

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FIELD SERVICES COORDINATOR	
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Kari Buijs	ext. 132

Board of Directors Update

Eggs are the new superfood and we are so fortunate to be working in a growth industry. EFA's goal is to see that all egg farmers place quota within their own barns, and continue supplying Alberta grocery stores and consumers with fresh, locally produced eggs. With growth, however, comes some challenges. Not all egg farmers are able to place their quota, but the development of the Quota Leasing Pool (QLP) has provided the opportunity for farmers to lease out their available quota, and other farmers have an equal opportunity to lease in. The QLP has been operating for almost a year and is proving to be a success. In order for the QLP to function optimally, EFA encourages all farmers to ensure that they know how much quota can be placed in their barns, and to fill out all the paperwork necessary to lease in/out in a timely manner. Deadlines are set and need to be adhered to so the QLP can proceed on time. The Board recognizes that situations change from farm to farm, but EFA staff can only act on the paperwork that they receive. If you have any questions or you wish to verify any paperwork, please call, fax or email EFA. Your Board of Directors wishes you a very Merry Christmas, and a happy and prosperous New Year!

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 OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



EFA Vision Statement

Healthy Food, Healthy Farms,
Healthy Families.

EFA Mission Statement

Cultivating a sustainable egg industry together with farmers, consumers and other stakeholders.

EFA Office Hours

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

- December 23 at 12:00 pm
- December 26
- December 27
- December 30 at 12:00 pm
- January 2, 2017

Wishing you a Merry Christmas, and a happy and prosperous 2017!

Egg Price Update

Effective August 14, 2016:

Grade A

X Large	\$2.080
Large	\$2.080
Medium	\$1.850
Small	\$1.480
Nest Run	\$1.959
Pee Wee	\$0.270

Grade B \$0.750

Grade C \$0.150

From the minimum paying price, processors can only deduct charges as authorized by the EFA Board. Farm-gate pickup rates were set in August 2010 and no increase in individual freight rates have been approved since that time.

Field Statistics Update

Here's an update on how our farmers are doing with their on-farm programs so far this year:

- 153 SC-SC Layer evaluations have been completed in 2016
 - Alberta's average score: 99.49%
 - 113 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating
- 157 Animal Care Program evaluations have been completed in 2016
 - Alberta's average score: 99.72%
 - 133 facilities have received a rating of 100%
- 94 SC-SC Pullet evaluations have been completed in 2016
 - Alberta's average score: 99.14%
 - 58 Alberta Pullet Growers have scored a perfect 100% rating
 - 13 pullet growers are newly accredited in the SC-SC Pullet Program

We'd like to thank our farmers for their commitment and hard work each and every day to ensure that safe, quality eggs are produced humanely.

2017 Record Books for SC-SC and the Animal Care Program

With a new year on the horizon, EFA has been making plans to release 2017 record books for the SC-SC and Animal Care programs. By the end of December, you will receive a January record sheet in the mail, together with your 2017 levy statement. This sheet can be used for your records as of January 1st, and can be stapled into your primary book once you receive it. Record books can be picked up at the January regional meetings.

Each year, we work to update and improve on the record books to ensure they remain current with program requirements and the needs of our farmers. There are a few minor changes that have been made to the 2017 version. Here are two of the bigger changes you will notice:

1. Animal Care auditors want to see culls reported separate from mortality. To assist with this, a new column was added in your record book to track the number of birds you cull, right beside the mortality column. In the mortality column, note the number of mortalities you found in your barn each day. In the cull column, note the number of birds you euthanized each day. If you do not have any mortalities or culls, please write down 0 to validate your records. We also encourage you to keep notes in your corrective action log about the reasons why you culled birds.
2. Both regular barn employees and crews brought in to move birds need to be aware of the Catching Handling and Loading Guidelines. To help clarify this in the records, a clause has been added right in the Employee Code of Conduct indicating that employees have read and understood the Catching Handling and Loading Guidelines. In this way, barn employees confirm they have read the guideline, when they sign off on the Employee Code of Conduct.

Producer Website Update

In 2017, EFA is planning to update our producer website with the goal of providing even more helpful, quality information and resources that matter to you. We would love to hear your ideas on how to make the producer website better. Submit your comments to Christina at: christina.robinson@eggs.ab.ca.

Visit EFA's producer website:

www.albertaeggproducers.ca

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

Now it's even easier to subscribe to *EggNotes*! Check out the Publications page on the EFA website to sign-up for a subscription, read the current issue, and even read past issues:

www.eggs.ab.ca/about/publications

"Yolk" of the Month

Guaranteed to crack you up!

Q: What is Santa's favorite drink?

A: Eggnog!



Transition to 67/75 Square Inches by January 1, 2020

EFA would like to remind our farmers of the transition plan we have in place to move all conventional cage densities to the 2003 Code of Practice densities by January 1, 2020. This transition aligns EFA with the EFC's national recommendation, approved by the EFC Board November 2014 "that egg producers be required to meet the minimum conventional cage density of 67 square inches on all flocks placed on or after January 1, 2020."

All conventional and enrichable systems will need to meet the density standards outlined in the 2003 Code of Practice, which requires 67 square inches for white birds and 75 square inches for brown birds as of January 1, 2020. This will effectively phase out grandfathering, which was previously permitted for facilities installed prior to July 7, 2003.

We recognize that there must be a transition time for producers who are currently grandfathered (placing birds at less than 67 square inches for white birds and 75 square inches for brown birds). Therefore, the following transitional rules are available:

- Producers are permitted to temporarily lease out their quota through the quota leasing pool in order to fully comply with the 2003 Code of Practice standards (67 square inches for white birds, 75 square inches for brown birds) until the housing system is materially renovated.
- To allow for proper scheduling of flocks, producers will have until the flock cycle directly prior to January 1, 2020 to lease out or sell any production quota that does not meet the cage density guidelines.
 - Producers are permitted to place quota they must lease-out into reserve for the period between the date of flock disposal until the start of the next quota leasing pool.
- On the flock placement date, directly prior to January 1, 2020, the EFA will automatically transfer any production quota that does not meet the 2003 Code of Practice to the producer's reserve quota. This effectively reduces the issued quota that the producer can place in their production facilities.
- When the lessor has materially renovated his facility, and is ready to place quota previously leased out, the lessor will complete a quota leasing pool opt out form so he is able to re-activate the quota on his next flock change.
 - Producers are permitted to place quota that they are taking back into reserve for the period between the end date of the quota lease until the start of the next quota leasing pool.

If you have any questions about this transition plan, or how it may impact you, please feel welcome to contact EFA.

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*:
February 3, 2017

Watch for your next issue:
February 17, 2017

Upcoming Events

January 4

Grader Advisor Committee Meeting
(Calgary)

January 17

Regional Meeting (Edmonton)

January 18

Regional Meeting (Calgary)

January 19

Regional Meeting (Lethbridge)

January 25

Research Committee Meeting
(Calgary)

February 6

EFA Board Meeting (Calgary)

February 28

EFA Annual General Meeting (Red Deer)

Proposed Updates to the Health of Animals Regulations

The Health of Animals Regulations, which include the transportation of livestock regulations, have been updated and published in the Canada Gazette, Part I. When regulations are published here, it provides Canadians a chance to review the regulations and submit comments before they are enacted.

Here are some highlights from the proposed transportation regulations:

- Training will be required for any person loading, transporting or unloading animals. Training will need to cover animal behaviour, animal handling for the species being transported, as well as risk factors that can impact animal welfare and contingency plans. ****Note that AFAC will be offering a humane poultry transportation workshop early in 2017 – stay tuned for dates!****
- Every person who transports animals will need to have contingency plans in place to address issues such as unforeseen delays, extreme weather and animals that become compromised during transport.
- The proposed maximum transport times (with no access to feed and water) will remain at 72 hours for day old birds, but will reduce from 36 to 24 hours for spent laying hens.
- Proposed transport densities for chickens require that birds not be overcrowded and are able to maintain a squatting or sitting position without coming into contact with the cover of the container.

The complete document outlining the proposed regulation changes can be found at:

<http://gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2016/2016-12-03/html/reg2-eng.php>

Alberta Agri-Food Consultation

The Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future is seeking input related to agri-food and agribusiness value-added production, small business opportunities, and local food production and promotion. This initiative was put forth to "undertake a study of how to grow and diversify the agri-food and agribusiness sectors in the province". Written submissions, which can be submitted online, will be accepted until Sunday, January 15, 2017.

EFA encourages egg farmers and other provincial egg industry stakeholders to participate in this important discussion. This is an excellent opportunity for egg farmers to have their voices heard by the provincial government, as it relates to local food production and the long-term direction of Alberta's agri-food sector.

For more information, or to contribute your online submission, please visit:
www.assembly.ab.ca/committees/abeconomicfuture/GDA/GDA.html

Quota Update

At the November EFC meeting, the EFC Board approved a motion seeking prior approval for a quota increase of 847,887 birds nationally effective January 1, 2017 (week 1/17).

EFC has submitted the appropriate quota order amendments to Farm Products Council of Canada (FPCC) for prior approval. The quota increase will not take effect until EFA has received confirmation that the order has been approved by FPCC and ratified by EFC. At that time, all producers will be notified in writing. Please note that EFA staff and Directors will not provide any information about the quota increase over the phone.

Auditor Updates

NSF-GFTC has had a change with their 3rd Party Auditors who conduct Animal Care Assessments on farms in Alberta. Jason Kielstra is no longer completing 3rd party audits on layer farms and has been replaced by Danni Kneeland (see photo below). Lori Kadylo remains in place as a 3rd Party Auditor for Alberta.

Remember that if a new auditor contacts you to arrange a farm visit, you are encouraged to confirm their identity by requesting government issued photo ID before you allow them access to your farm.



Levy Update

Egg Farmers of Canada's (EFC's) financial projections to the end of 2017 have warranted an increase in levy needed to support the Unrestricted Pooled Income Fund, by \$0.08/dozen. This is a result of higher IP volumes and the lower average levy rate in 2016, partially offset by an increase in leviable birds. Effective January 22, 2017, the EFC levy will be \$0.2575/dozen.

The EFA Board reviewed the 2017 Operational Plan, budget and levy requirements at their December meeting. They set the total provincial levy at \$0.446/dozen effective January 1, 2017, which equates to \$11.346/bird.

Over Base Quota Fee Update

The Over Base Quota fee is set on an annual basis using the following criteria:

- The fee is set as at the beginning of each year
- The annual user fee will be a minimum of \$0.00 and a maximum of \$3.00/bird
- The estimated year-end balance in the Over Base Fund is not to exceed \$500,000

Based on the above criteria, the Over Base Fee for 2016 will be set at \$.30/bird.

2017 Over Base quota statements will be sent out with levy statements by the end of 2016.

EFA Board of Director's Nominations

At EFA's upcoming Annual General Meeting, two seats on the EFA Board of Directors will need to be filled. John Hofer has completed his first three-year term and is eligible for re-election. Joe Kleinsasser has completed two consecutive three-year terms and can remain for one additional three-year term, provided he continues to serve on the EFC Board and he has the support of the Board and the producer membership.

The Board has agreed to support Mr. Kleinsasser to serve as EFC Director for the next three years and will therefore be seeking support from the producers at the AGM.

EFA has filed Plan Regulation amendments to prohibit processors from serving on the Board and to require that all nominations for Directors received in advance of the AGM. Further information regarding these changes will be provided in January.

In December, you will be receiving a nomination package which will include a nomination form. The nomination form must be signed by two different registered producers, and must have signed consent by the nominee. Nomination forms can be delivered to the EFA office via email, fax or by hand and must be received by no later than 14 days prior to the AGM (February 14, 2017).

Government Relations Update

EFA, along with the other members of the Alberta SM5 – Alberta Chicken Producers, Alberta Hatching Egg Producers, Alberta Turkey Producers, and Alberta Milk – hosted a reception for Alberta MLAs on November 2nd at the Federal Building in Edmonton. The Honourable Christina Gray, Minister of Labour, co-hosted the event with the SM5 at the request of the Honourable Oneil Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, who was unfortunately unable to attend.

Well over 30 MLAs representing each of the four major provincial political parties attended the evening reception. It was a tremendous opportunity for Directors and staff members from each of the five supply managed commodity groups to engage the MLAs and help them better understand the passion and commitment that goes into providing all Albertans with affordable, fresh, locally produced dairy and poultry products.

Many fantastic connections were made at the event, and the SM5 looks forward to fostering the working relationships with the provincial government. One positive outcome has already come to fruition as three MLAs – Erin Babcock, Jon Carson and Thomas Dang – were hosted for an egg farm tour at STS Farms, by EFA Vice Chair Susan Schafers. The farm tour was another opportunity to showcase an Alberta egg farm, and discuss various issues of importance to Alberta egg farmers and the provincial egg industry.

Research Update

At EFA's January Regional Meetings, Dr. Clover Bench presented early findings from her study, "Effect of Commercial Housing Type on Laying Hen Welfare and Bone Characteristics." A summary of that project, and information on the Welfare Quality Assessment can be found on the producer website at:

<http://www.albertaeggproducers.ca/information-center/meeting-presentations>

At that meeting, farmers were also presented with a copy of a Welfare Quality Assessment for Layers handbook put together by students at the University of Alberta, and a record keeping book.

As Dr. Bench has now completed the analysis from the project, including data from 16 egg farms throughout Alberta, we wanted to provide farmers with averaged scores for benchmarking purposes. If you have been scoring your flock, these numbers, broken down by housing type, may give you an indication of bird based outcomes and flock management practices you may need to work on. In reflecting on how this compares to what you are seeing with your flock, it is important to remember the small sample size for this study. The data may also give you an excellent idea of what is going well in your flock, and how the variability between your flocks compares to others.

For the clinical scores, each of which is measured from 0-2, the averages were as follows:

	Conventional	Enriched	Aviary	Free Run Floor
Back of Head	0.79	0.92	1.04	1.14
Plumage Damage	1.06	0.75	1.13	1.47
Keel Damage	0.58	0.89	1.32	0.97
Keel Prominence	0.15	0.31	0.45	0.50
Comb Lesions	1.44	0.98	1.32	1.37
Skin Lesions	0.50	0.37	0.41	0.73
Foot Pad	0.86	0.60	0.89	0.90

For the behavioural assessments, average scores were as follows:

	Conventional	Enriched	Aviary	Free Run Floor
Novel Object Test	0.25	0.56	20.75	5.25
Avoidance Distance Test	113.03	107.80	93.04	115.83

Of note, percent mortality did not significantly differ between the housing systems.

Alberta Egg Market Update

The Nielsen retail sales data is available up to November 12, 2016 and indicates that in the latest 4-week period, 2.96 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 4.9% decrease from the previous 4-week period (ending October 15th) and a 1.4% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2015.

Nielsen retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 6.7% over the previous 52 weeks in Alberta, to 38.6 million dozen eggs. Specialty eggs (excluding Omega-3 eggs) have seen the largest sales growth in the last 52 weeks in Alberta; a 10.6% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 3.1 million dozen eggs (8.1% of the total eggs sold in Alberta).

Healthy Communities

EFA would like to invite every Albertan onto a local egg farm, to let them see a modern egg farming operation, to help them better understand where their food comes from and how it was produced. Since it would be impossible to bring everybody to an egg farm, EFA has found a way to bring the egg farm to the public - by installing two live-streaming cameras in the net-zero egg barn at Brant Colony. Now everybody can get a glimpse into an egg barn, by visiting the EFA website:

www.eggs.ab.ca/farming/egg-barn-cameras.

HEALTHY BIRDS

HEALTHY FARMS HEALTHY EGGS

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Healthy Birds

It is natural for chickens to lose feathers each day. In loose housing systems, if you notice feathers begin disappearing from the ground, they are likely being eaten. This can be a sign that something needs to be adjusted in your flock's feed ration, and should be addressed before feather pecking issues arise in your flock.

Healthy Eggs

Egg yolk colour is one way consumers perceive egg quality. While we know that yolk colour is linked to the hen's diet and has little impact on nutrition or quality, variance in yolk colour can lead consumers to wonder if something is wrong with their eggs. Providing consistent yolk colour, throughout the industry, is essential for quality control and consumer satisfaction. Aim for a yolk colour that falls between 6 and 8 on the Roche color scale. EFA can provide Roche scales to those farmers who need them. If you are having issues with your yolk colour, please contact your grader to discuss options.

Healthy Farms

For 2016, the average score on PEEP moved from 68% to 72%. Farmers scored very well on both of the new elements (wash water discharge and cooler insulation), driving an overall increase in scores. Congratulations to all Alberta egg farmers with a passing PEEP assessment in 2016! There are now 26 farmers below (17%), and 128 above (83%) the 60 percent threshold. The lower number of total assessments in 2016 reflects a significant number of barns being renovated, that are not yet in production.

In 2017, there will be only one small change to the PEEP program. Question 3.3 related to manure management will be adjusted to reflect the fact that if you don't have a heat exchanger on your manure belt dryer, drawing internal barn air is an alternative strategy to ensure the use of warm air in the winter. Manure must be stored in a protected facility for full points.

Speakers' Bureau Training

Farm & Food Care Canada is introducing a new speakers' bureau training program, called The Real Dirt on Farming. The sessions are designed for producers and agri-food professionals, to give them the tools to speak up, introduce themselves and their shared values, and ideally share the Real Dirt messaging in their communities.

A session is scheduled for January 17, 2017 in Lethbridge, at the Farm Stewardship Centre. The learn more about the program or to register for the session, visit:

Realdirtontarminglethbridge.eventbrite.ca

If any current or potential Egg Ambassadors are interested in attending this session, please contact David Webb at the EFA office (ext.126).

Volunteers Needed

EFA is a proud member and supporter of the Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP), which has been helping to teach grade 4 students about agriculture since 1985. CAP is a fantastic opportunity for EFA's *Egg Ambassadors* to talk to kids about egg farming, and to help explain where their food comes from. If you are interested in learning more about CAP, please visit:

www.classroomagriculture.com.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact David Webb at the EFA office, to help plan your presentation and prepare for your school visit as a CAP volunteer!

Keeping Salmonella Enteritidis Out of the Layer and Pullet Barns

by Dr. Delores Peters, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

These recommendations for preventing Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) in layer and pullet barns are based on common issues Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF) staff see as we work with producers. Common problems include allowing contamination by manure, not controlling dust, inadequate pest control, and cross contamination from other poultry.

Manure:

SE can survive for up to 90 days in manure pits (unheated) and between 250 and 950 days in soil (depending on soil type, drainage, application). Cool, moist conditions will allow the longest survival. Manure from a contaminated flock is a risk for current and future pullet and layer flocks.

- Store manure downwind, outside the Restricted Access Zone on your farm to reduce flies, rodents and wild birds moving between the manure and the barns. We recommend storing manure 500 meters away from the barns if possible, further is better. At the same time, manure storage set back from water and property lines must be followed. They are available here:
http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=2001_257.cfm&leg_type=Regs&isbncln=9780779778669
- Do not allow any ponds or puddles of standing water close to the barn. Since vehicles, animals (i.e. cats) and people can move around the farm, the roadways around the barns may be contaminated. Prevent manure or contaminated soil from entering the barn by:
- Installing a Danish entry, and ensure that everyone who comes into the barn (including visitors) has clean footwear that always stays in the barn. Visitors could use disposable boots, plastic clogs, washable overshoes or rubber boots.
- Give everyone, including visitors, a coat or coveralls, not only to protect their clothes, but to keep possibly contaminated material from dropping from their clothes in the barn.

Pest control

- Prevent rodents, birds and insects from entering the barn as they can carry manure and bacteria into the barn.
- Use fly traps (lamps, strips and jars) to control and minimize flies.
- Cleaning manure out of the barn frequently will also reduce the flies.
- Keep the area around the barn clean and free from anything that could provide hiding spots for rodents. Use a 3 foot strip of bare ground (gravel, shale) around the barn, and do not store anything in this strip.

Office Furniture for Sale

The following items are available from the EFA office in Calgary.

1 desk: 26" x 44.5", 3 drawers

1 work station: 24" x 72" x 65"

1 hutch: 12.5" x 60.5" x 39", with cupboard and shelves

10 office chairs: adjustable, with purple upholstery

Cost: \$25 per item

Pickup: items must be picked up from the EFA office by January 6, 2017

Please contact Brandy at the EFA office (ext.101) by December 22, 2016, if you are interested in purchasing any of the items listed above.

Happy Holidays



from Egg Farmers of Alberta

- Keep the area around the barn free from food that could attract rodents or birds (especially spilled feed by the bins).

Dust:

SE can survive in dust for more than 140 days. AF staff find dust on walls, under cages, in fans and on fan louvres, feeders, on the top of motors, pipes, wires, fan housing, control box housing. Outdoors, SE can survive in dust in the fan housing and underneath the exhaust fans; and could contaminate shoes, mice and wild birds.

- Remove all dust during cleaning

Poultry:

Infected birds are the most likely source of SE.

Layer Breeders:

- All Canadian layer breeder flocks are tested at least monthly for SE. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry staff do monthly environmental swabs on the layer breeder flocks in Alberta.

Other poultry (broilers, ducks, geese, turkeys):

- Broilers could be a source of SE. As a precaution, treat broiler chicks, from ANY source, as if they are infected with SE.
- Many producers use the broiler barn for ducks or turkeys in a cycle. If the barn becomes contaminated, then the ducks and turkeys can become positive for SE.
- Slaughtering infected meat birds is another time when SE may contaminate meat, equipment and people who are slaughtering the birds.

To protect layers and pullets, treat all meat birds as if they have SE.

- BEST PRACTICE is to keep equipment and staff separate, so that the layer and pullet barns have their own equipment and dedicated staff.
- If you must share staff, go to the layer and pullet barns first before the other barn or slaughter house. Then have a shower and wash hair and completely change clothes before returning to the pullet or layer barns.
- If you must share equipment, including tools, vacuums, containers, tractors or supplies, thoroughly clean, disinfect and allow to completely dry in a clean place before moving the equipment to the layer or pullet barn.

Addressing these issues will help keep the layer and pullet barns free of SE.