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FIELD SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR/COORDINATOR

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Board of Directors Update

Your Board of Directors has been very busy this summer, especially in the area of government relations. Directors attended the Premier’s breakfasts in Calgary and Edmonton, as well as the Prime Minister’s BBQ in Calgary. These events gave Alberta egg farmers a tremendous opportunity to discuss egg farming and supply management with a number of MLAs and MPs from all over Alberta. These activities are an effective provincial extension of the government relations work being done at the federal level by Egg Farmers of Canada.

On August 30th, EFA was proud and honored to host an egg farm tour for 2 MLA’s – Bridget Pastoor and Greg Weadick – at New York Colony in Lethbridge. They were taken on a tour of the layer facility, watched eggs being loaded to go to the grading station and even helped with the egg collection. They asked many questions about egg farming and everyone in attendance had an enjoyable and educational time.

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 PRODUCER WEBSITE: www.albertaeggproducers.ca
 OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

ALBERTA Egg Producers

Fax

To:

Title: Egg Manager

Organization:

From: Catherine Kelly, Extension 128

Date: October 4, 2012 **No. Pages (Including cover page): 10**

Re: EggNotes

If you have experienced any problems in the transmission of this fax, please contact me at (403) 250-1197, ext. 128.

Catherine

PURPOSE OF THE EFA

EFA exists so there will be an environment in which Alberta egg producers can thrive within the Canadian industry, at a cost that demonstrates good stewardship of resources.

EFA OFFICE HOURS

Our office will be **closed on Monday, October 8th** for Thanksgiving. We hope this will not cause any inconvenience.

EGG PRICE UPDATE

Effective: from **July 22nd, 2012**

Grade A

X Large	\$2.050	↑
Large	\$2.050	↑
Medium	\$1.830	↑
Small	\$1.450	↑
Nest Run	\$1.931	↑
Pee Wee	\$0.270	---

Grade B \$0.750 ---

Grade C \$0.150 ---

EGGNOTES SUBSCRIPTION INFO

Do you know someone who wants to subscribe to EggNotes? Simply have them send their name, company or organization, fax number and email address to: info@eggs.ab.ca

Board of Directors Update, Continued from Page 1

EFA is excited to host more egg farm tours in the future, to build relationships with our local MLAs and MPs, while providing them an opportunity to learn more about our industry. Alberta egg farmers have an extremely positive story to tell about both egg farming and the benefits of the supply management system.

The EFA Board also had the pleasure of welcoming Tim Lambert and Peter Clarke from EFC, to discuss a wide variety of issues that are important for all Alberta egg farmers. Tim and Peter presented a variety of potential cost-saving measures for Board consideration, and asked the Board to brainstorm additional ideas for cost-saving. The Board is eager to discuss this topic in more detail, at a follow-up meeting for EFC Directors, scheduled for mid October.

Field Statistics Update

Here's an update on how our farmers have done with their Start Clean – Stay Clean (SC-SC) and Animal Care Program (ACP) evaluations in 2012:

- 119 SC-SC layer evaluations have been completed in 2012
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 98.5%
 - ✓ 24 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating
- 209 ACP evaluations have been completed in 2012
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 98.3%
 - ✓ 122 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating
- 104 SC-SC pullet evaluations have been completed in 2012
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 98.2%
 - ✓ 36 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating
 - ✓ 4 Alberta farmers are newly accredited in the program

EFA would like to thank all our farmers for their commitment and hard work every day, ensuring that safe, quality eggs are produced humanely!

Happy Thanksgiving & Happy Harvest!!!

From the EFA Board and staff

UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

October 9-11

United Egg Producers (UEP)
Conference
San Diego, CA

October 15-18

Canadian Poultry & Egg Processors
Council (CPEPC) sector meetings
Ottawa

October 23

EFA Board Meeting
Calgary

November 7

EFC Meeting
Ottawa

November 15

Production Management
Committee (PMC) Meeting
Calgary

November 19

Alberta Poultry Industry Emergency
Management Team (APIEMT)
Meeting
Calgary

Management Tips for Foot Health

- *by Dr. Clover Bench, University of Alberta*

The most common foot health problems include foot pad dermatitis, bumblefoot, hyperkeratosis and excessive claw growth. Housing types and flooring surfaces affect hens towards specific foot problems depending on whether hens are exposed to wet litter, wire flooring, perches, abrasive material, and/or if they have space to move freely.

Foot Pad Dermatitis is the inflammation of tissue of the plantar region of the foot, which can become infected with bacteria called *Staphylococcus (Staph) aureus* and lead to bumblefoot. It is often associated with wet or poor litter conditions in cage-free systems.

Bumblefoot is a localized bulbous lesion of the ball of the foot due to the penetration of a foreign body, followed by infection of *Staph aureus*. Bumblefoot is considered painful and is of great welfare significance. Lameness is often the first sign of the condition and is noted as the most costly problem for birds reared in deep litter.

Hyperkeratosis is the hypertrophy of the corneous layer of the skin and usually occurs on the toe and footpads of caged hens. It is caused by increased compression of the toe or footpad on the wire floor of the cage or perch. The slope of the wire cage floor has been shown to cause this. Overall, hyperkeratosis is considered less painful than Bumblefoot and tends to occur to a lesser extent in furnished cages, compared with conventional cages.

Excessive claw growth leads to a tendency for claws to break off more easily, which can lead to open, bleeding wounds and great susceptibility to infection. Most often, excessive claw growth occurs if hens do not have access to abrasive materials for trimming nails.

Recommendations by Housing Type

Each housing system presents unique challenges with regards to foot health. Hens in furnished cages have been found to have better overall foot health than hens in litter or range systems. However, claw health is most problematic in conventional cages than in all other systems. Management strategies to reduce some of the welfare concerns associated with foot problems include:

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ABOUT EGGNOTES



EggNotes is the official newsletter of the Egg Farmers of Alberta.

Submissions should be sent to:
info@eggs.ab.ca

Submission deadline for the next issue of *EggNotes*:
December 7th, 2012

Next issue of *EggNotes*:
December 20th, 2012

"YOKES" OF THE MONTH



Guaranteed to crack you up!

Q: What is a chicken's favorite tree?

A: A yolk (oak) tree!

Q: Why did the chickens cross the beach?

A: To get to the other tide!

Management Tips for Foot Health, Continued from Page 3

Bedded Systems:

Bedding – use an absorbent bedding material to a depth of 2-4". Top coat as needed to prevent wet spots. Pine shavings have a higher absorbency than wheat or barley straw.

Litter – stir litter regularly, by raking or replacing soiled litter when it becomes saturated. Removing caked or 'sealed' litter will allow wet litter to breath and encourage evaporation.

Flooring – consider using new slat flooring products (ie: under the drinker) that are on the market for free-run barns

Caged Systems:

Floor slope – make sure the slope of the wire floor isn't too steep.

Abrasive material – use an abrasive scratch pad (towards the front of the cage, near the feeders) to help wear down claws. Hens have a natural tendency to scratch while feeding or preparing to feed.

Perches – new perch prototypes are being developed which have soft, flexible surfaces, to lower peak force and increase bird contact area (better distributing the weight of the bird on the perch). Perches with a soft surface may reduce keel bone and foot pad welfare problems in laying hens.

All Systems:

Bio-security – good bio-security and disinfection, along with having a comprehensive layer health plan, will prevent or reduce the incidence of many viruses, infections and foot problems.

Ventilation – ensure your layer barn has adequate ventilation during the summer and winter months. Follow layer strain management guidelines for ideal barn temperature and humidity values at each age.

Water drinkers – check drinker lines for leakage at least twice a day, as part of routine health checks. If leakage is an on-going problem, drinker design may also need to be re-evaluated.

Lameness – watch for early signs of foot lesions, lameness or gait problems at least once a week.

Which potential foot problems are associated with your hen housing system?

It is always easiest to treat foot pad and leg problems early, rather than after the problem has become severe!

EGG FARMING BEST PRACTICE

Since fall weather is upon us, now is a great time to ensure there are no holes inside or outside your facility. This will prevent rodents and pests from looking for a new warm home for the winter.

BIO-SECURITY TIP

Place a receptacle or mailbox in the egg storage room for paperwork.

POULTRY HEALTH SERVICES NOTICE

Due to the renovations at the post-mortem room of Poultry Health Services in Airdrie, their diagnostic services will be temporarily moved to the University of Calgary Spy Hill Campus, which is located at 11877 85th Street NW in Calgary.

The last day for submissions at the Airdrie location is Friday, October 5th, until 2:30pm.

Poultry Health Services are hoping to have services restored in Airdrie by the end of October. If you need to submit birds for diagnostics during the month of October, please contact EFA or Poultry Health Services for further information about submitting your birds to the U of C location.

Producer Services Update

Ammonia Testing

This is a friendly reminder that from October to March, ammonia levels in your hen housing area should be monitored monthly and noted in your Start Clean – Stay Clean (SC-SC) records.

Hen Housing Guide

The EFA Hen Housing Guide has been updated to include recent developments and information on hen housing, such as the interim density policy for enriched cages. If you are considering re-caging or building a new facility, please be sure to contact EFA, to setup a meeting with your farm's decision makers. EFA's goal is to provide information to assist you in making the best long-term decision for your egg business.

Self-Testing for Salmonella

Results from Salmonella tests that are conducted **by a producer** are not covered by CEIRA! Although some sections of the SC-SC program currently recommend conducting your own salmonella test to confirm that your facility is clean (ie: if you dry clean), EFA strongly recommends that producers do NOT conduct their own salmonella tests, due to the lack of coverage. If Salmonella Enteritidis is identified during your testing, every lab is required to report this result, and you will NOT be covered by CEIRA.

Producer Concerns about Grade-outs

At the September meeting of the Grader Advisory Committee, the group discussed the best way to address producer concerns about their grade-outs. From time to time, producers raise concerns about discrepancies between egg weights on farm and in their grade-outs. If you encounter these types of discrepancies, the committee urges you to contact your grader, who will then arrange to come out to your farm. During their on farm visit, the grader will work with you to weigh the eggs and compare this weight to what is being seen both on farm and at the grading station. This open approach is the best way to resolve any issues and maintain positive industry relationships.

YOU ARE INVITED!

Near Infrared Reflectance Spectroscopy (NIRS) Workshop: "Getting the Most Out of your Feed Ingredients"

Geoff Smith from DFS, Newell, Iowa, will speak on the routine use and economic value of NIRS in their feed milling and farm operations. Other speakers include Dr. Mary Lou Swift (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development), Dr. Ruurd Zijlstra (University of Alberta), Ron Gietz (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development) and Rob Hand (Alberta Crop Industry Fund – ACIF)

- Practical experience using NIRS technology
- Economics of NIRS technology
- Value for livestock & crop producers
- Hands-on experience using NIRS machines
- Developing and managing calibration equations
- Available NIRS networks & services
- Grant for NIRS machines

November 14th: Coast Lethbridge Hotel & Conference Center
10:00 am – 3:30 pm

November 15th: Lacombe Memorial Centre
10:00 am – 3:30 pm

There is no cost to attend, but pre-registration is required. For further information or to register, please contact Brenda McLellan at 1-800-387-6030, by November 7th, 2012.

Research Update

Antibiotic Resistance and its impact on Egg Producers

Antibiotic resistance is being debated more and more in the media and is a concern for the public. Antibiotic resistance is when a microorganism fails to respond to an antimicrobial medicine to which it was previously sensitive. This results in the standard treatment becoming ineffective and infections persisting and spreading to others.

Antibiotic resistance is a consequence of the use, particularly the misuse, of medicines and develops when a microorganism mutates or acquires a resistance gene. Any group of bacteria has genetic variation, meaning there are differences between individuals in the population. A few bacteria may have the natural ability to survive treatment with the antibiotic. The result may be that resistant bacteria survive and become an increasingly greater part of the population over time, in response to the use of the antibiotics. When antibiotic resistance develops in one type of bacteria, it can transfer to other types that were not initially the target of the drug, since bacteria can swap genetic material with one another. This further increases the risk of using antibiotics.

While the egg industry already uses antibiotics sparingly, egg farmers have a key role to play in ensuring that antibiotics are used only when necessary. The inclusion of any antibiotics in feed that are not recommended by a veterinarian should be avoided. When you are using an antibiotic prescribed by a veterinarian, you should be sure to follow the directions for use closely. Failing to use a full dose can increase the occurrence of antibiotic resistance.

Taking these actions will help minimize the spread of antibiotic resistance and ensure that effective antibiotics continue to be available to treat human illnesses. You may also hear the term "antimicrobial" or "antimicrobial resistance". Antimicrobials and antibiotics have the same function; the difference is whether they were produced synthetically or biologically.

Industry Development Update

Egg Farmers of Alberta would like to send our congratulations and best wishes to Jenna, our Industry Development Officer, who was married in August. We wish Jenna and her husband a lifetime of happiness together!

Please note that Jenna's last name has changed from Latanville to Griffin, and that her new email address is: jenna.griffin@eggs.ab.ca

EFA PRODUCER WEBSITE

EFA's producer website is a hub of information relating to production practices, quota, Start Clean – Stay Clean and more! EFA's goal is to provide our producers with an easy to navigate site that is full of valuable resources that you can refer to when you need answers. The following resources are now available:

- "Who's Getting Into Your Barn?" is a resource from the Poultry Industry Council that provides tips for controlling barn access (*under 'Best Production Practices – Bio-Security'*)
- "Pest Control for Your Barn" is a resource from the Poultry Industry Council that provides a checklist for controlling rodents and insects in your barn (*under 'Best Production Practices – Pest Management'*)
- An updated 'Hen Housing Guide' from EFA (*under 'Animal Care'*) → please see page 5 of this issue of *EggNotes* for more details about the Hen Housing Guide updates

Please be sure to check out EFA's producer website at:

www.albertaeggproducers.ca

For a username and password, please call the EFA office.

Composting Poultry Manure

Composting is the biological decomposition and stabilization of organic material. The process produces heat that, in turn, produces a final product that is free of pathogens and plant seeds. There are many advantages to composting poultry manure, including:

- Reduction of mass and volume, so the producer can economically haul the material further
- Reduction of odour
- Destruction of pathogens
- Destruction of weed seeds
- Improvement of nutrient quality (the nutrients from compost are released slowly and steadily)
- Increasing water retention of soil where it is applied
- Decreasing pollutants (by stabilizing the volatile nitrogen)

In order for composting to be effective, it needs to occur under very controlled processes. Each of the following factors have the potential to significantly affect the composting process:

Temperature: The compost pile should be between 54-60 degrees Celsius at the center. Remember that the edges of the windrow are cool, so the compost pile must be turned. Heat loss can occur if the pile is too small.

Carbon to Nitrogen Ratio: Microbes need 20-25 times more carbon than nitrogen, to remain active. Therefore, the ratio should be between 25:1 and 30:1 at the beginning. Softwood, shavings and sawdust are all good sources of Carbon, while manure is a good source of Nitrogen. Most materials available for composting do not fit the ideal ratio, so different materials must be blended.

Aeration: Greater than 10% oxygen concentration is ideal. Initial mixing of materials usually introduces enough air to start composting and regular mixing of material, referred to as turning, enhances aeration. The oxygen concentration can be measured with an oxygen probe.

Moisture Content: Moisture content needs to be between 50-60% by weight. The squeeze test can be done to check moisture content. If the material is too wet, water can be squeezed out of a handful. If the material is too dry, it doesn't form a ball when squeezed.

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COMPOSTING POULTRY

MANURE, Continued from Pg 7

There are several different composting methods available, such as passive windrow, active windrow, aerated static windrow and in-vessel channel. Each method has advantages and disadvantages, in terms of the amount of time and labor required, the space required, the quality of compost and odour.

To learn more about best practices, troubleshooting and to determine which method might be right for you, please contact the Agricultural Technology Centre: 403-329-1212.

Adapted from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's Composting Manual

CLASSIFIED ADS



#1) For Sale

Pullets Available

19 weeks on October 15th

Contact:

Amin at Kuku Farms

780-699-4011

Proper Use of HT-MAC Equipment

The most common method of spent hen euthanasia in Alberta is currently carbon dioxide gassing, using high throughput modified atmosphere chamber (HT-MAC) technology. If you are using this technology, in order to minimize the risk to yourself, your operation and to the industry, it is vital that these MAC carts are used in a very precise way. While modifying the carts or the process for their use may improve efficiency, doing so can result in decreased animal welfare. The following reminders can help minimize bird suffering while using the HT-MAC:

1. Ensure the target CO₂ concentrations (50%) are reached within the unit, prior to loading birds. For a standard sized HT-MAC, this requires at least 1 minute of gas flow at a minimum of 25 psi.
2. Maintain proper gas concentration at the bird's level. If gas levels are too high, birds will suffer distress due to irritation of the mucous membranes, including the eyes, nose and throat. If gas levels are too low, birds will not lose consciousness prior to being overlain by additional birds.
3. Always use a heating system. These are required for the tanks, regulators and lines, to minimize the freezing effects of CO₂ gas. Even minor freezing, which is undetectable by visual observation, requires loading rates of the birds to be significantly reduced to match the diminished as pressure and flow rates.
4. Ensure the loading rate is suitably matched to the floor area, so that birds will not be overlain by others before losing consciousness.
5. Do not fill the unit beyond 75% capacity. Due to induction of air during the loading of the birds, the gas levels at the top of the chamber vary considerably.
6. Allocate adequate time after the last birds have been loaded, to ensure sufficient exposure to CO₂ gas to cause death.

Topping-Up Flocks Reminder

Many producers are currently working out the best plan for activating their recent quota allotment. EFA strongly encourages all producers to wait until their next flock change to activate their new quota. Topping-up your flock with birds from another source is a big risk to the bio-security and health of your entire flock!

ALBERTA EGG MARKET UPDATE

The Nielson preliminary retail sales data is available up to August 25th, 2012 and indicates that in the latest 4-week period, 2.45 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 0.7% increase from the previous 4-week period (ending July 28th) and a 4.2% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2011.

Nielson retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 2.5% over the previous 52 weeks in Alberta. Specialty eggs (excluding Omega-3 eggs) have seen the largest sales growth in the last 52 weeks in Alberta; a 20.6% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 1.3 million dozen eggs (3.9% of the total eggs sold in Alberta).

EFA ONLINE!

Remember to tell everyone you meet about the EFA website, where you can find lots of eggcellent information about being an egg farmer, how an egg a day can be part of an active, nutritious lifestyle and a wide variety of delicious recipes! *Get Cracking* to eggs.ab.ca



Marketing Update

Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure

Egg Farmers of Alberta would like to thank everyone who generously donated to our team, helping us more than triple our fundraising goal. **EFA's CIBC Run for the Cure team has raised \$8,400** to date, to help fund continued breast cancer research, education and health promotion initiatives across the country, making a difference from coast to coast!

EFA's more than 30 dedicated team members – made up of Directors, producers, staff and family members all dressed in their yellow *Get Cracking!* gear – turned out on a cool, sunny Sunday morning, standing out in a sea of pink that numbered more than 8,000 people. A steady stream of people lined up at EFA's booth, to find out more about eggs and get their *Get Cracking!* goodie bag. Live bands entertained the crowd and emotional speeches were given, before the highly energetic, EFC-sponsored warm-up team took the stage to stir the crowd into a frenzy. All EFA team members successfully completed their walk/run and a shared sense of accomplishment was felt, in large part because of all the generous donations made in our name by numerous producers and industry partners!

On behalf of the entire EFA Board, staff and Run for the Cure team members, **THANK YOU** to everyone who donated and supported us!

Upcoming Events

EFA is proud to be participating in these *EGG*cellent events:

- **Edmonton Women's Show**
@ Northlands Expo Centre, Hall A in Edmonton October 13 & 14
- **Can Fit Pro**
@ University of Calgary in Calgary October 20
- **Calgary Women's Show**
@ BMO Centre in Calgary October 27 & 28
- **Farmfair International**
@ Northlands Expo Centre in Edmonton November 4-11

EFA 2012 Highlights

- Total # of events attended: 23
- Total # of events sponsored: 119
- Total # of promotional items distributed: 67,412
- Total # of resources distributed: 110,420

If you have any questions about EFA's marketing initiatives or want to let us know about something *EGG*citing happening in your area, please contact David Webb at extension 126.