

EggNotes

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Vice Chair: Peter Waldner	403-795-8621
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EFC Alternate: Jerry Hofer	403-363-3501
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Fields Services Coordinator

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

Due to COVID-19, EFA office is closed. Staff are
working from home and are available during regular
business hours by phone and email.

April 2 - Good Friday, Office Closed

Egg Price Update Effective February 21, 2021

Canada Grade	Size	Price Per Dozen	
A	Extra Large	2.510	↑
A	Large	2.510	↑
A	Medium	2.220	↑
A	Small	1.890	↑
A	Nest Run	2.360	↑
A	Pee Wee	0.270	↓
B		0.760	↓
C		0.150	↓

Note: From the minimum paying price, graders can only deduct charges as authorized by the EFA Board. Effective December 29/19, rates were set for each zone in Alberta and reflect the maximum rate that can be deducted from producer's weekly cheque. For further information, please refer to OPP #13.3 on the producer website.

EggNotes is the official newsletter of Egg Farmers of Alberta.

Submissions should be sent to:

info@eggs.ab.ca

Next Issue: April 16, 2021

Note: EggNotes can be accessed on the EFA website or EFA's producer website



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Email: info@eggs.ab.ca Office hours: M-F: 7:30am - 4:00pm

Board Update

- Your Egg Farmers of Alberta (EFA) Board of Directors would like to thank our fellow farmers, value chain partners and industry stakeholders from across the country, for making our 52nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) – and 1st virtual AGM – a tremendous success. The Board was pleased to see 97 registered Alberta egg farmers participate in the AGM, as part of 197 overall attendees. The Board appreciates your adaptability and commitment to coming together to celebrate another successful and extraordinary past year.

The Board is pleased to welcome back Peter Waldner for his second 3-year term, and welcome Meb Gilani back to the Board once again for his first 3-year term. On a bittersweet note, we would like to thank Bernadette Vandeborn for her passion and service to EFA and the provincial egg industry over the last three years.

EFA's 2021 Board of Directors:

- **Chair:** Meb Gilani
- **Vice-Chair:** Peter Waldner
- **EFC Director:** Beatrice Visser
- **EFC Alternate:** Jerry Hofer
- **Director:** Conrad Vanessen
- **Director:** Elie Hofer

The EFA Board would like to thank the staff for organizing a truly unique AGM for 2021, which ran smoothly and provided farmers the opportunity to have their voices heard. We look forward to a prosperous year ahead for the egg industry in Alberta and across Canada!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 17,** Pullet Growers of Canada (PGC) AGM
- March 18,** EFA's Movement Tracing Engagement Webinar
- March 24,** Egg Farmers of Canada AGM and Open Board Meeting
- March 25,** EFA Board Orientation
- March 26,** EFA Board Meeting
- March 30-31,** Egg Farmers of Ontario AGM
- April 2,** Good Friday - Office Closed
- April 8,** Quota Exchange Sales Deadline - Final day to submit quota units for sale
- April 12,** ULTP Meeting



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Healthy Birds



► Animal Care Program - Reminders!

As audits are well underway for the year we wanted to pass along a few friendly reminders:

- On the flock housing/disposal record please make a note of ALL methods of disposal. For example, if you process some for your own use and whole barn gas the remainder, both methods need to be recorded. You should also note any birds that are sold or shipped live.
- Even employees that do not have regular access to the bird area (ex. egg gathering staff), should sign the Employee Code of Conduct.

► 2022 Quota Leasing Pool (QLP) Changes

A survey was completed of all registered producers in 2019, which included a specific question on how often the pool should run. 50% of producers were indifferent, 47.5% wanted the pool to run twice per year and 22.5% wanted the pool to run once a year. So, for the past **4 pools** we have been running the pool twice a year, however it is becoming very difficult to ensure that fill rates are normalized for each of the pools.

At the February 2020 meeting, the Board discussed this issue noting that it is very difficult to ensure that the fill rate for both pools is consistent because of the producer's inability to provide accurate estimates of how many birds they will be applying for in the second pool making it almost impossible to equalize the fill rates. As an example, the 2021 pool had a fill rate of **42.0%** whereas the 2021/2022 pool **21.9%**. Another consideration is that producers and EFA staff have double the amount of paperwork with running two pools.

The Board concluded that starting for the 2022 pool, we will move back to running the pool once per year. This will require producers to ensure that they are planning for the future when they are building/renovating to ensure they are able to apply for the right number of birds from the pool.

The 2022 will be launched on June 27, 2021 with forms due back by July 18, 2021. The leasing pool start dates (19-week date placement) will be from February 15, 2022 to February 14, 2023.

In addition to this change, there will be one more minor adjustment to ensure that producers are not applying for more quota from the pool that they are actually renovating for. As such, a clause will be added to apply penalties to producers that are indicating they are adding capacity if they are trying to secure more than their fair share from the Quota Leasing Pool. The penalty for a first offense will be 5 year ban and a second offense will be a lifetime ban from participating in the pool.

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A copy of the updated policy will be provided on the producer website, prior to the launch of the 2022 pool.

If you have any questions regarding the changes to the 2022 QLP, please contact Erin Johnston at ext. 127.

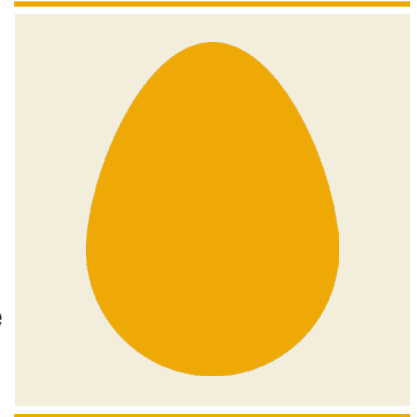
Healthy Eggs

► Nielsen Update

The Nielsen retail sales data is available up to January 30th, 2021, which marks the first completed period of the new year. The stats indicate that in the latest 4-week period 3.35 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 6.5% decrease from the previous 4-week period (ending January 2nd), and a 4.4% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2020.

Nielsen retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 7.5% over the previous 52 weeks in Alberta, to 44.3 million dozen eggs. Regular white & brown eggs have seen the largest sales growth; an 8.2% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 37.7 million dozen eggs (85.1% of the total eggs sold in Alberta).

As a reminder, additional Nielsen trend data that is updated approximately every four weeks is available on the producer website.



Healthy Farms

► Canada's National Poultry Show

Canada's National Poultry Show has gone virtual and includes great educational content on biosecurity, health management, equipment, and innovation. Do not miss your chance to join this Canadian premiere poultry event by visiting National Poultry Show - The Grove (thegrovewfd.com) to get your ticket (\$20.00 each).

The event takes place on April 7th and 8th, 2021 from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. and then again from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Please note that the event times are likely in EST.



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➤ Whole Barn Gassing Case Study

On February 16th a farmer with a split flock conducted whole barn gassing. As part of his preparations, he sealed off an area where he expected gas could flow between the two sides of his barn. This was done with plywood sheets and plastic.

On the day of gassing the outside temperature was below –20 degrees Celsius. The farmer anticipated that the air inlets on the side with the birds to stay in production would open but unfortunately, those air inlets froze up. Without sufficient external air coming in the pressure differential between the two sides increased and ultimately the plywood cover plugging the air exchange between the two sides came off. CO2 gas flowed between the two sides. There was no monitor on the other side of the barn so the farmer didn't realize it had happened until after the gassing when he heard the birds in the other side making unusual noises. Upon entering he found that only the birds in the top row had survived, he had lost over 8,000 birds.

We can all only imagine the feeling this farmer must have had when he walked into the barn. We can't thank him enough for being willing to share his story in case it can help something similar from happening again. While all barns are different and will have unique requirements, we would recommend the following preventative steps to farmers gassing with a split flock:

- Monitor the gas on both sides of the barn
- Make sure to securely cover **both** sides of any doors, holes etc. between the two sides prior to gassing
- Make sure you manually open your air inlets in the non-gassing side and/or monitor them as you are conducting the barn gassing
- Think about what you will do if your monitor does indicate CO2 levels are rising in the wrong side of the barn. Keep in mind that after you shut off the gas the levels may continue to rise and quickly. It may very well be unsafe to enter either side of the barn without SCBA gear – is there an alternative way you can ventilate quickly?

➤ AgSafe Newsletter

Want to be 'In the Know' when it comes to Farm Safety? We encourage Alberta egg farmers to sign up for AgSafe's newsletter at <https://www.agsafeab.ca/Newsletter.aspx>

➤ Managing Pecking Behavior in Laying Hens Webinar

Want to learn more about natural behaviors of laying hens or how to keep abnormal behaviors from happening? Attend the Managing Pecking Behavior in Laying Hens Webinar on **March 12 at 12 pm EST**. Tina Widowski, Ph.D., from the University of Guelph and Leanne Cooley a poultry scientist from L.H. Gray discuss managing pecking behavior in laying hens to overall improve welfare. Register using this link:

<https://forms.microsoft.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=uD9NLSr4P0qcLDw1br9KvWI4o4PXTWhH-vF3GuCalzz9UNKISQzhKWIQyOFRWQUcxUThCOEFUUIhOOC4u>



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► Farm Security

One of EFA's four strategic pillars is Healthy Farms, which is about helping to ensure the health and well-being of Alberta egg farms and farming families. For this pillar, health encompasses environmental health (minimizing carbon footprint & reducing overall environmental impacts), economic health (profitability & sustainability of family farms), and human health (farm safety & farm security). Though EFA's on-farm environmental program – the Producer Environmental Egg Program (PEEP) – and New Entrant Program are the cornerstones of this pillar, farm security has become a more relevant and important piece of the Healthy Farms puzzle in recent years.

In addition to being responsible for caring for their flock of laying hens and providing fresh, local food, egg farmers must now be prepared to contend with animal activism and illegal trespassing. While the Government of Alberta has strengthened provincial trespass laws to protect farmers from “harassment and occupations by protesters, which are actions that risk introducing disease and threaten the welfare of animals”, all farmers should have a comprehensive security and response plan in place to safeguard the health and well-being of their farm, family, employees, animals, and livelihood.

As a reminder for all Alberta egg farmers, there are a variety of resources available on the Farm Security page in the Healthy Farms section of the producer website. EFA's Farm Security Toolkit provides details and tips to help you develop a security plan for your farm, as well as a response plan to help you know what to do if your farm is ever targeted by activists or is the victim of an illegal trespass. Committing to effective farm security is vital to maintaining the health of your farm.

► 2021 Western Poultry Conference Registration

Registration for the 2021 Western Poultry Conference is now open! Register for the virtual conference held on the afternoon of March 23 and the morning of March 24 to learn useful information you can use on your farm. Dates and times don't work, but still interested? All registered attendees will have access to a recording. Register at <https://www.conventionall.swoogo.com/wpc2021>

Healthy Communities

► New Mental Health Section on Producer Website

Egg Farmers of Alberta has developed a new section on the producer website for Mental Health. Available resources include information on addiction, anxiety, depression, and suicide. There is also a pictorial of suggested support systems specifically designed for a producer audience as well as an Alberta specific contact list for a variety of services that connect with mental health. Please note, this is not an exhaustive list of all the services that are available but is a great starting point for where to go for help. If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health, please reach out for help.



These resources are found on the producer website under Mental Health (Healthy Communities).



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► **From Your Production Management Committee**

At the most recent PMC meeting on February 23rd your Committee discussed the Farm Programs Survey. The survey was sent to all registered egg farmers on January 11th with responses due February 5th. A total of 65 responses were received.

Overall, Alberta egg farmers continue to support both the Start Clean - Stay Clean® (SC-SC™) program and the Animal Care Program (ACP). Overwhelmingly farmers support these programs because they believe it protects their market and that it improves consumer confidence. This is fantastic!

There were a couple of opportunities for improvement identified by the survey. The first is that there are some egg farmers who feel they do not have input into the development of the SC-SC™ and ACP and changes made to those programs. While they are national programs and EFC has the ultimate authority on changes, EFA does provide feedback to proposed changes via the PMC. The PMC discussed opportunities for more broad-based producer consultation and elected to pilot a new process. When we receive consultations from EFC, if timing allows, we will circulate a survey to all registered egg producers to collect input. The voluntary feedback will be gathered up and considered when the PMC determines what to put forward to EFC. We will then assess the effectiveness of this approach and whether to continue on.

The other challenge identified was frequent changes to the programs. For both programs EFC recently implemented a policy whereby changes can only happen once per year. All changes approved by EFC by September come into force the following January. That does mean that every year there are changes to record keeping and sometimes unexpected investments that need to be made. It was determined to put forward a request to EFC to consider if the programs could remain constant with a full review done every 4 or 5 years. Ultimately, this is EFC's decision.

A summary of the full survey results has been posted to the producer website at Farm Programs (Producer Surveys).

Thank you to all farmers who took the time to provide valuable feedback.

► **Recognition Programs – Congratulations!**

The Producer of the Year Award recognizes a registered egg producer in Alberta who has demonstrated exceptional standards and work this past year in all aspects of his or her egg operation. We would like to extend our congratulations to Ben Wipf at Silver Spring Colony who was awarded Producer of the Year for 2020. Congratulations as well to Joshua Hofer at Wolf Creek Colony who received the Honourable Mention Award.

For 2022, the Producer of the Year Award criteria will be revised to reflect the importance of farm safety and farmer's efforts to improve on their farm safety assessment. Farm Safety will be scored out of 15 points on a sliding scale with a score of more than 80% being worth full points. The total score allocated to biosecurity will be increased by 5 points while timely return of levy payments and forms 7 will be decreased by 5 points each. The full award criteria is available on the producer website.

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While we can have only one producer of the year, we cannot fail to recognize that our industry has many egg managers that are committed to excellence in meeting industry standards. To recognize this, EFA has developed a recognition program. Each year, EFA intends to host a special event to congratulate farmers that have achieved an exceptional level of performance in their on-farm programs. To receive an invitation farmers must meet the following requirements:

- Score 100% on the Animal Care Program for 2 or more years in a row
- Score 100% on the SC-SC™ Program for 2 or more years in a row
- Achieve a score of 90% or higher in PEEP for 2 or more years in a row
- Be in good standing with the Board (all fees paid)

While we were not able to host an AGM breakfast this year, we hope to be able to host a celebratory event in conjunction with the June regional meetings – stay tuned! This year congratulations go to the following farms who met the eligibility criteria:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Baker Colony | • Meridian Colony | • Rockport Colony |
| • Big Bend Colony | • Mialta Colony | • Rosedale Colony |
| • Brant Colony | • Midland Colony | • Silver Spring Colony |
| • Brio Developments Inc | • Midwest Colony | • Sky Light Colony |
| • Elmspring Colony | • New York Colony | • Springview Colony |
| • Evergreen Colony | • Newell Colony | • Starbrite Colony |
| • Grandview Colony | • OB Holdings Corporation | • Sunrise Colony |
| • Green Acres Colony | • OK Colony | • Sunshine Colony |
| • Handhills Colony | • Old Elm Colony | • Vanessen Enterprises Ltd. |
| • Hutterville Colony | • Plainview Colony | • Wild Rose Colony |
| • Lathom Colony | • River Bend Colony | • Wolf Creek Colony |
| • MacMillan Colony | • Rochfort Colony | |

The other component of the recognition program is an egg-cellence draw. Congratulations to Oaklane Colony whose name was drawn at the AGM.

In 2022, for both the EggCellence Club and Eggceptional Performance draw, a score of greater than 60% on the farm safety assessment will be added to the list of criteria.

► Launch of QE2-21 Quota Exchange

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Q2-21 Quota Exchange. The goal of the exchange is to ensure accessibility, transparency and equal access to Alberta's egg quota transactions. If you are interested in selling quota on the QE2-21 Quota Exchange, submit all of the required documentation to EFA by the deadline date of **April 8, 2021**.

If you have any questions, please contact Erin Johnston at 403-250-1197 ext. 127 or by email at erin.johnston@eggs.ab.ca



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► Celebrating 10 Years of Dedicated Eggcellence

Congratulations to Jenna Griffin, Manager of Programs and Research and David Webb, Marketing and Communications Manager who have both been with EFA for 10 years. Through the years, their talents and efforts have shaped EFA's success. Together we take pride in their accomplishment and commitment to eggcellence.

We are proud to have you on our team and offer congratulations on this service milestone!



► AFAC LCC REMINDER

A portion of the Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) virtual Livestock Care Conference (LCC) has taken place this month. If you are interested in tuning in, every Tuesday and Thursday in March. AFAC is proud to bring a variety of speakers and workshops from all corners of the livestock industry and the globe, to highlight how far livestock welfare and practices have come, while also looking ahead to what comes next.

Featuring speakers on farm animal behavior, regulations, and producer strategies, the LCC brings together expert and applicable knowledge. This year's LCC also boasts both a producer panel and a media panel. Conference registrants will gain access to several unique and valued workshops ranging from Emergency Management Planning to Mental Health to the long-awaited Difficult Encounters. Registrants are invited to come to every speaker session and workshop, or to just attend those of particular interest.

Details and registration can be found at <https://afaclcc.ca>



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► Communications Update

We believe in two-way communication between our consumers and us, and we want you to stay informed, be active and engaged about our social media happenings. Each month we'll include a communications update of a piece of work that we are proud to show you! We would also love your opinion on what you want to see, so if you have suggestions feel free to send them to adelina.gashi@eggs.ab.ca or call 587-391-6122.

► Healthy Eating Campaign for March

As part of our 2021 marketing strategy, we've developed a themed monthly campaign as a fun and creative way to share all the wonderful information about eggs. March is nutrition month, in which we will be highlighting key nutritional information found in eggs. Eggs are not only an excellent source of high quality protein, but they also contain many vitamins and minerals. You can check out our page dedicated to egg nutrition on our website (<https://www.eggs.ab.ca/eggs/egg-nutrition/>). Here's what you can expect to see on our social media channels this month:

