

EggNotes

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Fields Services Coordinator: Murray Minchin
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EFA Vision Statement

Healthy Food, Healthy Farms,
Healthy Families

EFA Mission Statement

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

EFA Office Hours

Office will be closed Monday, September 3 for
Labour Day

Egg Price Update

Effective May 27, 2018

Canada Grade	Size	Price Per Dozen	
A	Extra Large	2.20	↑
A	Large	2.20	↑
A	Medium	1.970	↑
A	Small	1.600	↑
A	Nest Run	2.073	↑
A	Pee Wee	0.270	-
B		0.750	-
C		0.150	-

Note: 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.

EggNotes is the official newsletter of

Egg Farmers of Alberta.

Submissions should be sent to:

info@eggs.ab.ca

Next Issue: September 14, 2018

Note: EggNotes can be accessed on the EFA website (both full issue PDF and blog posts) or EFA's producer website



EFA Board Update

Your Egg Farmers of Alberta Board of Directors would like to remind producers about the importance of public trust, as a vital component of building a sustainable egg industry.

Despite having enjoyed over a decade of growth, adhering to world class on-farm food safety and animal welfare programs, and being committed to continuous improvement, maintaining trust in our eggs and egg farming practices is a delicate endeavor.

Canadian consumers have a growing desire to learn more about where their food comes from and how it was produced, while activist groups seek to damage the credibility of the egg industry, to force a shift away from animal agriculture. As we witnessed with the recent undercover videos released in B.C., having just a single barn not performing up to expectations can undermine our collective efforts, and erode the public trust that is so vital to our success.

The EFA Board strongly believes that throughout Alberta and across the country, the egg industry is only as strong as our weakest link. In addition to passing the mandatory Animal Care Program and Start Clean – Stay Clean™ program, and being prepared for 3rd party audits, it is imperative that every egg barn in the province is ‘camera ready’ at all times.

As an egg farmer, how would you feel if photos or video footage from inside your barn were released? Would you be able to defend the conditions of your barn and your farming practices? Are you prepared to open your barn doors to welcome reporters or the public into your operation? Would you be proud of your barn and how you care for your laying hens?

Ensuring your egg barn is always ‘camera ready’ is a significant responsibility. However, with public trust and the long-term sustainability of the egg industry at stake, it is a responsibility that every egg farmer must be willing to embrace!



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Egg Farmers of Alberta



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HEALTHY BIRDS

HEALTHY FARMS HEALTHY EGGS

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Field Statistics Update

We are now over half-way through the year and would like to provide an update on how farmers are doing with their on-farm programs in 2018:

164 PEEP evaluations have been completed in 2018

- o Average score: 76.33%

66 SC-SC Layer evaluations have been completed so far in 2018

- o Alberta's average score: 98.30%
- o 51 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating

85 Animal Care Program evaluations have been completed in 2018

- o Alberta's average score: 99.98%
- o 83 facilities have received a rating of 100%

44 SC-SC Pullet evaluations have been completed in 2018

- o Alberta's average score: 99.51%
- o 32 Alberta Pullet Growers have scored a perfect 100% rating
- o 22 pullet growers have received accreditation or re-accreditation in the SC-SC Pullet program this year. Pullet growers in Alberta doing a fantastic job preparing for the mandatory requirement, effective January 1, 2019, that all egg farmers purchase pullets from a grower accredited in the SC-SC Pullet program.

Thank-you to farmers for your commitment and hard work each and every day to ensure that safe, quality eggs are produced humanely.



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Healthy Farms



New Resource Available for Managing Flocks in Loose Housing

Managing flocks in loose housing systems presents a unique set of challenges, for farmers both experienced and new to this type of flock system.

Egg Farmers of Alberta has just published a new guide that pulls together tips, advice and monitoring techniques collected from our farmers, industry experts, and scientific research.

As new information comes forward for managing flocks in loose housing systems this guide will be updated, evolving as our industry learns more about managing flocks in loose systems.

To view the guide on Managing Flocks in Loose Housing Systems visit the Producer Website and go to Animal Care, Hen Housing or contact our office.

<http://www.albertaeggproducers.ca/userfiles/files/Managing%20Flocks%20in%20a%20Loose%20Housing%20System%20Guide%20V1.pdf>

Mass Depopulation Committee Update

The Mass Depopulation Committee met on August 1st. It was determined that the Board will work to develop veterinarian approved Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for large MAC carts, small MAC carts, sea container gassing, and whole barn gassing. The work will occur this fall and the SOPs should be available to Alberta egg farmers later this year or early next. We are expecting revised AVMA euthanasia guidelines to be released in the fall and the newly developed/revised SOPs will ensure that farmers are able to meet the standards.



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AgSafe Alberta AGM

On June 28th, the newly formed AgSafe Alberta held its first AGM. Both Minister of Labour Christina Gray and Minister of Agriculture Oneil Carlier attended the meeting and brought greetings from the Government. Both Minister Gray and Oneil noted the importance of a Hazard Assessment as a foundation for starting out with farm safety planning. Jody Wacowich was announced as the new Executive Director for the organization, starting August 1, 2018.



Producers can view a video of the AGM in its entirety at <https://vimeo.com/279157158>

After the AGM, Alberta Labour representative Ross Nairne (Executive Director, Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Program Development) provided a presentation and technical briefing on the new Occupational Health and Safety Requirements for Farms and Ranches in Alberta. To view the Alberta Labour technical briefing presentation please click on the following link:

OHS Presentation: <https://vimeo.com/279152746>

(Password: AgSafe2018)

Both videos can also be found on the AgSafe Alberta website at: <https://www.agsafeab.ca/about-us-2/>

Upcoming Events

August 29 - 50th Anniversary Celebration
(Wild, Wild West Event Centre, Calgary)



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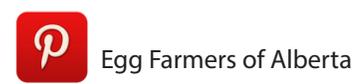
Healthy Eggs

Clean Eggs are Healthy Eggs

Keeping the eggs produced in your barn clean is important for food safety. Dirty eggs can be a gateway for bacteria like salmonella to enter the egg and potentially cause food poisoning if not cooked thoroughly. Preventing eggs from getting dirty is the ideal approach. We have compiled some tips for keeping eggs clean:

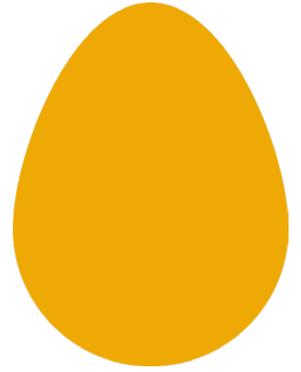
- Collect eggs early and frequently to reduce the window of opportunity for soiling. Most hens will lay within a few hours of the lights coming on in the morning - it is best to collect the eggs as soon as possible after they are laid. Collecting eggs at least twice daily is advisable
- Maintain a clean environment and keep equipment clean.
- In Loose Housing
 - o Prevent floor eggs as much as possible. For tips on preventing floor eggs see EFA's new resource on Managing Flocks in Loose Housing systems. (link to <http://www.albertaeggproducers.ca/userfiles/files/Managing%20Flocks%20in%20a%20Loose%20Housing%20System%20Guide%20V1.pdf>)
 - o Keep litter dry and friable. Clean out wet litter so that birds feet remain clean and less likely to soil eggs.
 - o Close nest boxes at night and ensure that no perches extend into the nest area.
- Prevent diarrhea in your hens!
 - o Vaccinate hens to protect them from disease and keep them healthy
 - o Dirty eggs typically happen with grain based diets (ex. wheat, barley, and rye).
 - These grains have soluble non-starch polysaccharides (SNSPs) that make the gut contents sticky and gel-like.
 - Often, if there is canola in the diet, farmers will see canola clung to the dirty bits of the egg and think the canola is causing the problem, but canola doesn't actually have the same soluble starches (canola has insoluble starches).
 - In order to alleviate the problem, farmers should ask their nutritionist about two enzymes: xylanase and beta-gluconase. These two enzymes are fibre-degrading and solve the problem of increased "stickiness" in the gut, thus reducing dirty eggs. These enzymes are also important when including grains in the diet because they help with energy availability – so there is benefit beyond

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preventing dirty eggs!

- When buying pre-mix, be sure that the enzymes include more than just phytase, which has a completely different function and does not help with dirty eggs. Be careful decreasing the amount of pre-mix because they will lose out on the needed enzymes.

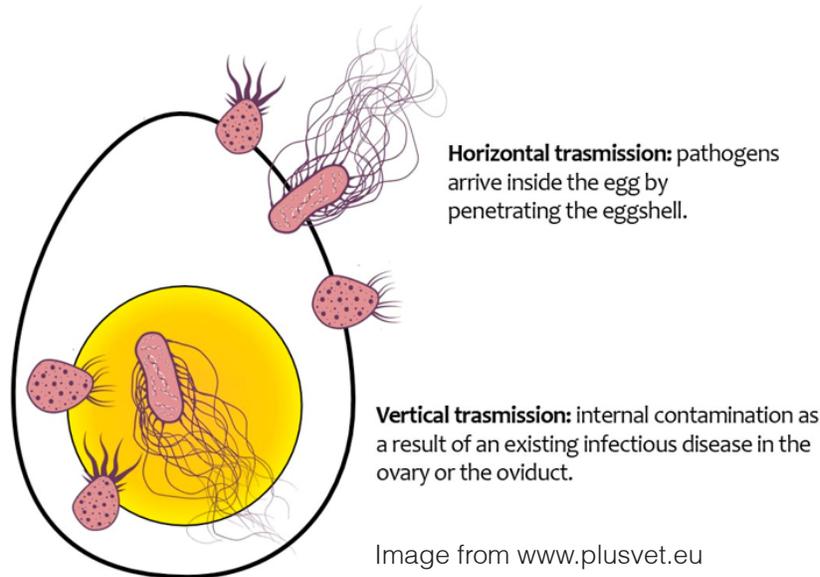


When you do get eggs that are dirty, keep in mind that on farm washing of eggs is not permitted and is now a critical control element in the Start Clean- Stay Clean Program. Washing eggs may aid the transfer of harmful bacteria like Salmonella from the outside to the inside of the egg. During washing, natural barriers in the shell can be washed off, allowing harmful bacteria to pass through the pores to the inside of the egg. Eggs for your own use can be washed on farm, but ONLY those for your own use – be sure to always use the proper method as it is safer to not wash eggs than to wash them improperly.

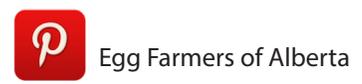
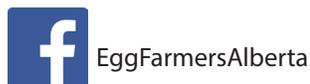


How does Salmonella infect eggs?

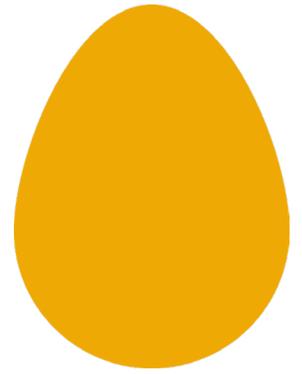
Salmonella bacteria is a frequent cause of foodborne illness in Canada. Salmonella organisms are spread among birds by two routes: horizontal and vertical transmission.



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Salmonella Enteritidis is the only one serotype that we know about that infects the hen's ovaries and can be transmitted to the inside of the egg – this is called vertical transmission. Salmonella Heidelberg (SH) is a Provincially reportable disease because there has been one report published that indicates a possibility that SH is also transmitted from the ovaries to the egg.



Salmonella bacteria can move because they have flagellum (long tails). An egg shell has more than 17,000 tiny pores on its surface; if an egg is placed on a Salmonella-infected environment, or is soiled with manure or debris from the environment, the bacterium may move through the egg pores and infect not only the shell, but the egg contents – this is called horizontal transmission. Sources of Salmonella contamination for the egg include manure from carrier hens, feed, unclean equipment, human or other animals (rodents and insects). Most Salmonella serotypes are horizontally transmitted. Salmonella Typhimurium DT104 horizontally transmitted and is a Provincially reportable disease because it is resistant to antibiotics and poses a significant human health risk.

Public Relations Update

EFA would like to thank all Egg Ambassadors for another fantastic event season, full of consumer engagement and memorable stories, in the pursuit of building public trust in our industry. Egg farmers already have a tremendous amount of responsibility when it comes to caring for laying hens, and providing Albertans with fresh, local food. Egg Ambassadors have a passion and enthusiasm for representing all Alberta egg farmers, which deserves to be recognized!

With an increasing scrutiny on our industry, and a general trend of consumers wanting to know more about where their food comes from and how it was produced, it is more important than ever to have a team of trained Egg Ambassadors. Every conversation is an opportunity to educate, dispel common myths, and build confidence in both our product and farming practices.

Whether you're a new recruit or an experienced representative, EFA encourages all new and returning Egg Ambassadors to attend an Egg Ambassador Workshop every year.

EFA will be hosting multiple Egg Ambassador Workshops in early 2019, in a few different cities in different weeks, to hopefully be able to accommodate all interested egg farmers. For more information about the Egg Ambassador program, please contact David Webb at the EFA office.

