

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
 Regular office hours will continue in the month
 of January

Egg Price Update Effective November 12, 2017

Canada Grade	Size	Price Per Dozen	
A	Extra Large	2.150	↑
A	Large	2.150	↑
A	Medium	1.920	↑
A	Small	1.550	↑
A	Nest Run	2.025	↑
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: February 9, 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

Happy new year from your Egg Farmers of Alberta Board of Directors!

We are looking forward to starting 2018 on the right foot, with an engaging and informative round of regional meetings this month. The Board encourages all producers to not only attend, but actively participate in the discussions, as your feedback helps shape EFA's strategic direction. The upcoming regional meetings will include presentations and discussions about many important topics, including Over Base Quota, the service fee, EFA's regulatory reviews, emergency preparedness, and a trade update. Each regional meeting will also include a closed producer only session.

Please refer to the calendar of events for additional details about each regional meeting. We look forward to hearing from all Alberta egg producers!



Nielson Update

The Nielsen retail sales data is available up to December 9, 2017 (year-end figures for 2017) and indicates that in the latest 4-week period, 3.16 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 0.3% decrease from the previous 4-week period (ending November 11th), and a 2.7% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2016.

Nielson retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 4.0% over the previous 52 weeks in Alberta, to 40.35 million dozen eggs. Specialty eggs (excluding Omega-3 eggs) have seen the largest sales growth; a 10.5% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 3.5 million dozen eggs (8.6% of the total eggs sold in Alberta).



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Healthy Farms



Regulatory Review

All marketing boards and commissions operating under the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act are subject to a mandatory review of the regulations for their respective organization every five years. A review of the Egg Farmers of Alberta regulations and any amendments need to be completed by the fall of 2019. We have decided to begin work early on this review in the hopes that we are able to complete this project before the end of 2018.

The Regulations that are being reviewed are:

Egg Farmers of Alberta Plan Regulation (AR 258/97). This regulation specifies EFA's purpose, Board functions, Board structure and provides for meetings of the membership, including eligibility, voting and elections.

Egg Farmers of Alberta Marketing Regulation (AR 293/97). This regulation addresses licensing, reporting requirements, quota and levy administration.

Some of the regulatory changes being considered include:

1. Changes to the definition of family member related to Director eligibility.
2. Review of current voting procedures to allow producers the option to vote by mail in ballot in advance with the main voting still happening at the AGM.
3. Updating the quota allotment provisions to combine base and overbase quota in accordance with the principles established by the Board.
4. Revisions to allow for the establishment of a quota exchange.
5. Review of the 7% CAP on the amount of quota any one producer can hold either directly or indirectly.

Producers are encouraged to provide input to the EFA Board of Directors during the regulatory review process, which will include discussions at the January and June 2018 Regional Meetings. Copies of the regulations can be obtained by calling the EFA Board office or viewed on: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts6183](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts6183)



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Alberta EFP is instituting a renewal period

Adapted from <http://www.albertaefp.com/recent-announcements/alberta-efp-instituting-renewal-period>



Effective April 1, 2018, producers will need to have an EFP completion letter dated within the last 10 years to be considered current and eligible for cost-share funding with the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change programs of the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP). That means, for example, if you apply in September 1, 2018, your EFP will need to have been approved on or after September 1, 2008 to be considered for current funding.

There has been a movement to harmonize EFPs nationally to make EFPs more useful to sustainable sourcing programs, and Alberta is the only province without a renewal period. This change is being made to make EFPs useful to sustainable sourcing programs across Canada.

The Alberta EFP program has a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (an industry advisory group) that set the renewal period at 10 years. They are waiting to see if the renewal period becomes part of the harmonized national standard. If it does, they anticipate they might need to move the renewal period to 5 years or less in the future.

What does this mean for you?

- If you want to apply for Growing Forward/CAP grants, you will need a current EFP.
- If your completion letter is older than 10 years, you will need to do a new workbook and action plan.
- If you cannot find your completion letter, you will need to start and complete a new EFP to be considered current, regardless of the completion date; unless your EFP is online.
- Technicians cannot give out completion letters without doing a full review of a new EFP (both workbook and action plan).

Producers are encourage to use the online workbook if possible!

- The online workbook does many of the calculations for you and carries data forward to other parts of the online workbook where needed
- Future renewals will be easier. The data are stored online on a secure virtual private server accessible only to ARECA staff entrusted to deliver the EFP Program.

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- When the next version change comes, your data will be migrated to the newest version, making updates easier and simpler.
- If available, you should use your original binder as a reference for your EFP renewal. The estimate to put a paper version online is a few hours.
- If you cannot renew online, then you need to complete a new binder of the latest version.



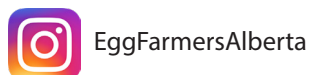
How do I Renew?

You can register to be assigned a technician in your area by following this link: <http://www.albertaefp.com/start-an-efp>

Upcoming Events

- Jan 16 - Calgary Regional Meeting
(Winston Gold Club formerly the Elks Club)
- Jan 17 - Edmonton Regional Meeting
(Best Western formerly the Days Inn)
- Jan 24 & 25 - Lethbridge Regional Meeting
(Coast Lethbridge Hotel & Conference Centre)

- Jan 31 – Advisory Committee Meeting (Calgary)
- Feb 8 – Board Meeting (Calgary)
- Feb 7 - Mass Depopulation Committee Meeting (Calgary)
- Feb 26 – Western Poultry Conference (Sheraton, Red Deer)
- Feb 27 – EFA AGM (Sheraton, Red Deer)



PEEP Update

The average score on PEEP moved from 72% in 2016 to 79% in 2017. There are now more than 30 producers scoring 90% and above!



In 2017, EFA set a goal of having 90% of farms pass PEEP. Producers were able to exceed this goal with 91% of producers now obtaining a score of 60% or greater. The EFA Board has set a goal that by December 2020, all producers are passing PEEP. Congratulations to everyone who has improved their score since the program was launched in 2014!

For 2018, there will be one new question added to the PEEP assessment. Question 4.7 relates to Cooler Technologies namely Evaporative Fan Controls, Electronically commutated motors (ECMs), and High Efficiency Scroll Compressors. EFA's Field Staff will be handing out new pages for your producer manual providing background information on these technologies.

4.7 Cooler Fans and Motors

GENERAL ELEMENT	RATING
1. All of the following: i. The evaporator has fan controls that can adjust the speed of the motor. ii. ECM motors are in place for evaporator and condenser fans. iii. The compressor is a scroll compressor.	10
2. At least two of the following: i. The evaporator has fan controls that can adjust the speed of the motor. ii. ECM motors are in place for evaporator and/or condenser fans. iii. The compressor is a scroll compressor	7
3. At least one of the following: i. The evaporator has fan controls that can adjust the speed of the motor. ii. ECM motors are in place for evaporator and/or condenser fans. iii. The compressor is a scroll compressor.	5
4. There are no evaporative fan controls or ECM motors. The compressor is a conventional reciprocating compressor.	0

PEEP will now be out of 170 points with 102 points being considered a pass.



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Be Seen Be Safe



For the past 2 months, the Alberta Poultry industry has been working to adopt Be Seen Be Safe as a way of improving our emergency preparedness and response efforts in the face of disease threats such as avian influenza.

All commercial poultry farms in Alberta have been geofenced, making it possible to log visits on and off your farm by anyone who has downloaded the Be Seen Be Safe app on their phone. So far, over 771 farm visits have been logged on EFA farms and 29 EFA users have activated their accounts, allowing them to view the log of visits on and off their own farms.

We encourage you to take part by picking up your farm gate sign at the upcoming regional meetings and encouraging your farm visitors to download the app on their mobile phones.

Be Seen Be Safe is having a draw* for a smartphone. To enter this draw you need to put up your Be Seen Be Safe sign at your farm, take a picture of the sign and send it to Be Seen Be Safe. We will be giving these signs out at the regional meetings to producers who do not have one yet.

If you would like to learn more about the system, you can access the Be Seen Be Safe page on EFA's producer website, under Emergency Preparedness or visit Be Seen Be Safe's website directly at www.beseenbesafe.ca.

Be Seen Be Safe staff are available to help with any questions you have – you can contact them at info@beseenbesafe.ca or by phone at (519) 803-3542.

*Winner will be announced at the AGM



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Healthy Birds



Flock Talk – Titres and Techniques

Over 55 producers attended the Alberta Agriculture Flock Talk meetings in December, which focused on troubleshooting vaccine application and sprayers, and reading and interpreting serology reports. Leanne Cooley from Grayridge Farms and Harold Echeverry from Merck covered a significant amount of content. Over 95% of producers attending the sessions indicated that “yes” they would be implementing new practices on their farm as a result of attending the Flock Talk. One producer commented that the session offered “the kind of information and hands on learning that [he] needed” and another wrote that the information on titres was “eye opening”.

Some of the key messages from the session included the following:

- When receiving vaccine from the hatchery it is important to check the temperature and make sure it has been handled properly. Your vaccine shouldn't arrive in a regular bag it needs to be in a cooler!
- Consider whether a small fridge has the proper temperature control to effectively store vaccine product. It matters where in the fridge you keep it!
- When preparing vaccine with water, the recommendation is that the water is 2-6 degrees. If you prepare the vaccine with 20 degree water the virus will start to die.
- For killed vaccines only (they will come in a big plastic bottle and are often white and thick) you should take them out of the cooler and get them to room temperature (ex. 6-12 hours) so that when they are injected they don't cause too strong of a reaction.
- Skim milk powder protects the integrity of the vaccine but there are some better things for this purpose because bacteria feed off milk powder and it can create biofilms.
- Purpose designed stabilizers can also help you to assess your vaccination because they have dye. You can check 5 birds in spots throughout your flock and you will see blue dye in the cheek or tongue. If it isn't blue they didn't drink it! If you do 100 birds the target is 95% show blue.
- The industry is seeing a lot of changes at the hatchery level and changes with the birds themselves (lighter, more eggs per hen housed, coming into lay sooner, etc.) With all of these changes there is more of a need to start to pull bloodwork to deal with the unknown.
- Hatchery vaccine programs are general guidelines – everyone needs to take that program and figure out how it might need to be adapted for their farm.

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- Generally, the best time to take bloodwork is after the third live but if results are poor it may be worthwhile to go back and do bloodwork after each live to better understand where things are going wrong
- When spraying, one of the best ways to improve titres may be to do at least two passes per cage – consider the volume and spray rate of your sprayer. Working the same row twice consecutively may be better than working each row individually and then coming back for a second pass because birds aren't going to re-pile in the same configuration in a short period of time.
- If doing water, think about the linear feet of water line you are starting with. It might be helpful to time yourself and understand how long it takes you to mix up your vaccine. How long does it take to flush and charge water lines? You need to allow 45-60 minutes of drinking time with the active virus/vaccine.



As a follow-up to the Flock Talk, and to provide as much of the information as possible to producers who could not attend, the following has been posted to the producer website:

- Copies of the presentations given by Leanne and Harold
- A digital copy of the poster that was handed out, put together by University of Alberta Capstone students
- A titre chart that indicates target level titres for different vaccines at each boost
- Information on serology testing available in Alberta and how to take bloods

This information is available at:

<http://www.albertaeggproducers.ca/best-production-practices/Poultryhealth/>



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Assessing Animal Welfare (Continued from November edition...)

In September 2017 representatives from EFA attended the International Conference on the Assessment of Animal Welfare (WAFL) in Ede, Netherlands. In the November issue of EggNotes we discussed learnings related to how animal welfare can be measured on farm.

There are three types of measurements typically used: Resource based, management based, and outcomes based. There was also an opportunity to participate in a workshop “towards a unified definition of animal welfare among animal welfare scientists.”

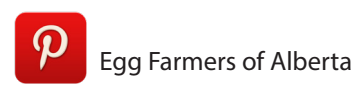
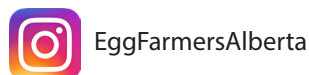
Why is it important to define animal welfare? Until there is an agreement on how to define welfare, it is difficult to assess it! A lack of consensus in this area has resulted in conflicting legislation. An example of this is the different decisions made by Australia and the EU with respect to sow gestation stalls. Both regulatory teams reviewed the same literature but the EU decided the science should be interpreted that welfare is poor and banned gestation stalls while Australia said the evidence didn't support that the housing system was in and of itself a welfare concern. This was largely as a result of different definitions of welfare.

Over the past number of years EFA has worked to communicate the concept of the Five Freedoms in producer resources and presentations. The Five Freedoms are an internationally recognized set of guidelines originally developed in the 1960s. The Five Freedoms have traditionally represented guiding principles for many livestock organizations in terms of animal welfare and include:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from fear and distress
4. Freedom to express normal behavior
5. Freedom from pain, injury, or disease

Emerging from the workshop was that a different model, the Three Circles Model, may be gaining momentum as a preferred definition for welfare. The Three Circles Model addresses both the object science and human values used in evaluating welfare. Introduced by David Fraser, Dan Weary, Ed Pajor and Barry Milligan in 1997, the Three Circles model addresses three concepts to evaluate animal welfare while taking the Five Freedoms to a deeper level. The Three Circles are as follows:

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1. *Basic health and functioning.* This concept addresses the physical fitness of the animal, including good health, normal body function, and normal growth and development. This part of the circle relates back to the freedoms from hunger and thirst discomfort (Freedom 2); and pain, injury and disease (Freedom 3).

2. *Natural living.* This part of the circle emphasizes that animals should be able to lead reasonably natural lives. This includes being able to perform important, normal behaviors (e.g., dust bathing for chickens) and to have some natural elements in their environment (e.g., sunlight, fresh air or social contact). This concept relates back to the freedom to express normal behavior (Freedom 4).

3. *Affective states.* This circle considers the emotional state of the animal in that animals should feel mentally well and should not be subjected to excessive negative emotions. Negative emotions include unpleasant states such as pain, hunger and distress. Beyond just avoiding the negative, animals should be able to experience positive emotions in the forms of pleasure or contentment (e.g., play or social contact). Affective States relate back to the freedom from hunger and thirst; pain, injury and disease; and fear and distress (Freedom 5).

Using the diagram, you can see how each of three concepts can overlap, but that there can also be times when specific practices necessitate making trade offs:



The Three Circles Model allows us to better understand our own bias in evaluating welfare and why there may be different opinions of what defines good welfare. For example, if one person thinks that basic health and functioning is the most important part of the model, they will likely not always agree with someone who places more emphasis on natural living. Using the Three Circles Model can be a tool to facilitate conversation with different stakeholders and to see welfare in different ways, including critically evaluating our own natural bias. What do you think? Do each of the circles carry equal weight or is one more important than another?