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Board of Directors Update

Your Egg Farmers of Alberta (EFA) Board of Directors would like to thank their fellow egg farmers (107 producers!), government and industry representatives, and EFA staff, for the fantastic turnout at our highly successful 44th AGM, which was held on February 26th in Red Deer!

This year the Board welcomes Susan Schafers, from STS Farms, as a new Director. Ben Waldner (Chairman and EFC Director), Joe Kleinsasser (Vice Chairman), Amin Valji (EFC Alternate), Levi Hofer (re-elected for 2nd term) and Muneer Gilani will all continue to serve. On behalf of the EFA Board and staff, we would like to thank outgoing Director Andrew Wipf for three terms (9 years) of outstanding service; your experience and passion for our industry will be missed!

Three motions were passed at the AGM, which the Board will now investigate. The first called on the Board to reduce short/long term investments from \$2.9 million to a maximum of \$1.5 million. The second called on the Board to consider adopting the US standard for SE testing. The third called for no new installations of conventional cages after January 1st, 2018. Stay tuned for further updates at the EFA Regional Meetings in June.

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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

The EFA office will be **closed on Monday, May 20th, for Victoria Day**. We hope this will not cause any inconvenience.

EGG PRICE UPDATE

Effective: from **October 14th, 2012**

Grade A

X Large	\$2.130	↑
Large	\$2.130	↑
Medium	\$1.910	↑
Small	\$1.530	↑
Nest Run	\$2.007	↑
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**

Egg Farmers of Canada (EFC) Updates

Farmer Questionnaire

In February, EFC sent all Canadian egg farmers a questionnaire, to collect information so they can better understand the views of Canada's egg farmers. Using the data from this research, EFC hopes to establish an updated profile of a typical Canadian egg farmer, discover the ways Canadian egg farmers are engaged in social responsibility and improve farmer outreach. If you have not yet completed this survey, please do so before the **April 17th deadline**. EFC will be making a donation on behalf of Canadian egg farmers to Food Banks Canada, for each completed survey that is submitted. The questionnaire can also be completed online, at **www.eggs.ca/farmerquestionnaire**

Risk Management Fund Policy

The EFC Board recently considered and approved an amended policy for the use of the Risk Management Fund (RMF), to cover the gap between SE and AI coverage for producers whose layers have been ordered destroyed as a result of AI. The amendment made the necessity to maintain property, general liability and business continuity insurance a recommendation to producers, rather than a requirement. The RMF will be discussed in more detail at EFA's Regional Meetings in June.

Field Statistics Update

This is how our farmers have done with their Start Clean – Stay Clean (SC-SC) and Animal Care Program (ACP) evaluations, so far in 2013.

- 24 SC-SC layer evaluations have been completed in 2013
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 98.8%
 - ✓ 7 Alberta farmers scored a perfect 100% rating
- 24 ACP evaluations have been completed in 2013
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 99.2%
 - ✓ 22 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating
- 22 SC-SC pullet evaluations have been completed in 2013
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 96.8%
 - ✓ 7 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating

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

EFA PRODUCER WEBSITE

EFA's producer website is a hub of information relating to quota, best production practices, SC-SC and more!

There has been a recent increase in the amount of negative media attention being aimed at supply management and, although we continue to enjoy strong political support at both the federal and provincial level, EFA believes that the egg industry must be vigilant in ensuring that our positive messages are heard by industry, politicians and the public. EFA also believes that a producer-lead grass roots movement is the most effective means of achieving this goal!

EFA has put together several new supply management resources that are now available, under 'Be An Egg Ambassador/Supply Management':

- SM Background
- SM Myth Busters
- Levy 101
- Trade Update

These resources will help you better understand supply management and prepare you for speaking to others in the community about the benefits of the uniquely Canadian system of supply management, the foundation of Canada's prosperous and sustainable egg industry.

Visit EFA's producer website at:

www.albertaeggproducers.ca

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

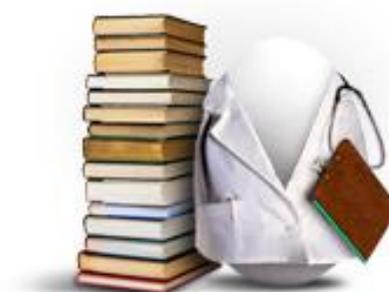
Fatty Liver-Hemorrhagic Syndrome

- *by Poultry Health Services veterinary team, with assistance from Poultry Partners nutritionist, Shawn Fairbairn*

Over the past several months, a number of producers submitted birds to the diagnostic lab with a history of increased mortality. Their stories were similar – "I have a great flock, one of the best I have had in years. As pullets they were doing excellent, the birds were on average 100 grams ahead of chart. The start of production was great and the flock peaked at over 95%. Everything was going well until suddenly mortality began. Birds that died were well developed, sometimes even overweight, with large pale combs and wattles. Why are my birds dying?"

In the diagnostic lab, all of the submitted birds had large blood clots in the abdomen and the livers were enlarged, pale and had hemorrhages. A large amount of fat was present in the abdomen; all of the birds had developed ovaries and usually an egg in the oviduct. All post mortem signs point to Fatty Liver-Hemorrhagic Syndrome (FLHS), a condition which was confirmed by examining the livers under the microscope.

Unfortunately, FLHS is not a disease that we can medicate or vaccinate against. Once this condition is confirmed by your veterinarian, we ask that producers please share the results with their nutritionist. There are many different potential nutritional causes of FLHS that need to be examined and ruled out, in order to successfully remedy the situation. Diets that contain low protein or methionine levels relative to energy, unbalanced protein levels, oxidized or rancid fat, not enough of the B vitamin's biotin, choline and B12 or high levels of canola meal or the mycotoxin Aflatoxin are all known dietary triggers of FLHS in laying hens. It is important to know the cause so that the appropriate treatment can be chosen. Working together, it is possible to narrow down the list of potential causes, to try and manage the situation for the current flock and prepare a plan to prevent similar incidents occurring in future flocks.



EGG FARMING BEST PRACTICE

With spring approaching and bringing with it warmer weather, please be sure the water from melting snow can run away from your barn. Stagnant water can carry Salmonella and provide an environment for other organisms and insects. Areas within 200 feet (60 meters) of the production unit must be free from stagnant water.

BIO-SECURITY TIP

Keep poultry entrance ways and barns locked.

CAP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Many children think that eggs, milk and vegetables come from the grocery store; they don't connect these common products to the chickens, cows and crops in Alberta and they don't understand the role that agriculture plays in their daily lives. The Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP) helps children learn about the food they eat, where it comes from and the importance of agriculture in Alberta.

CAP success relies on the involvement of people who are dedicated to preserving and promoting agriculture. CAP is endorsed by both the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Minister of Education.

To register as a CAP volunteer or for more information, please go to:
www.classroomagriculture.com

Producer Services Update

Pullet Flock History Certificate is Now Required

As of March 19, 2013, the Start Clean – Stay Clean (SC-SC) program requires that any pullet growers selling birds to a registered layer producer must provide a Pullet Flock History Certificate.

The Pullet Flock History Certificate provides layer producers with more detail about the pullet flock, including a history of SE testing, the date of the SC-SC rating and vaccination records. Pullet growers will need to provide a completed certificate to layer producers, whenever a pullet sale is made. Failure to provide this certificate could result in the layer producer losing their SC-SC accreditation.

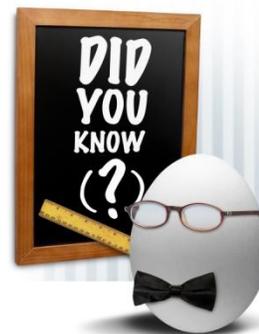
Producers that grow their own pullets on farm will not need to provide this certificate, as it is expected that you will have the supporting records for this information already available.

When buying pullets from a third party, please ensure that they provide you with a certificate when your birds are delivered.

If you need a blank Pullet Flock History Certificate, you can obtain one by:

- Visiting EFA's Producer Website (www.albertaeggproducers.ca), click the 'SC-SC' tab on the menu and click 'SC-SC Pullets', then click the link for the Pullet Flock History Certificate.
- Asking EFA Field Services staff (Murray or Dave) for one the next time they are visiting your farm.
- Contacting the EFA office to have one sent to you via email or mail.

If you have any questions about the new Pullet Flock History Certificate, please contact Dave Lastiwka by phone (Ext.132) or email (dave.lastiwka@eggs.ab.ca). Thank you for your cooperation with this change!



UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

April 22

EFC Provincial Board Consultations
Ottawa

April 23

EFC Board Governance
Ottawa

April 24

EFC Board Strategic Planning
Ottawa

April 28 – May 5

Urner Barry Conference
Las Vegas, NV

May 2

EFA SM Champions Training
Calgary

May 8

EFA PMC Meeting
Calgary

May 14

EFA Board Meeting
Calgary

May 15

APIEMT Meeting
Edmonton

June 11

EFA Regional Meeting
Edmonton

June 12

EFA Regional Meeting
Calgary

June 13

EFA Regional Meeting
Lethbridge

Food Safety in the Kitchen

As an egg farmer, you work every day to produce safe, fresh, locally produced eggs for your fellow Albertans. From the bio-security measures you take as you enter your barn, to keeping your birds healthy, to properly storing the eggs at just the right temperature – so much of what you do is dedicated to ensuring food safety. The responsibility of ensuring food safety doesn't stop at the farm gate; here are some food safety tips from Health Canada, to help maintain egg quality and freshness at home. You can share this information with your farm gate customers:

Shop Carefully – When you are buying eggs, choose only refrigerated eggs with clean and uncracked shells. You should check the “best before” date on the package. Remember to pick up eggs at the end of your shopping so they are not exposed to room temperature for an extended period of time.

Storing Eggs – Eggs should be refrigerated as soon as possible in their original carton in the coldest section of the refrigerator, usually the body of the fridge; eggs should not be kept in the refrigerator door. The carton helps protect eggs from damage and from absorbing other food odors.

Eggs (whether raw or cooked) should not be kept at room temperature for more than two hours. Eggs that have been at room temperature for more than two hours should be thrown out. Foods spoil quickly in the danger zone temperature range of 4°C to 60°C (40°F to 140°F).

Don't crack the shell of an egg until you want to use it. Hard-cooked eggs, in shell or peeled, and pickled eggs can be stored in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to one week. Hard-cooked yolks should be used within five days. Cold egg dishes and drinks should be kept on ice.

Keep Clean – Remember to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds and wash utensils, cutting boards, counters and knives carefully with soap and warm water, before and after handling raw eggs. This helps avoid potential cross contamination and can help prevent the spread of food-borne illness.

Cook Thoroughly – When you are cooking eggs and egg-based foods, make sure they are cooked thoroughly to at least 74°C (165°F), to ensure they are safe to eat. Foods containing raw or lightly cooked eggs may be harmful to vulnerable people, such as young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weak immune systems.

Serve egg dishes immediately after cooking and refrigerate leftovers in air-tight containers within two hours. Eat within three to four days.

Source: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/kitchen-cuisine/eggs-oeufs-eng.php>

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*:
May 24th, 2013

Next issue of *EggNotes*:
June 7th, 2013

“YOKES” OF THE MONTH



Guaranteed to crack you up!

Q: Why was the chicken thrown out of the baseball game?

A: They suspected fowl play!

Q: Where do you find a chicken with no legs?

A: Right where you left it!

Effective Use of Vaccines

EFA recently completed a study to evaluate the cost VS benefit of using vaccines (in combination with good bio-security) to control various poultry diseases. The results of the study are still being analyzed for their full implications, but there are some immediate points worth noting:

- Stronger vaccination protocols are necessary in areas where disease risk is high. This includes areas where there is a history of disease, there are neighboring poultry barns, or there is a high bird density in the local area.
- Marek's Disease (MD) is everywhere and it will seriously impact any producer who does not vaccinate against it. There are three MD vaccines typically used in Alberta: HVT, SB-1 and Rispens. While producers may be tempted to reduce costs by vaccinating only with HVT, this is generally considered to be an absolute minimum level of protection. Losses of 5-10% have been seen because of failure to vaccinate with Rispens. Further, the addition of the SB-1 vaccine should be seriously considered. A combination of vaccines provides broader and more complete protection.
- Vaccination for Newcastle Disease (ND) is also critical, since this is also a very common disease. However, while live vaccination for ND during lay is sometimes practiced, vets consulted recommended against it. Vaccine reactions can occur and the live vaccine can become a source of the disease, which can spread to other flocks. Live vaccine protocols that are completed by week 16 are preferred.
- There are three important types of vaccines for Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT): CEO, TCO and Recombinant vaccines. Historically, CEO ILT vaccines have been used most commonly in Canada, as they provide long-term protection, which is an advantage in layer flocks. However, CEO vaccines can result in outbreaks of ILT if vaccination is not consistent across an entire area. Since CEO vaccines represent a risk (and are banned in Manitoba and the Maritimes) and TCO vaccines only provide short-term protection, Recombinant vaccines – though more expensive – may be a good alternative.

A good way for producers to ensure they are getting the right coverage for their flock is to talk to their hatchery, pullet grower and veterinarian.

GROWING FORWARD 2

Growing Forward 2 (GF2) came into effect on April 1st, 2013, with several producer programs opening up or application. The following programs of relevance to Alberta's egg farmers can now be accessed:

On-Farm Energy Management – covers producer investments that improve energy use on farm and the installation of submeters to ensure awareness of energy use.

On-Farm Stewardship – helps producers implement projects and management practices that have direct and positive impact on water quality. An example would be improved manure storage.

On-Farm Water Management – provides technical assistance for producers to complete a Long-Term Water Management Plan (LTWMP) and shares the cost of related enhancements to on-farm water supply.

Programs related to Bio-Security, Animal Welfare and Food Safety will be opening soon.

Producers considering making any improvements to their operation are encouraged to contact Growing Forward, to learn more about possible funding opportunities.

GF2 Website:

www.growingforward.alberta.ca

Phone:

310-FARM

Calgary CO-OP AGM – Motion Against Conventional Eggs

On March 11th, several EFA Board Directors and staff attended the Calgary CO-OP AGM, where a member-sponsored motion was up for consideration, which had the potential to impact Alberta's egg industry. The motion calls for Calgary CO-OP to phase-out eggs from hens raised in conventional cages, within 5 years (the original motion was 3 years, but an amendment was approved). When put to a vote, the motion passed 97-67 (59% voted yes). This non-binding motion directs the Calgary CO-OP Board of Directors to investigate the feasibility of enacting such a plan.

The people behind the motion (which also called for phasing-out of pork from sows raised in gestation stalls) used inaccurate propaganda to emotionally persuade the AGM attendees to vote in favor of the motion. Not only did they point to similar moves away from conventional cages in Europe and the United States, but they also portrayed egg farmers using conventional cages as being cruel and unethical. Both Ben Waldner and Susan Gal did a fantastic job presenting the industry's perspective, making the vote much closer than it likely would have been.

As expected, there has been significant media interest in this story. EFA has been involved in stories done by The Calgary Herald, CBC Radio Canada, CBC Calgary, City TV Calgary, Global Calgary (also carried on Global National), Beacon News and Alberta Primetime (on CTV Calgary). Unfortunately, most stories have been primarily interested in the financial impact such a policy would have on industry, in an attempt to make the story one about 'ethical food VS cheap food'. Media has also continued to refer to the motion as a move to 'cage-free' eggs, when in fact the motion only called for a transition from conventional cage production to production from alternative housing systems (which should include enriched housing).

Egg Farmers of Alberta have been stressing 4 key points at every opportunity we've had to address this issue:

1. The Alberta egg industry has been moving away from conventional cages for a number of years, both in response to changing consumer demands and as evidenced by the motion passed at the EFA AGM.
2. Nobody is more dedicated to high quality animal care than Alberta's egg farmers, regardless of the housing system they use to raise their hens.
3. Any transition away from conventional cages must include both cage (enriched) and cage-free (free-run, aviary, free-range) alternatives.
4. Any transition away from conventional cages must be done on a timeline that is acceptable to Alberta's egg farmers, ensuring that there is a stable supply of locally produced eggs and that the industry can maintain its profitability and sustainability.

Continued on Page 8...

CALGARY CO-OP AGM,
Continued from Page 7...

In addition to the numerous interview requests, EFA published an official media release, which can be found on our consumer website (www.eggs.ab.ca/media), as well as our producer website. EFA also sent a formal letter to the Calgary CO-OP Board of Directors, encouraging them to work together with industry and their supply chain partners, to find a solution that would be equitable, profitable and sustainable for all key stakeholders. EFA looks forward to working with Calgary CO-OP.

ALBERTA EGG MARKET UPDATE

The Nielson preliminary retail sales data is available up to March 9th, 2013 and indicates that in the latest 4-week period, 2.7 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 2.3% increase from the previous 4-week period (ending February 9th) and a 3.1% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2012.

Nielson retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 2.9% 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 23.7% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 1.8 million dozen eggs (5.3% of the total eggs sold in Alberta).

Marketing Update

EFA Supply Management Champions

As first mentioned at our AGM, EFA is preparing a team of Alberta egg farmers to be *supply management champions*, to help spread positive messaging about the benefits of the uniquely Canadian system of supply management. Our industry has prospered for over forty years under supply management and, over that time, our farmers have taken a great deal of pride in having the honour and responsibility of feeding Albertan families. Alberta egg farmers provide a world class, nutritious and delicious, sustainable local supply of fresh eggs – it is time for Alberta consumers and politicians to hear our story! Stay tuned for information and tips about how you too can share your story with friends, politicians and consumers!

Upcoming Events

Come visit the EFA booth at these *EGG*cellent events:

- **Aggie Days Calgary**
Calgary (BMO Centre, Stampede Park), April 10th – 14th
- **Mom, Pop & Tot Fair**
Edmonton (Expo Centre), April 12th & 13th
- **Calgary Women's Show**
Calgary (BMO Centre, Stampede Park), April 20th & 21st
- **Aggie Days Lethbridge**
Lethbridge (Exhibition Park), April 23rd & 24th
- **Health & Wellness Show**
Edmonton (Commonwealth Community Rec Centre), May 4th & 5th

EFA 2013 Highlights

- Total # of events attended: 13
- Total # of events sponsored: 43
- Total # of school presentations: 32
- Total # of resources distributed: 41,937
- Total # of promotional items distributed: 19,993

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 (Ext. 126) or Catherine Kelly (Ext. 128).