



NUFFIELD
Farming Scholarships

Nuffield Poultry study tour 2025

Vietnam

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Organised by Steven Pritchard

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Report written by David Throup

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Map Of Vietnam



Itinerary

Friday 3rd October	Depart UK for Hanoi.
Saturday 4th October	Hanoi Noi Bai International Airport. Organised city tour of Hanoi.
Sunday 5th October	Depart for Private walking tour of Hanoi French Quarter. Free time to explore Hanoi.
Monday 6th October	Visit British Embassy and lunch with the ambassador. Tour of the Long Biên Market.
Tuesday 7th October	Hoà Phát egg packing plant. Flight departure Vietnam Airlines to Ho Chi Minh City.
Wednesday 8th October	De Heus Dong Nai feed mill. Arrive Vietstock 2025 show for meeting with Cherry Valley – Vietnam Duck Industry.
Thursday 9th October	JAPFA Vietnam for discussion on poultry meat production. ShrimpVet demonstration farm.
Friday 10th October	SunFarm, TAFE Group layer farm Vietnam's Leading Egg Producer - Tafa Viet
Saturday 11th October	Private tour of Cu Chi tunnels. Ho Chi Minh International Airport for flights home.

Hanoi

Arrival in Hanoi

On arrival at Hanoi Noi Bai International Airport, we were greeted by Dr Ho of Hy-line and transferred to Mövenpick Hotel Hanoi Centre, a centrally located hotel offering easy access to cultural and business districts.



Once everybody had arrived at the hotel, we embarked on the first tour of Hanoi city, which was in Russian army jeeps.



This was a great way to see Hanoi with various food tasting stops along the way. The tour ended with a trip to Train Street, which was a unique experience to see the train pass through a narrow street full of bars and restaurants.



Cultural Activities

On day, two Sarha and Jarvis were our guides for the French Quarter walking tour. They explained that the French had chosen this location as it was the banking area of Hanoi. In 1941, the French had all moved back to France due to World War 2 and then later the Japanese then moved in, as there was conflict with their neighboring country, China.



This area of Hanoi still has French influence and history with the food and architecture. The old government guesthouse still contained bullet holes from times of conflict.

The St Joseph Cathedral was built in 1886 by the French over a period of 3 years and is the oldest church in Hanoi. This building stands out with its dark grey colour. This building was painted this way to make it look older than it actually was.



The tour concluded with a Hanoi speciality, an egg coffee, which originated from a time when milk was scarce, and a blend of whipped egg white, sugar and condensed milk is used as a replacement.



Long Biên Market Visit

Experienced one of Hanoi's oldest markets, observing local trade practices and sampling authentic Vietnamese street food.



Our arrival at the market was a little late as most of the trade stalls had closed but the range of fruit impressed, me the most as the majority was not familiar in a British supermarket.



Diplomatic Engagement – British Embassy



The poultry group had a meeting with Matthew Albon-Crouch, The UK Agriculture, Food and Drinks Attaché to Vietnam, and Hang Trinh, Policy Advisor. Matthew's background had been working for DEFRA, and he had spent the last two and a half years in Vietnam in a role he clearly enjoyed very much with a posting of four years. His work was primarily trade focused with an emphasis on new markets and to maintain existing trade lines. He is also involved on a range of projects, one being improvements to animal health. We learned that Vietnam has the highest per capita consumption of seafood in Asia at 37kg per person. The Ambassador mentioned one of his pet hates was plastic usage, a point that the poultry group had already noticed. Vietnam has a young population with poverty reducing which was helped by a growing economy 8% year on year and opportunities for trade exports, examples being instant coffee playing a major part for Vietnam and rice exports mainly exported to the Philippines and Africa. The country is also working on developing a poultry meats export and a salmonella action plan. Vietnam trades with nearby countries and their closest allies would be Laos. They trade with China which can be tough and Vietnam also has a positive relationship with Russia both being communist countries. Vietnam is also seeing challenges with climate change having recently had three major typhoons. Most of the Vietnamese energy comes from coal power stations with huge potential for more renewable energy. The country also manufactured electric vehicles under the name, VinFast that is government owned.

We later joined Matthew and Hang for lunch for some traditional Vietnamese food. Hang offered to join the group for the rest of the week as they were very impressed with our itinerary. Joining us, she proved very helpful with linguistics and knowledge of the area.

Industry Visit - Hoà Phát Egg Picking Group

<https://nongnghiep.hoaphat.com.vn/>

The Hoà Phát Group is made up from a series of business enterprises with their largest being steel production makes up 86% of their after-tax profit and produce 16 million tons of steel per year. This was followed by agriculture at 8% and real estate, which is 6%. The agricultural side is built up of poultry layers, beef, pigs and feed milling with locations all over Vietnam.



The poultry group had come to visit the poultry laying site of Phu Tho located to the Northwest of Hanoi. The site was established in 2016 covering an area of 40ha with the capacity to house 1.2 million laying hens including 15000 parent poultry and pullets this was managed by 357 employees. The site cannot be expanded as good land is in short supply and is rented from the government over a 50-year lease before you can resubmit it.



The Hoà Phát Poultry Company prides itself on using a single breed being Hy-Line to ensure constant performance and self-reliance in breeds. Having their own feed milling enterprise also ensures total control on their feed quality. They operate a 3-tier biosecurity system on site and updated vaccination program. The company has also invested in world-leading brands of equipment. Although we didn't get to see inside the poultry building, due to biosecurity, they used a caged system, and they housed the layers for up to 75 weeks before depletion. The end of lay birds were then sold for meat. The shower in procedure was also interesting as it involved removing clothes at the site entrance building and going through a gated shower room before drying and putting on site clothing. Pocket items were put into a UV box for disinfection.



The egg packing room used a moba 350 with good access to labour it was noted that there wasn't much automation compared to UK equivalent. The graded eggs were distributed throughout Vietnam with additional egg sourced from China when in short supply.

Ho Chi Minh City

Arrival

We arrived at Tan Son Nhat International Airport and checked into Novotel Living Saigon South, later moving to Novotel Saigon Centre for convenient access to business districts and cultural attractions.

Industry Visit – De Heus Dong Nai Feed Mill

<https://www.deheus.com.vn/>

We were introduced to Gerry Oude Elfering who managed the site De Heus Dong Nai Feed Mill: who provided insights into feed production technology and its role in supporting Vietnam’s livestock sector.

Gerry had been involved with the De Heus Company for over 40 years and worked with poultry nutrition and shaping future developments for the company. After supporting De Heus Vietnam traveling from the Netherlands, he permanently moved with his family to Ho Chi Min city in 2019.

De Heus operates 17 mills in Asia, milling 3 million tons of animal feed in Vietnam. The Dong Nai mill we visited produced 600 thousand tons of feed per year 44% was bulk and the rest was bags all manually loaded on to trucks. De Heus has also got shares in genetics for poultry rearing to ensure quality in the industry. They also do a lot of research with the Vietnamese climate to monitor the link between feed and nutrition. De Heus also wants to work closely with farmers by giving them the tools to improve productivity. One example, being water quality as salt water can creep in from the coast. Work has also been done to understand the breed and cultural behavior of animals, as feed can be blamed for any problems that may occur. They also don’t put meat or bonemeal into their feed ration. De Heus operates closely with government relations as ownership and land availability can be hard to obtain in a communist country.



Vietstock Livestock Exhibition

<https://vietstock.vn/>

The group went to visit the Vietstock Livestock exhibition which was held at the Saigon conference center in Ho Chi Min city and had over 300 exhibitors with seminars and a show case of technologies products and solutions.



Looking around the show I was drawn to composting technologies and biosecurity, but it did have something for all interests. It was informative at the Big Herdsman stand which looked like a Chinese copy of Big Dutchman equipment.

At the Vietstock show we met with Cherry Valley representatives to discuss developments in Vietnam's duck industry and explored emerging technologies and market opportunities.

<https://www.cherryvalley.co.uk/post/vietnam-a-new-and-progressive-approach>

Bing Yan UK Managing Director was the representative for Cherry Valley with introductions from Robert Borrill.

Bing talked to us on the growth of the duck market across Asia and how the genetics for the Cherry Valley breed of ducks are based in the UK and China servicing breeding duck eggs throughout the world to provide good genetic quality. The Cherry Valley bird is also well suited to a range of different housing systems, ranging from the open floor system that suits the smaller farm and cold floor housing which is more temperature controlled and reduces risk of vermin. Caged duck systems are now becoming more popular across Asia as they are more modern providing automation and large scale. Typical mortality was seasonal, usually around 3-4 % but could be as high as 12 %. Bing mentioned Asia focuses highly on feed conversion ratios (1.95 -2.15) and Europe tend to work more on sustainability. Birds are ready for market (3.5kg) within 40-42 days with high weight leading to a high selling price. The Chinese market tended to use duck not for meat but more as a snack food for example wings feet and necks. Due to the sale of these by products duck meat is as cheap as chicken. Duck consumption is 20kg per year compared to chicken at 18kg.

Vietnam is the second largest duck producer in the world after China. Current nationwide production has increased from 120 million birds per year in 2018 to 140 million. In the last 7 years Cherry Valley has become the number one provider in the Vietnam market

accounting for 45% share and supplying 60 million birds. With plans for 70 million this year.

JAPFA Poultry Vietnam

<https://www.japfa.com/>



JAPFA are a huge agribusiness in the Asian market. In Vietnam their turnover is \$1 billion (USD) which comes from feed manufacture (> 1.5 MT/yr), day old chick sales (100 million of broiler and layer chicks), broiler production (75 million), layers (100 million), ducks (6 million) and a substantial pig operation producing over 1 million piglets per year and fattening 800 k pigs for slaughter.

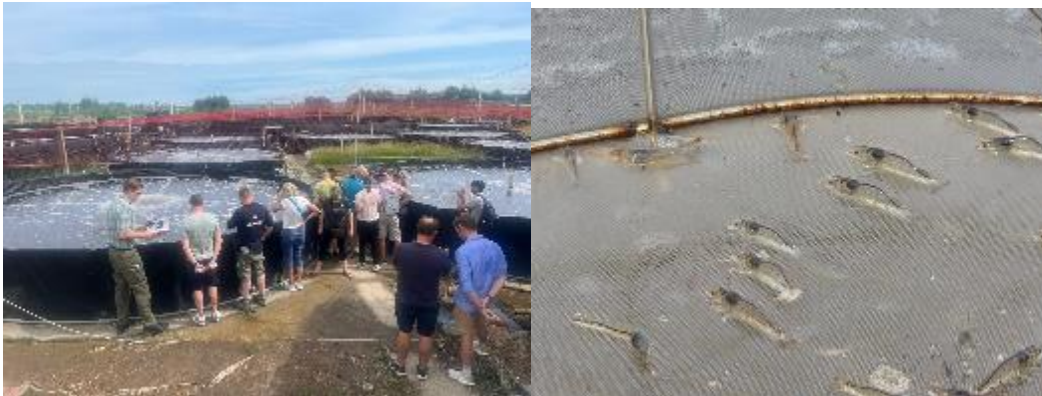
In the poultry meat sector they focus on slow growing chicken and work closely with Hubbard to provide a range of birds to suit the different regional market demands. JAPFA described the slow growing market as very disorganised with around 70% of the market share in the hands of small producers. Their aim is to try and organise/disrupt the slow growing sector by bringing the discipline from standard broiler growing and also better control of the genetics. The JAPFA representative did mention that this market was not growing as fast as they would like although consumption of coloured chicken is around 10 kgs per capita. JAPFA do market research and list local festivals where the male chicken is eaten at these events. They also find regions which tend to like a certain breed of chicken. For example, coloured chicken that can bring a different flavour and texture. The Vietnamese culture prefers to buy their chicken on the wet market alive and slaughter at home, so they get to see what they are buying. Research into mapping regional poultry markets give JAPFA the ability to handle different breeds for regional markets and an idea

of what numbers to produce. JAPFA produce chicken in many locations tailored to the market. The chicks are grown over a 110-120 day growing cycle, with the birds also beak tipped and vaccinated. One advantage of slower growing is a longer selling period as the fast grown birds may not be sold on time depending on demand. Focusing on sustainability in Vietnam, rice husks are now starting to be taken in exchange for manure providing a good source of fertiliser. Male chicks from the layer market are being used to feed snake and dog farms. The JAPFA representative gave the group good insight to how the poultry meat industry worked for them and their values.

Industry Visit - Shrimpviet

<https://shrimpviet.com/>

Shrimpviet is a private company, and their demonstration farm covers 30 ha in area. It is a research organisation built up to provide knowledge for shrimp related industry or setting up shrimp farms. Shrimp farming is a relatively young industry with many innovations from taking larvae to full size shrimp, nutrition and breeding programs. Shrimpviet cares about the environment and how shrimp are produced and wants to remain sustainable with no use of antibiotics or chemicals, as there is a fear of residue buildup and resistance. Water quality is also a key factor with water filtration used to reduce phosphorus and nitrogen discharge. Tilapia fish were also used to clean the water before returning to the sea.



The larvae were imported from Shrimpvets breeding farm North of Ho Chi Min to the demonstration farm. This was due to the water quality being better on the breeding farm. Shrimpviet mimic ideal breeding condition by creating a cold dark breeding environment along with good nutrition. The shrimp eggs become larvae in 3 weeks and take an additional 3-4 months to grow into 20g shrimp.

The spawning rate of a shrimp is 15000 eggs per female with 50% hatching and a 10-40% mortality rate. The largest factor for mortality was cannibalism, which could be controlled by feeding more often. As shrimp are bottom feeders, they receive four feeds a day and they must eat within one and a half hours or the feed separates and becomes wasted.

When the shrimp are full sized, they are harvested and put into ice which is the quickest way to kill shrimp. As this was a demonstration research facility production wasn't the main driver over research. The site was operated by 10 people over a 24/7 operation.

Nature Reserve - KDL Sinh Thái Và Sát Cần Giờ

After visiting Shrimpviet the group had an unscheduled stop at a nature reserve. We took a trip down a long track in a makeshift bus, which took us into the heart of the nature reserve.



In the reserve, we visited a crocodile swamp. This was a place to preserve the rare Siamese crocodile and the giant Hoa Ca crocodile. We got the chance to try crocodile fishing by floating out on a caged raft and by dangling a fishing rod with bait attached. The crocodiles would leap up and snap it from the end of the rod. The nature reserve was also home to long tailed monkeys and up to 30 species of wild birds all that can be seen from the 25m High watch tower.



Industry Visit – SunFarm

<https://tafaegg.com/>

We arrived at Tafa Egg on World Egg Day 2025. Our visit to Sun Farm was a 2-hour bus ride from Ho Chi Min city and was hosted by CEO Ms Chu Thi Hong Thuy and her site managers. The farm covered 100Ha that was privately owned by the Tafa Group this was seen as unusual as most of the land in Vietnam was owned by the Government. The farm itself was home to 2 million birds across 20 houses in cages. On entry to the site, we were given site clothes to put on before going through their biosecurity. This was similar to the earlier visit again walking through a gated shower room. There were some impressive vessel composting systems for the manure and onsite packing facilities. The manure being in high demand as a soil improver for the coffee plantations. The visit took us into the newly built poultry housing which used a 4-tier cage system and all Big Dutchman equipment with modern water-cooled climate control. The water was filtered through a series of settling ponds before entering the watercourses.



Hen breed choice was ISA Browns which they take to 72 weeks. This breed produced a tinted egg which has a light brown or creamy colour to the eggshell. Tafa Group had plans to expand its operation from 2 million birds to 4 million birds on site supplying supermarkets across Vietnam, Cambodia and neighbouring countries along with egg powder and liquid egg facilities. Currently they have 70% of the egg market in South Vietnam. On entry to the Packing Centre, we were greeted with a warm welcome from employees in traditional dress.

This facility uses 2 Moba Graders as well as egg washing facilities for certain markets, Japan was used as an example. The Packing Centre had capacity to pack and grade 240000 eggs per hour and was a very clean operation ensuring high quality, giving potential to sell their product for a higher price. Having the birds and packing on one site gave Tafa Group the ability to get their eggs off site quickly and in to store again ensuring quality to their consumers.



After the tour the Poultry group were introduced to a product that Tafa Group were producing which was an egg baked for 100hrs. This product was proving popular when it was deshelled the egg white was a caramel colour and when dipped in salt gave a convenient tasty snack. The Tafa CEO was also very engaged with social media. The Poultry group were welcomed with signage, traditional dress and interviews for those that would engage.



The Cu Chi Tunnels

The Cu Chi tunnel tour was hosted by our tour guide Bunny where she started with a trip to the firing range. Here there was a chance to fire weapons used in the war in Vietnam from pistols, rifles and M60 machine gun. After a few shots we entered the fighting zone in the jungle where we got to explore a range of left-over military equipment before entering the tunnels.



The tunnels were dug as a form of guerrilla warfare and protection but the heat in the tunnels was intense and the tunnel network would have covered the area of a city. The tour showed examples of booby traps, none that looked pleasant and examples of unexploded bombs dropped by B52s being cut open to produce tank mines.



For me, this site was a reminder of the horrors of the war for both sides. The attitude of the Vietnamese people were to let the past be the past.

Key Highlights & Insights

- **Cultural Immersion:** The tours in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City provided a rich understanding of Vietnam's history, architecture, and traditions.
- **Industry Knowledge:** Visits to leading agricultural and aquaculture facilities offered valuable insights into Vietnam's food production systems, sustainability efforts, and markets.
- **Networking & Collaboration:** Engagements at Vietstock 2025 and the British Embassy strengthened professional relationships and opened avenues for future partnerships.
- **Personal Experience:** The combination of business and cultural activities created a well-rounded perspective of Vietnam's economy.
- **Group Experience:** The Hospitality of the Vietnamese people on all the places visited.



We are truly grateful to Jaffa Cakes, the organisers, hosts, and sponsors for making this study tour to Vietnam so informative and valuable.