NEWSLETTER OF THE
EGG FARMERS OF ALBERTA
AUGUST 2016

Egg Notes

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Board of Directors Update

The Board of Directors was very impressed by the attendance at EFA's June regional meetings, as well as the discussion and questions from the floor. The Board decided to take a moment and review some of the questions that were brought forward:

Q: Should we have waited for the launch of the Quota Leasing Pool to ensure the kinks were worked out?
A: The goal of the pool is to be efficient and ensure the egg production starts as quickly as possible. The Board felt that the overall results of the first pool were excellent, but we have reviewed some concerns that were brought forward and are working to improve and implement the changes to make it run better.

Q: Can we advertise equipment for sale on the new producer SharePoint site?
A: The producer SharePoint site is an excellent resource for producers, as they can access documents related to their own farm. Although we currently cannot post advertising, staff is continuing to work on expanding the capabilities of the site.

Q: When can we convert overbase quota to base quota?
A: Our current regulations do not allow the conversion of overbase quota to base quota. The Board will be discussing the pros and cons of this issue at the Strategic Planning Session in September.

As always, if you have any questions about our industry, please call any of your Directors. If we can't answer them, we will find someone who can.

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Egg Farmers of Alberta

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OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

EFA Vision Statement

Healthy Food, Healthy Farms, Healthy Families.

EFA Mission Statement

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

EFA Office Hours

Our office will be closed **Monday, September 1** for Labour Day and **Monday, October 10** for Thanksgiving Day. We hope this does not cause any inconvenience.

Egg Price Update

Effective August 14, 2016:

Grade A	
X Large	$2.080 ↑
Large	$2.080 ↑
Medium	$1.850 ↑
Small	$1.480 ↑
Nest Run	$1.959 ↑
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.

Field Statistics Update

Here's an update on how farmers are doing with their on-farm programs so far this year:

- 84 SC-SC Layer evaluations have been completed in 2016
  - Alberta's average score: 98.7%
  - 69 Alberta farmers have scored a perfect 100% rating
- 62 Animal Care Program evaluations have been completed in 2016
  - Alberta's average score: 99.88%
  - 60 facilities have received a rating of 100%
- 54 SC-SC Pullet evaluations have been completed in 2016
  - Alberta's average score: 99.16%
  - 29 Alberta Pullet Growers have scored a perfect 100% rating
  - 10 pullet growers are newly accredited in the SC-SC Pullet Program

EFA would like to thank farmers for their commitment and hard work each and every day, to ensure that safe, high-quality eggs are produced humanely.

Changes to Billing for Diagnostic Services

Since 2005, EFA has managed and sent out invoices for any diagnostic services completed by Poultry Health Services (PHS). As of December 1, 2016, the diagnostic billing process will change, with invoicing being managed by Poultry Health Services. Going forward, charges will be based on a fixed schedule for services, as detailed in the chart below. This change is being made to improve service and allow for a more efficient way of dealing with billing errors, concerns and disputes.

Per PHS, there will also be additional charges for various services.

Producer Website Update

In an effort to continually add new material to the producer website that provides value for farmers, two new pages have been added:

- At the June regional meetings, there was a request for EFA to share more information about the changing egg markets in Alberta, particularly around specialty eggs. EFA has developed charts that show purchasing trends for specialty eggs for the past five years, which can be found under Information Center / Egg Sale Trends.

- EFA has added a new page about levy, including details about how levy is calculated, how levy impacts egg prices, and where levy funds go. Any questions about the recent levy increase can also be answered on the Levy page, which can be found under the All About Quota menu option.

Visit EFA's producer website:

www.albertaeggproducers.ca

EFA Implements a 3% Utilization Allowance

As of August 7, 2016, EFA has implemented the Quota Utilization Allowance Policy. This policy allows EFA to manage the provincial quota utilization rate.

In February 2016, EFC approved an increase in the national quota utilization threshold from 97% to 100%. In order to reach 100% utilization, additional birds beyond a farm's issued quota must be placed.

EFA implemented the following steps to move to a 100% quota utilization rate:

- 3% of issued quota for each producer was moved to reserve
- A 3% utilization allowance was applied to each producer's issued quota

This change does not impact the number of birds a producer can place – producers can still place the same number of birds as before the utilization allowance was launched. EFA will now refer to the total number of birds you can place on farm as your "Total allowable placement".

Total allowable placement = (issued quota + quota credits in use) + 3% utilization allowance

Producers who have space in accordance with EFA's Animal Care Policy can activate their quota in reserve at their next flock change. Producers who are at capacity can lease their quota in reserve through EFA's quota leasing pool. Quota leased for the purpose of making room for the utilization allowance is exempt from leasing rules including: the 10 year deadline for activating newly purchased quota or over base quota, and the leasing factor rule.

Producers who have a lease confirmed through the 2016/2017 quota leasing pool, or have lease agreements on file, must activate the full amount of their lease. Quota adjustments for capacity will be made from previously issued quota.

For more details, the Quota Utilization Policy (OPP 9.31) can be found on EFA's producer website, or by requesting it from the Egg Farmers of Alberta office. EFA thanks all Alberta egg farmers for their co-operation as this significant change to quota management is implemented.

Levy Update

Egg Farmers of Canada's (EFC) financial projections to the end of 2016 have warranted an increase in levy needed to support the Unrestricted Pooled Income Fund, of $0.07/dozen. Contributing factors to the lower 2016 fund balance compared to year-to-date 2015 are reduced levy revenue due to the decrease earlier this year and higher egg purchase costs mainly due to higher IP volumes. Effective August 14, 2016, the EFC levy will be $0.2575/dozen.

In view of this increase by EFC, the Board set the total provincial levy at $.3656/dozen, effective August 7, 2016 which equates to $9.301/bird.

Taxation Rules for the Sale of Quota are Changing

Revenue Canada is making changes to how quota is taxed when it is sold. Effective January 1, 2017, producers selling quota owned by a farm corporation will be subject to new rules from the most recent federal budget. Attached is an article from the Country Guide that outlines the changes. EFA encourages farmers to speak to your financial advisors and accountants, to discuss how these changes will affect you.

Separate vs. Shared Designation

The separate vs. shared policy and process was developed in partnership with Alberta Agriculture, as a way of determining if production facilities housing more than one flock of birds should be sampled for Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) separately or in one pooled submission. Currently, if SE is found on a farm where there is no separate designation, all flocks in the production facility are treated as positive. If SE is found on a farm where separate designation has been obtained, only the flock that tested positive is treated as positive. However, remaining flocks on the farm are subject to additional testing, to ensure they remain negative during clean up and recovery.

Earlier this year, Alberta Agriculture advised EFA that they would no longer be able to complete shared vs. separate assessments. Alberta Agriculture has, however, made themselves available to assist EFA as a new solution for determining the sampling process is found.

At their July meeting, EFA's Production Management Committee (PMC) reviewed options for salmonella sampling and addressing separate vs. shared designation going forward.

After discussion, the PMC recommended that EFA should adjust sampling protocols so that for each barn, there is one test, regardless of the number of flocks within. This would eliminate the need for separate vs. shared designations to be completed. If there is an SE positive in a barn in Alberta, Alberta Agriculture will go on farm and complete enhanced disease investigation and sampling on each flock, to determine which flocks are SE positive. The PMC also recommended that EFA continue to encourage best practices for biosecurity, in order to protect multi-age flocks in single building envelopes.

EFA would like to hear your feedback, comments and concerns on this proposal before this change to our sampling protocols is implemented. Please direct your feedback to a PMC member or to Christina Robinson at the EFA office, by September 16. The PMC will review your comments at their next meeting and the finalized process will be communicated to all producers.

PMC members:
Elie Hofer – 780-691-8512
Eli Entz – 780-837-8944 x712
Ben Waldner – 403-740-2583
Michael Froese – 587-340-7344
Byron Toews – 403-389-4404

Upcoming Events

August 22
EFA Meeting with Marketing Council

September 7
EFA Production Management Committee Meeting

September 12 and 13
EFC Board Meeting (Ottawa)

September 26-27
Board Meeting

September 27-28
Strategic Planning Meeting

October 4 -6
Banff International Egg Symposium

October 12
EFC PMC Consultation Meeting (Ottawa)

Keel Bone Health in Layer Hens

By Emmanuel Opoku Yeboah, MSc., and Clover Bench, PhD

Injuries associated with the keel bone represent one of the most important emerging welfare issues in commercial laying hens, particularly those raised in cage free housing systems.

Keel Bone Damage
Keel damage falls into 2 main categories: (i) Fractures and (ii) Deviations

(i) Fractures
Fractures are characterized by sharp bends, shearing, and/or fragmented sections of the keel bone. Collision with barn elements (ie: perches) may be one potential cause of fractures. Keel bone fractures are believed to be painful and reduce mobility, as well as reduce performance traits such as increasing feed conversion and reducing egg quality.

(ii) Deviations
While fractures are considered a breakage in the bone, keel bone deviations are irregularly shaped structures at various points on the keel bone. Below are illustrations of severely deviated keel bones.

Factors Contributing to Keel Bone Damage

(a) Housing
Some research has found a higher prevalence of keel damage in hens housed in free range systems compared to those housed in conventional cages. Other research has also reported an increase in keel bone damage in aviary systems compared to little or no keel damage in hens raised in enriched cages. These findings agree with research that found an increase in keel damage in laying hens kept in floor pens from 19 to 66 weeks of age, and research that reported increased keel damage from 17 to 70 weeks of age in hens raised in free-range systems. Increased space in cage free systems in combination with perches increased keel bone injuries. Keel bone fractures are often caused by high-impact collisions with housing structures, while keel bone deviations (ie: keel notching) result from prolonged pressure on the keel during perching.

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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*:
October 7, 2016

Watch for your next issue:
October 21, 2016

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www.eggs.ab.ca/about/publications

Keel Bone Health in Layer Hens continued from page 5…

(a) Other Factors

Nutritional deficiencies such as calcium and phosphorus can increase the potential for weaker bones in layer hens, particularly towards the end of the lay cycle. As such, it is important to avoid nutritional deficiencies by ensuring good nutrition in your hens, in order to minimize osteoporosis. Exercise is a good way of stimulating bone growth but is dependent on housing type. For example, load bearing activities can help increase bone strength. However, collisions with perches or pressure on the keel should be avoided. If the prevalence of keel deformities is high or on the rise in your barn, you may need to evaluate perch design and/or placement in your particular housing system.

Figure 1: Normal keel bone

Figure 2: Keel bone deviation score of 1

Figure 3: Keel bone deviation score of 2

(source: C. Bench)

Assessing keel bone damage

Palpation is a technique used for the localization and confirmation of anatomical landmarks such as bones and muscles. A keel fracture and/or deviation in a live bird is most typically identified through palpation. The hen is secured firmly with the hands and palpated by feeling with the fingers around the keel bone area. Record keel bone information regarding the shape, thickness, dips, ditches, bumps and dehydration (i.e., lack of tenting). Hens are assessed depending on the degree of deviation using a scale of 0, 1 and 2, as indicated in Figures 1, 2 and 3 (based on the Welfare Quality® Program).

Take Home Message

The prevention of keel bone deformities is particularly important for the well-being of hens in cage-free systems. Assessment of keel bone injuries are an important tool that all producers can use regularly to monitor the prevalence and type of keel bone problems your flock may experience. In addition, consult with your nutritionist to reduce osteoporosis risk, promote load bearing exercise in cage-free systems, and monitor for collisions with perches (which may require re-assessment of perch design and/or placement).

Grand Opening Ceremony

EFA was thrilled to host more than 40 distinguished guests at Brant Colony on Monday, July 25, for the grand opening of the Canadian egg industry's first net-zero layer barn. Brant Colony's egg manager, Darrel Mandel, lead the group – including the Honourable Oneil Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, MLA David Schneider, and a variety of egg industry stakeholders – on a tour of the barn, highlighting the innovative technology that was integrated into the design and construction of the facility.

The official grand opening was the culmination of two years' worth of dedication, collaboration, hard work and a vision to build a sustainable provincial egg industry facility. The goal of the project is for the facility to be balanced in terms of its energy inputs and outputs, in order to achieve net-zero. Over a given year, the facility will strive to produce enough power through renewable systems to offset power supplied to it by conventional fossil fuels.

Congratulations to Darrel and every one at Brant Colony for hosting such a wonderful and engaging event. Thanks also to Kelly Lund from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, and EFA's own Jenna Griffin, for leading this important project to demonstrate what environmentally responsible farming practices are capable of, and what is required to actually achieve a net-zero balance in a layer barn.

Feed Efficiency

What it means and what it tells you about your operation (Part 2)

By Matt Oryschak, Research Associate – Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

Introduction

In part one of this article (see the June issue of *EggNotes*), we described what feed efficiency is, how it can be calculated for an operation, and what it can tell you about your feeding program. In part two, we are going to focus on dispelling a myth about feed efficiency – that maximum feed efficiency equals maximum profitability. I hope by the end of this article to have convinced you that this is not necessarily the case.

How strongly connected is feed efficiency to profitability?

Let's start by rephrasing the question as 'if your operation's feed efficiency is lower than another's, does that mean that you are less profitable?' To put it simply, the answer is no – or at least not necessarily.

Since there is a biological maximum egg production per hen, it follows that there is a maximum to how much revenue can be generated from a fixed number of hens. This means profitability is ultimately tied to minimizing cost, specifically feed costs, to support optimum egg production. This is not the same as simply minimizing total feed cost – less than optimal production will also reduce profitability!

So how do you maximize the *ratio* of feed cost to production? The simplest answer is looking at less expensive feedstuffs – for instance canola meal, DDGS, etc. There is a problem with that: a feedstuff's value is tied to its nutrient density, most often its energy density. Canola meal, for instance, contains less protein and less energy than soybean meal, so it is not a simple 1:1 exchange in a feed formulation. Often times, oil needs to be added to the diet to make up for the shortfall in energy when using such ingredients, which adds significantly to the cost of the ration. How then do we take advantage of the abundance and variety of feedstuffs to enhance profitability?

Recall that in part one of this article I said that energy intake is an important driver of egg production. Breed companies publish recommended energy densities in their guides, but it is important to remember that: 1) these are recommendations not commandments; and 2) they are based on a specific feed consumption or allocation. Few people would argue that under average to good management conditions, hens have the capacity to consume more than the 100 or 105 g that guide recommendations are based on, if allowed to do so (trust me – I have the data).

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The question is why not take advantage of this unused capacity. How? By:

1) dropping the target energy density of the diet (thereby allowing more of the cheaper ingredients into the feed formula); and

2) increasing feed allocation (because remember, hens still need the same number of calories per day to produce that optimum egg).

Your immediate observation (based on part 1 of the article) would be that this will necessarily reduce feed efficiency. But the more important question is what happens to the feed costs/hen/d?

What will determine the net economic benefit to dropping target energy density in the diet is that the % reduction in feed costs ($/tonne) should exceed the increase in feed allocation. For instance, if feed allocation is increased from 105 to 115 g/hen/d (~10% increase) to offset a 10% reduction in target energy density (ie: 2600 vs 2900 kcal/kg), but the cost of the ration drops by more than 15%, there should be a net improvement in profitability. We thought it was time to put this theory to the test.

The evidence from our research

In a 12-week trial our group recently conducted at the Poultry Research Centre, we compared the performance and relative profitability of hens fed diets containing either soybean meal or canola meal as the major protein source that we formulated to the recommended energy density or 90% of recommended (ie: lower energy). Target levels of all other nutrients (ie: amino acids, minerals) in the diet were tied in a ratio to energy, so that we were not putting surplus nutrients into the feed that the birds would not be able to convert into egg mass. Unlike commercial practice, birds were given free access to feed. This was so we could observe whether the hens would voluntarily change their feed intake to compensate for the lower energy density in the 90% diets.

We found that all diets supported excellent productivity, with a slight edge going to the soybean meal diet formulated to the recommended energy density. As expected, feed efficiency was poorer for the diets formulated to 90% of recommended because hens consumed more feed to maintain equivalent performance. When it came to profitability however, there were a couple of interesting findings – as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Relative profitability of hens fed diets based on soybean meal or canola meal formulated to 100% or 90% of recommended energy density.

	Soybean meal-based		Canola meal-based	
	Recommended energy density	90% energy density	Recommended energy density	90% energy density
Feed costs				
Feed consumption, g/hen/d	119.4	120.7	114.7	121.1
Formula cost, $/t	314.12	259.21	316.53	241.11
$/hen housed/d	0.038	0.031	0.036	0.029
$/average AB flock[1]/d	450.18	375.56	435.56	350.26
Revenue				
Lay percentage, %	95.31	93.86	92.64	93.11
Weighed price[2], $/dozen eggs	2.055	2.040	2.043	2.047
Revenue, $/hen housed/d	0.163	0.160	0.158	0.159
Revenue, $/average AB flock/d	1,958.42	1,914.60	1,892.92	1,905.62
Profit (Revenue – feed costs)				
Profit, $/hen housed/d	0.126	0.128	0.121	0.130
Profit, $/average AB flock/d	1,508.24	1,539.04	1,457.36	1,555.36
Profit, $/average AB flock/yr	550,507.65	561,748.84	531,937.37	567,706.23

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EFA Staff Update

Catherine Kelly, who had been working as the On Farm Programs Administrator, is no longer working with EFA. Those tasks have now been divided between current staff members, as follows:

Erin Johnston – flock permits and flock counts

Brandy Addai – salmonella results

Dave Lastiwka – corrective actions for on-farm programs including SC-SC and Animal Care Program

The EFA team will continue to bring you a high level of customer service. If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact Christina Robinson, Farm Programs Manager.

"Yolk" of the Month

Guaranteed to crack you up!

Q: What is a chicken's definition of relay?

A: It's what hens do after the egg farmer collects their eggs!

Q: What do you get if a chicken lays an egg on top of the barn?

A: An egg roll!

Feed Efficiency continued from page 8…

[1] Based on the most recent statistics available, an average Alberta flock has 12,000 hens. This is used simply for illustrative purposes.

[2] The weighted price for each treatment was determined by adjusting the price per dozen by the distribution of eggs in each grade for each treatment over the entire 12-week period.

The first finding worthy of note is that when formulating diets to recommended energy densities, the use of less expensive co-products is tricky and actually reduces profitability (compare columns 1 and 3). This is because more oil needs to be added to the diet to compensate for the lower energy content in solvent-extracted canola meal. It is for this reason that canola meal generally does not find its way into commercial poultry rations beyond 10%.

The more important finding however is that when you relax the target energy density in the diet (and increase your feed allocation per hen accordingly), you can start to see the cost-saving power of ingredients like canola meal. Hens increased their feed consumption to compensate for the lower energy density in the 90% density diet (ie: 121.1 vs. 114.7, or 6% in canola meal-based diets), but this was more than offset by the difference in daily feed costs – which was nearly 19% lower for the 90% density diets. The net result of relaxing the target energy density in the diet was a 2-3 % increase in profitability of 2-3%, or in the context of an average flock in Alberta (12,000 hens), about $10,000 – $15,000/year.

Take home message

Feed efficiency, like all productivity metrics, can provide important information about an operation but it is important that it is viewed in its proper context. What I hope I have been able to do is illustrate in these articles that feed efficiency is a valuable piece of information, but it is not the last word when it comes to your farm's bottom line, and at the very least it is a poor indicator of net profitability.

I hope I have also tempted some of you to reconsider the emphasis you place on feed efficiency in your feeding program. I hope to also have inspired you to initiate conversations with your nutritionist and peers in the industry about whether your operation (and the industry as a whole) would be better served by shifting more emphasis to minimizing feed costs ***per unit of production (e.g. egg mass).*** Remember – this is not the same as minimizing total feed cost! Egg producers are paid for the number and size of eggs they ship to the plant – how best to get there is up to you.

New 3rd Party Animal Care Auditors

Earlier this year, EFC welcomed Mona Ivan as their Northern Alberta Field Inspector. As Mona was previously working as a 3rd party auditor in Alberta for NSF-GFTC, this left Alberta with vacant auditor positions.

NSF-GFTC has now hired two 3rd Party Auditors to conduct Animal Care Assessments on farms in Alberta: Lori Kadylo and Jason Kielstra. 3rd party audits for the Animal Care Program will be conducted on 1/3 of Alberta's registered egg farms this year. If Lori or Jason arrange a farm visit with you, you are welcome to request government issued photo I.D. to confirm their identity before you allow them access to your farm.

Lori Kadylo

Jason Kielstra

Research Update

One of EFA's current research priorities is to identify ways to decrease the occurrence of Salmonella Enteritidis (SE). A combination of approaches including vaccines, biosecurity, testing, and sanitation of feed ingredients are necessary to maintain food safety.

In 2013, with funding from EFA and the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency, Dr. Doug Korver initiated a study to identify and evaluate candidate prebiotics that are optimal for use with the Alberta layer diet. Prebiotics are non-digestible feed ingredients that promote the growth of beneficial bacteria in the gut of the bird. The inclusion of prebiotics in the diet gives a competitive advantage to the bacterial species capable of using them for growth over those species that cannot. The prebiotics tend to favour the growth of good bacteria such as Lactobacilli which in turn can out-compete bacteria like Salmonella and Campylobacter. The resultant good gut health can also result in improved feed efficiency making the inclusion of prebiotics economically realistic.

Here are the results of the study. Four different yeast-based products were tested against a control diet containing no yeast product:

1) A yeast-derived prebiotic containing mannanoligosaccharides and β-glucans (*Immunowall, ICC*);
2) Hydrolyzed yeast containing elevated levels of RNA, which are broken down by enzymatic hydrolysis into nucleotides and nucleosides (*Hilyses, ICC*);
3) A whole Pichia yeast product which includes nucleic acids, mannans and β-glucans (*CitriStim, ADM Alliance Nutrition*); and
4) A blend of yeast products which contains β 1,3-glucans and mannan carbohydrates (*Maxi-Gen Plus, Canadian Bio-Systems*).

The products were fed at the manufacturer-recommended levels to laying hens for 42 days. None of the treatments resulted in meaningful changes in egg production and feed intake. After 42 days, intestinal contents were collected and analyzed for changes in microbial populations. Each of the products was able to alter the bacterial species present in the gut. Each of the products were also tested for the ability to eliminate SE in vitro. A known amount of SE organisms were incubated with a mixture of cecal contents from untreated roosters, control feed, and the yeast products. After both 24 and 48 hours, each of the products significantly reduced the presence of viable SE.

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EFA's Commitment to Customer Service

Each year at the June regional meetings, EFA conducts a customer service survey in order to measure the organization's performance in meeting the needs of Alberta egg farmers. The results from the 2016 survey are in and 77% of farmers gave EFA a rating of 8/10 or higher for customer service over past year. While this is on par with 2015's survey and 5% higher than 2014, EFA strives to continually improve the level of service provided.

A common concern identified in the survey was the ability to reach staff by phone and email in a timely manner. EFA has a commitment to return phone calls and emails within 24 hours. If a staff member is out of the office, a recorded message or auto-reply email will indicate when they will return to the office, and who else in the office to contact while they are away. As a reminder, leaving even a brief message (instead of just hanging up) will help ensure a timely response is made by the appropriate person.

EFA encourages farmers to provide feedback at any time, if you feel there is an area that can be improved, or if you'd like to share a story of an interaction with EFA that went well. Send your comments to **info@eggs.ab.ca** or call the EFA office to speak with a manager.

Research Update continued from page 10…

These results are an early indication that each of the products are able to reduce the presence of human pathogens in laying hens, and would likely reduce the risk of infection of the hens in the first place. Additional study will be required to test whether the products are able to prevent infection in a challenge model, and whether established infections could be eliminated.

Leasing Pool Update

EFA's quota leasing pool has been under review in order to address some of the challenges encountered during the launch of the program. Thank you to all who provided feedback and input into this review process. The updated policy has been reviewed by the Leasing Pool Review Committee and the EFA Board, and has now been approved for the 2017/2018 leasing pool. Here is a summary of some of the changes:

- The application process for the leasing pool has been moved to August/September so that lease amounts can be confirmed before pullet orders are finalized. Expect to see the leasing pool application forms sent out by the end of August.
- The lease rate for the quota lease fee will be reviewed annually by the Board during the budgeting process. Adjustment to the lease fee will be based on consideration of the lease rates across Canada and the profits associated with quota.
- There will be two options available for producers leasing from the pool:
  - Full payment at the start of the new leasing pool (April)
  - Payments made in 3 equal installments on April 15, September 15 and January 15. This option is only available for those producers paying by direct debit.
- When unutilized quota is available in the leasing pool, or in EFA's quota sleeve, short term leases through the pool can be approved in order to accommodate:
  - Placement dates or flock cycles that don't fit into a one-year lease
  - Moving leases between multiple flocks. Any quota not leased for a full year will be pro-rated for the number of days it is active.
- Quota holders who have sold some or all of their quota can lease it back to the seller through the pool up to the conclusion of the seller's flock cycle.

A full update on the quota leasing pool, along with a copy of the new policy, will be sent to all quota holders together with application forms for the leasing pool, by the end of August.

EggNotes

HEALTHY BIRDS
HEALTHY FARMS HEALTHY EGGS
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Healthy Eggs

Recent surveillance of wild birds in Canada has shown that as much as 10% of wild birds were positive for some form of Avian Influenza. In most cases, the virus carried by wild birds is low pathogenic and the birds typically show no outward signs of illness. However, low pathogenic viruses that are introduced to commercial laying flocks can quickly mutate into the more dangerous highly pathogenic strains.

Take steps this fall to protect your flock from wild birds by strictly adhering to your biosecurity procedures. EFA also strongly urges you not to process any wild birds on your farm during hunting season.

Healthy Birds

Did you know that chickens consume twice as much water as feed? Providing clean, safe water is vital for keeping your flock healthy and in good production. Testing your water supply on an annual basis for pH levels and both mineral (sodium, chloride, iron, calcium, nitrates and sulfur) and microbial (coliforms) challenges is key to monitoring and managing water quality. If your sample comes back with a coliform count greater than 10,000cfu/ml your water could contain harmful pathogens. For an accurate sample, be sure to collect your water samples from the point where the birds access it (at the water nipple) and away from ventilation fans.

Healthy Farms

In July, EFA hosted farm safety workshops throughout the province, led by Dan Trottier of Timmenga and Associates. The workshops were attended by over 50 producers, who had the following feedback:

- The workshop helped take farm safety plans from intimidating to doable
- I was provided ideas on how to start a farm safety program and how to keep it simple
- I took a lot of interest in proper employee training and I'm positive we'll benefit from it
- It would be a good idea to see if we could have one safety chief for the entire farm
- The most interesting thing about the meeting was understanding how far behind we are in terms of how we think about safety

EFA has uploaded the following tools and resources on the producer website under Best Production Practice / Farm Safety:

- A copy of the workshop presentation
- An MS Word version of the EFA Job Task Hazard Assessment (JTHA) template, so you can download and customize it to your operation
- A new worker safety training checklist template

If you are considering bringing in a consultant to assist your operation in developing a safety plan, note that there is funding available from the Growing Forward 2 Business Management Skills Development Program. The funding is at a 75% reimbursement level. Further information is available on the Growing Forward website or by calling 311.

Other resources and links to help you build your program and a safety culture include:

- The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA)
- WorkSafeAlberta
- WorkSafeBC
- Alberta Agriculture
- The Alberta Farm Safety Centre
- Workplace Safety and Prevention Services
- AgForLife

Wishing you a safe harvest!

EggNotes

Alberta Egg Market Update

The Nielsen retail sales data is available up to July 23, 2016 and indicates that in the latest 4-week period, 2.9 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 1.0% increase from the previous 4-week period (ending June 25th) and a 9.5% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2015.

Nielsen retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 6.6% over the previous 52 weeks in Alberta, to 38.1 million dozen eggs. Specialty eggs (excluding Omega-3 eggs) have seen the largest sales growth in the last 52 weeks in Alberta; a 9.1% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 2.9 million dozen eggs (7.7% of the total eggs sold in Alberta).

Volunteers Needed

EFA is a proud member and supporter of the Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP), which has been helping to teach grade 4 students about agriculture since 1985. CAP is a fantastic opportunity for EFA's *Egg Ambassadors* to talk to kids about egg farming, and to help explain where their food comes from.

If you are interested in learning more about CAP, please visit: www.classroomagriculture.com. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Jean Symborski at the EFA office, to help plan your presentation and prepare for your school visit as a CAP volunteer!

Healthy Communities

Calgary Stampede visitors get a chance to learn about agriculture and farming at the Stampede's Ag-tivity in the City, in the Agrium Western Event Centre.

Egg Farmers of Alberta participate in this annual event as it's a unique opportunity to connect urban and rural, so the public can meet real egg farmers and learn about where their eggs come from!

EFA's interactive and educational *You be the Farmer* booth was refreshed this year, with the addition of a live bird display. Alberta egg farmers cared for 30 hens (15 white and 15 brown hens) that were housed on-site in a furnished housing unit.

In early June, Mike Froese approached EFA about the possibility of using the furnished housing unit that Burnbrae Farms had used at events in Ontario, and we jumped at the opportunity. EFA had long wanted to include a live bird component in our booth, but it was only possible thanks to Mike, Burnbrae Farms, and EFA's team of Egg Ambassadors! A big thanks to everyone who helped make this happen!

Over 15 local egg farmers and the hens engaged tens of thousands of Calgary Stampede visitors over the 10 days. The most popular question the farmers were asked was the difference between white and brown hens and eggs.

Although another year of stampeding has come to an end, EFA wants to extend a huge THANK YOU to all Alberta egg farmers that made this year's Stampede such a success!