

How To Get An "Emu Week" Proclamation

It's time to be thinking about getting an **"Emu Week" Proclamation** signed in your state or area as part of the preparations for N.E.W.

The American Emu Association (AEA) will still refer to this as "National Emu Week (N.E.W.)". There is no problem with us referring to this event as National Emu Week because it is being observed nationwide. But, a state, city or township can only proclaim a "State, City or Township" event. They cannot proclaim a "National" event. Only the federal government can sign a proclamation for a national event.

In the past, we were never been able to get over 1/4 of the states to sign a proclamation for Emu Week so, a national proclamation has never been sought. This is something that can be looked into for the future but, so far, a national proclamation has not been sought due to the small amount of states that participate with a proclamation.

A few state governments find proclamations "frivolous" and an unnecessary expense and will not issue them. Others insist that we include ALL ratites which does not work out well because of different hatching seasons for emu, ostrich and rhea (in some states, legislation dictates that this must be a "Ratite Week" Proclamation). You will need to adjust your proclamation accordingly.

HOW TO GET A PROCLAMATION

The following are hints on getting an Emu Week Proclamation. Keep in mind, if state proclamations cannot be obtained, that **proclamations can be signed not only by state governors and administrators**, but, by:

Local city mayors

City council members

Town chairmen

Supervisors & etc. in towns, cities, townships, villages, counties, etc.

A Mall, or an individual store, could even proclaim "Emu Week"

Each state affiliate needs to have on file with their state affiliate president and board, a detailed document explaining how they obtained their past proclamations. This way, in future years, anyone could step in and know exactly how it was done.

Ask the person who obtained last year's proclamation or is applying for this year's proclamation to document this information today!

NOTE: In Wisconsin our State Ag Secretary's office was instrumental in getting a proclamation for us the last several years. All it took was an e-mail to the Ag Secretary's office. After a short dialog with the office secretary, we had the proclamation in our hands within 7 days of requesting it.

I highly recommend that you introduce yourself to your State Ag Secretary, their staff, your state senators and the state representatives for your area. Make an appointment so, they can get to know you. They can answer questions throughout the year and can be very helpful in obtaining an Emu Week proclamation.

Steps to having a signed state proclamation:

* Find a contact person through your State Senators or Representatives, by calling your State Governor's office, contacting the State Ag Secretary's office or your state Senator's or your Representative's office. Your University Ag Extension office may be able to help with contact information for these people.

* Make a request to your contact person for a proclamation. This will be a formal letter. It can be submitted in person, by mail or through e-mail.

* Save their Name, Title and contact information (e-mail address, phone number, etc.) for future proclamations.

Conditions for having a proclamation signed:

- * It has to be something **occurring within the state**. The state can't sign a "national proclamation" (this is why it will be titled "(Your State) Emu Week" or just plain "Emu Week").
 - * It needs to talk about the **benefits to the people of your state**.
 - * It needs to **come from a public group**, not a specific organization (state emu association - NO. / **All emu growers - YES**)
 - * It must **state the pertinent information** (dates, statistics of benefits to your state, census numbers, etc) (2007 Ag Census results for your state can be found at www.agcensus.usda.gov)
 - * The language needs to be **approved by the Governor's office** (or whoever is signing the proclamation), who may request language changes.
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After speaking to your state contact person, you will need to send a copy of the proposed proclamation to the Governor's office (or your contact), along with a letter requesting the signing.

The "Request Letter" should include:

- * A contact's name and address (you) for "Emu Week"
- * RE: Emu Week proclamation
- * Who you are and why you're requesting the signing
- * What you're proclaiming and when, including exact dates
- * Brief reasons why this proclamation will be of benefit to people in your state
- * Date you need the proclamation signed by (April 15 would be a good date to shoot for)
- * Do you want a public signing (this is a good photo opportunity). If so, send a list of names of people who will be attending the signing
- * Any legislators or media that might be attending
- * A thank you for their help.

NOTE:

The **letter and proclamation wording should be sent** to the Governor's office (or whoever will be signing it) **a minimum of 3-4 weeks before you need the proclamation signed. 6-8 weeks is preferred**, especially, if, you are having a public signing.

If you're having a public signing, check with your contact about 3 weeks before the date, to make sure everything is in order. A public signing is a photo opportunity and adds punch to your press release but, is not absolutely necessary.

The Governor's office will write the proclamation on official paper for you and the governor will sign it.

The next post will have a sample, fill-in the blank proclamation that you can use.
