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Board of Directors Update

Your Egg Farmers of Alberta (EFA) Board is excited to announce that they have adopted a hen housing policy that will transition the province's egg industry away from conventional cages, in a systematic and financially viable manner. This policy will be integrated into EFA's Animal Care Policy, entrenching EFA's authority to regulate hen housing in the province of Alberta.

While farmers already raising hens in conventional cages will be able to continue to do so, **no new conventional or enrichable cage systems will be allowed to be installed in Alberta after December 31, 2014.** Any farmer continuing to operate a conventional cage system must also continue to comply with established national standards, which are based on the Code of Practice. Alberta's egg farmers will continue to provide consumers with a wide variety of high quality, nutritious, locally produced eggs, while having the freedom to choose from several acceptable hen housing systems, including furnished, free-run, aviary or free-range. EFA considers this new policy to be a natural evolution for the egg industry in Alberta, ensuring a sustainable egg industry for future generations.

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

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, October 14th, for Thanksgiving**. 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 ---

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.

Farm Security Reminder

EFA would like to advise producers that animal activist groups have been active in Alberta, even resorting to undercover investigating. EFA wants to remind producers to ensure strict adherence to animal care best practices, by all those who work with your egg laying hens. Every producer must also be extra vigilant with hiring employees.

To protect your farm further, EFA asks that you take the following measures:

- If any media come to your farm, DO NOT allow them access to your farm or barns. Remain calm, explain that bio-security practices are in place to keep your hens healthy and that no visitors are allowed into the barn. If they have questions about egg farming, they should contact Egg Farmers of Alberta. If possible, please record their name, phone number, and the media outlet they work for. Inform the EFA office immediately.
- Keep your barn doors locked.
- If you have a farm gate or chain at your driveway, keep it closed.
- If you see any suspicious behavior on or around your farm, call your local RCMP.

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.

- 111 SC-SC layer evaluations have been completed in 2013
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 98.6%
 - ✓ 46 Alberta farmers scored a perfect 100% rating
- 111 ACP evaluations have been completed in 2013
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 99.4%
 - ✓ 71 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating
- 92 SC-SC pullet evaluations have been completed in 2013
 - ✓ Alberta's average score: 97.2%
 - ✓ 40 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 great place to visit for information about your industry, including best production practices, hen housing, upcoming events and more!

The following resources are now available on the producer website:

- "LED Lighting – Factors to Consider" highlights some key topics, such as color spectrum, depreciation and compatibility, which should be discussed with your lighting provider.
- "Life Cycle Analysis Carbon Footprint Tool" allows producers to input information about their operation, such as feed and energy use, then provides information on the environmental impact of their layer operation, compares their impact to the industry average and provide models for the impact of any changes being considered.

Visit EFA's producer website at:
www.albertaeggproducers.ca

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

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

Separate Designation for SE Testing of Multi-Age Facilities

For the purpose of SE testing, multi-age facilities in Alberta are sampled and tested as one unit, unless there is full segregation of the flocks. EFA has developed the following criteria, together with Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development (ARD), in order to consistently determine if two lay facilities in one building can be designated as "separate".

Barns will be considered "separate" if ARD deems that all of the following criteria are met:

1. Separate airspaces and separate ventilation systems. Attic airspaces may be shared only if a) negative pressure both barns can be demonstrated and b) there are no openings that allow spray or dust to enter the attic from the barn and c) air intakes do not take air from the attic.
2. If there are common doors between the barns, then they must remain locked and sealed shut during the entire period of lay.
3. Separate egg collection systems and egg belts. The egg belt from one barn must not pass through the other barn.
4. Separate manure handling systems. This means the same manure belt does not go into both barns and manure from one barn does not pass through the other barn. If the manure belt does go under both barns, then the following criteria must be met: a) there are properly fitted covers over the entire channel b) covers are in place when the belt is running c) only belts from one barn are run at a time and d) the entire manure handling system is completely cleaned and disinfected between cycles.
5. Strict bio-security between barns. Coveralls and boots are always changed between barns. Hands are always washed before entering barns, or fresh gloves worn. Masks, if used, must be changed between barns. Equipment must always be cleaned and disinfected before being shared between barns. There must be a designated area before entering each barn to allow for changing of boots and coveralls.
6. Effective rodent and insect control. There must be minimal evidence of rodents or insects within the barns, lobbies or passageways. There must be a documented monitoring program that demonstrates a history of rodent and insect control and evidence of interventions made.
7. Good overall site bio-security. All bio-security protocols for visitors, equipment, water, feed and other animal and bird species must be in compliance with the Start Clean Stay Clean program.

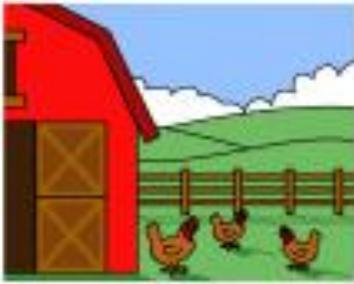
EGG FARMING BEST PRACTICE

With fall here and winter approaching, please remember to complete ammonia tests in your layer and pullet facilities on a monthly basis. This is a requirement from October to April. Please record each test in your SC-SC records.

BIO-SECURITY TIP

Conduct business (ie: egg sales) away from the production area(s).

CLASSIFIED ADS



#1) For Sale:

Loman White pullets
19 weeks on October 28th
Contact:
Dan Entz @ Homeland Colony
780-837-8944 x712

#2) For Sale:

5-tonne Wheatland Bins
4 bins available, with crank gates,
spring loaded lids, no rust or dents
Contact:
Levi Hofer @ New York Colony
403-892-1877

Separate Designations for SE Testing... Continued from Page 3

8. There are separate lobbies for each barn. Barns with shared lobbies will be considered "separate" only if criteria # 1 -3 are met and if criteria # 4-7 satisfy the ARD inspector.

If SE is detected in one barn and additional barns on the site are considered "separate", then the "separate" barns will not be depopulated. They will undergo enhanced testing once every four weeks until the positive barn has been depopulated, cleaned and tested negative. If, at any time, there is a documented lack of rodent or beetle control, or a lack of bio-security between "separate" barns as determined by an ARD inspector, then the barns may lose their separate designation and be considered "shared".

Changes to the Start Clean – Stay Clean (SC-SC) Program

Egg Farmers of Canada's (EFC) Board of Directors approved 3 changes to the SC-SC program at their July meeting. These changes will go into effect as of January 9, 2014.

SC-SC Layer Program Changes

1. Pharmaceutical Use: A new element has been added that requires the feed supplier to record any medication used in feed. A new pharmaceutical record is available to help record more complete information on medications, including what medication was given, when and how it was administered, whether it was prescribed by a vet and detail on withdrawal times. This new element is worth 2 points.
2. Rodent Trap Frequency: A revised element which adds requirements for any producers using a service provider to manage their pest control. Service providers must visit the production facility a minimum of once a month, provide a report indicating the number of rodents captured, and provide a plan of action if the report shows an increase in activity. The plan of action must be implemented by the producer. These records must be available for review by the SC-SC inspector. Producers who manage their own pest control program are still required to monitor their traps and bait stations weekly.

SC-SC Pullet Program Changes

1. Pullet Perches: A revised element which adds an alternative to installing tumble bars or similar deterrents on waterers in free run barns, to prevent roosting. If waterers are designed in a way to not be affected by fecal fouling, this will now be allowable. There is no point change to this element.

UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

October 17

Western Meeting
Calgary

October 18

Research Committee Meeting
EFA Office, Calgary

October 22-24

University of Alberta's Regional
Workshops for Egg Producers
Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge

November 2

Agriculture for Life's Harvest Gala
Edmonton

November 5

CEIRA Board Meeting
Ottawa

November 12

EFA Board Meeting
EFA Office, Calgary

November 27

Production Management
Committee Meeting
EFA Office, Calgary

December 12-13

EFA Board Meeting
EFA Office, Calgary

Aggressive Feather Pecking and Plumage Damage

- *by Teryn Gilmet and Dr. Clover Bench, University of Alberta*

Feather pecking occurs when a hen pecks at the feathers of another hen, plucking them and creating plumage damage. It is assessed via three body parts: the back, belly, and head & neck. Feather pecking and plumage damage can lead to increased feed consumption, reduced egg production, and increased mortality. It can also reinforce further feather pecking and eventually lead to cannibalism. Though present in all housing systems, alternative housing systems have been found to increase the risk of feather pecking in layer hens. Feather pecking and subsequent plumage damage is an ongoing welfare concern and can create economic losses for producers.

Plumage Damage Assessment

According to the Welfare Quality® assessment protocol for laying hens, feather plumage can be evaluated using the following scoring system:

- A: No or slight wear. Nearly complete feathers, only single feathers lacking.
- B: Moderate wear. One or more featherless areas less than 5cm in diameter or presence of damaged feathers.
- C: At least one featherless area greater than 5cm in diameter.

Possible Causes of Aggressive Feather Pecking

Feather pecking in hens is a multi-factorial problem that occurs in conventional and alternative housing. It stems from interactions between the bird, environment, and management variables. Two major factors are:

Barren Environment: Foraging is a behavioural need of hens. The underlying motivation of feather pecking is believed to be redirected foraging behaviour. While hens receive all of their nutritional needs, the behavioural need of foraging may not be met in feeds that only require a short amount of time to eat. A housing system with little enrichment is also likely to increase feather pecking in hens as exploratory and foraging behaviours are not satisfied.

Overcrowding: UEP-HSUS guidelines recommend a minimum 67 to 144 sq. inches per hens in cages. Higher stocking densities are typically associated with larger flock sizes, both of which increase feather pecking behaviour in hens. High stocking densities increase contact between hens and reduces the ability of birds to perform natural behaviours such as foraging or dust bathing. Stress and frustration can also increase pecking behaviour.

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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, 2013

Next issue of *EggNotes*:
December 20th, 2013

"YOKES" OF THE MONTH



Guaranteed to crack you up!

Q: What do you call a hen that's afraid of her shadow?

A: Chicken!

Q: Why did the chicken cross the basketball court?

A: Because the referee kept calling fowl!

Aggressive Feather Pecking... Continued from Page 5

Possible Solutions to Aggressive Feather Pecking

While beak treatment is one solution to feather pecking, some housing management variables can also be used to reduce feather pecking. Some possible solutions are:

Bedding and Foraging Material: A feed or feeding regime that satisfies the hen's behavioural need to forage will decrease feather pecking. Bedding and foraging material are the most effective method for reducing feather pecking.

Lighting: Cage lighting can stimulate or inhibit feather pecking. Lower light intensity can help reduce feather pecking. Some studies have also investigated light colour and found that red light may also decrease feather pecking.

Perches: Perches can reduce the presence of feather pecking if hens are able to get away from each other. In particular, higher perches allow for subordinate birds to avoid more dominant birds (especially if floor fed).

Enrichment: Many studies have shown that adding enrichment to a hen housing system reduces feather pecking. Dust baths and/or hanging novel objects such as tin foil, tissue paper, felt paper, chain devices or string, have been found to reduce feather pecking in hens.

Plumage Colour: Hens with white feathers experience less feather pecking than darker feathered birds. It was also found that white hens deliver the most severe feather pecks.

Take Home Message

Feather pecking is a significant animal welfare and economic concern that is applicable to all types of laying hen housing systems. Environmental management and organization greatly affect the presence of feather pecking in laying hens. In order to achieve optimal laying hen welfare and production, producers should encourage the natural foraging behaviour of hens through various management strategies.

International research in this area of layer hen welfare is ongoing, to better understand how management in cage-free housing systems impacts hen welfare and how welfare can be increased in all housing systems.

GROWING FORWARD 2: MANURE MANAGEMENT

Growing Forward 2 is currently accepting applications under the Confined Feeding Operation (CFO) Stewardship Program. Manure Treatment (composting) is an eligible cost under the program.

Composting manure reduces the volume to be transported, and results in more efficient use of manure nutrients. Examples of costs covered include:

- Specialized compost mixing or aeration equipment (ie: windrow turner)
- Monitoring equipment (for temperature, moisture and oxygen)
- Windrow covers, water tanks or other watering equipment
- Compost bagging equipment
- Conventional farm equipment (ie: tractor with bucket, skidsteer, loaders)
- Custom composting services
- Operation or maintenance costs, and equipment upgrades
- Purchase of additives or other feedstock to supplement composting process
- Transportation of manure or compost
- Laboratory analysis fees

The cost-sharing is 50% government and 50% applicant, up to a maximum of \$30,000.

Research Update

EFA, through our participation in the Intensive Livestock Working Group (ILWG), is participating in the Alberta Phosphorus Watershed Project.

Nutrients in manure and inorganic fertilizers benefit crop production; however, surface runoff can wash valuable crop nutrients into streams and water bodies if nutrients are not managed effectively. Excess nutrients in streams can lead to water quality concerns, including excess plant and algae growth, fish die-offs, and odours. The adoption of beneficial management practices (BMPs) can reduce or minimize nutrient loss from agricultural operations.

ARD and the ILWG have initiated a three-year watershed study to develop and test a phosphorus risk management tool. The Alberta Phosphorus Management Tool will provide producers with BMP suggestions to reduce nutrient loss from their farms. The tool will be used to assess the risk of phosphorus loss and prioritize BMPs on environmental effectiveness and cost. This will provide options to get the best value.

The project team will work directly with producers to evaluate the Alberta Phosphorus Management Tool on-the-ground in two agricultural watersheds: Acme Creek near Acme and Tindastoll Creek near Penhold. These watersheds were selected based on the diversity of livestock production and watershed characteristics. The tool will be evaluated in terms of ease of use and its effectiveness in identifying and addressing risk. Egg farmers identified in the boundary areas may be contacted by a project lead to gauge their interest in participating in the study.

Farm Safety

Farming is a dangerous occupation, with many different hazards. As an egg farmer, how do you identify and mitigate risks?

ARD is looking for support in testing a new farm safety risk management plan. They are looking at holding two workshops; the first would be during the week of January 6-10 and the second would be during the week of February 24-28, 2014. Each workshop would be one day, likely in Leduc. In between workshops, participants would be required to work on a plan with all stakeholders on their farm. Participating farmers would be paid expenses and a per diem to attend the workshops.

If you have a particular interest in improving farm safety and would like to participate, please contact Jenna Griffin at extension 129, or by email at jenna.griffin@eggs.ab.ca.

MEDIUM EGG WORKSHOP

The Poultry Research Centre (PRC) has been working with Alberta egg farmers, to determine common causes of surplus medium eggs. All Alberta egg farmers are now invited by the PRC to enjoy free registration to a workshop that explores medium egg production. Workshops will be held:

- Edmonton: Tuesday, October 22nd, at the Alberta Chicken Producers Poultry Technology Centre, University of Alberta South Campus (6003 118 St)
- Calgary: Wednesday, October 23rd, at the Prince of Peace Manor Community Centre (285030 Luther Rose Blvd NE)
- Lethbridge: Thursday, October 2nd, at the German Canadian Club (902 6 St N)

The workshops will run from 9:30am to 2:15pm, and will include presentations on managing feed, nutrition, lessons from an Alberta egg farmer, value in managing egg size, and top 10 management tips.

If you have any questions, or would like to register for the workshops, please contact:

Valerie Carney: 780-415-2269 or Valerie.Carney@gov.ab.ca

Brenda Schneider: 780-415-0827 or Brenda.Schneider@gov.ab.ca

www.regonline.ca/albertaeggs

Environmental Farming

As you likely know from EFA's Annual General Meeting in February and previous Regional Meetings, EFA has completed a Life Cycle Analysis of egg production in Alberta, in conjunction with Quantis and ARD. Consumers are more interested than ever in learning about the environmental impacts of the foods they buy and EFA is aware that farmers want to improve their on-farm environmental performance. Through this project, EFA is looking to help enable producers to remain competitive, adaptive and responsive to consumer interests.

One way EFA has added value to this project for producers is by creating an On-Farm Footprinter Tool that producers can access to input production related information, in order to get a picture of where they stand in relation to the average Alberta farm. The tool is now available on the EFA producer website! Producers are able to save their profile and monitor changes to their farm over time. The tool also allows producers to test "what-if" scenarios for evaluating possible on-farm improvements.

EFA encourages producers to visit the EFA producer website and test out the tool. At the January 2014 Regional Meetings, a hard copy will be provided to all producers and there will be a walk through about how to use the tool and capture benefits. Further work will also include an economic evaluation of the tool's recommendations.

Agricultural Operation Practices Act (AOPA) Update

In Alberta, manure management records are required for manure production, manure application and manure transfer. Under AOPA, anyone who handles 500 tonnes or more manure per year must keep records for a minimum of five years. While manure output differs from species to species, 500 tonnes of manure a year equates to an operation with about 565 beef cows/finishers, or 20 lactating dairy cows, or 375 finisher pigs; poultry numbers vary by the type of bird.

Producers are responsible for keeping all necessary records. Assistance to producers in understanding the requirements for record keeping is available through ARD. If producers need more information, or if they would like a copy of the record keeping books, they can contact their location Confined Feeding operation Extension Specialist by calling 310-FARM (3276).

ALBERTA EGG MARKET UPDATE

The Nielson preliminary retail sales data is available up to August 24th, 2013 and indicates that in the latest 4-week period, 2.6 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 3.9% increase from the previous 4-week period (ending July 27th) and a 5.2% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2012.

Nielson retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 2.4% over the previous 52 weeks in Alberta, to 33.8 million dozen eggs! Specialty eggs (excluding Omega-3 eggs) have seen the largest sales growth in the last 52 weeks in Alberta; a 16.4% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 1.9 million dozen eggs (5.6% 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 once again surpass our fundraising goal!

EFA's CIBC Run for the Cure team has raised \$4,460 to date, to help the Foundation continue to fund breast cancer research, education and awareness programs, making a difference here in Alberta and across the country!

EFA was honored to have the Mayor of Calgary, Naheed Nenshi, come by our booth to collect his EFA swag bag. Here he is pictured with Jade Cozier, one of EFA's *eggceptional* event staff members!



Upcoming Events

Come visit the EFA booth at these *EGGcellent* events:

- **Canfit Pro**
Calgary (University of Calgary), October 19th
- **Edmonton Women's Show**
Edmonton (Northlands, Expo Centre, Hall A), October 19th & 20th

EFA 2013 Highlights

- Total # of events attended: 26
- Total # of events sponsored: 100
- Total # of school/health presentations: 62
- Total # of resources distributed: 152,138
- Total # of promotional items distributed: 92,645

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