

OPTIFarm broiler management*David Speller**Applied Group, United Kingdom; david.speller@appliedgroup.org.uk*

As an intensive broiler farming business it has been very clear that improvements in animal welfare and improvements in farm profitability can go together provided the welfare improvement is of genuine benefit to the birds housed. The ever complicating world of computer programmes and sensor technology is not one that sits comfortably with most stockman for whom the personal interaction with the animals is key. It's not about what the data is telling them it is more about what they see, hear, smell and ultimately feel when in a broiler house with the birds. This is where OPTIFarm was born. Initially for our own farming needs and now offered globally as a remote optimisation and monitoring service. Using specialist trained individuals (mainly ex broiler farm managers) OPTIFarm monitors the birds and their environment 365 days per year, 24 h a day. From the monitoring and data captured OPTIFarm can translate findings into the farmer's language through either a phone call, sending him a text or an e mail. The data gathered can suggest what feed, lighting, environment, water, etc. the birds are desiring at that moment allowing for rapid decision making and improved welfare. As well as advising, OPTIFarm is also able to actively remote manage the shed controls systems to optimise the environment remotely whilst the farmer is sleeping. It is very often noticed that farm environments are stable in the daylight hours with stable external climate conditions but can go wrong overnight as temperatures drop outside and cooler air enters the building. Likewise managing heat stress requires accurate controls settings and an understanding of temperature, humidity and wind chill factors felt by the birds. OPTIFarm can do it all 24 h a day 7 days a week globally.