

EggNotes

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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

Due to COVID-19, EFA's office is closed. Staff are working
from home and are available during regular business hours
(7:30 am - 4:00 pm) by phone and email.

Egg Price Update Effective July 18, 2021

Canada Grade	Size	Price Per Dozen	
A	Extra Large	2.610	↑
A	Large	2.610	↑
A	Medium	2.320	↑
A	Small	1.990	↑
A	Nest Run	2.455	↑
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: February 11, 2022

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



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Board Update

- Your Board of Directors hopes for a tremendous turnout of registered Alberta egg farmers at our 53rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Tuesday, March 1st, 2022. The AGM will be held in person (for those who are double-vaccinated, or who are able to provide a negative Health Canada approved or lab-accredited rapid antigen, rapid PCR, or lab-based PCR test from a sample that was taken within the past 72 hours). The AGM will also be broadcast via Zoom and will run from 9:30 am – 3:15 pm.

As a reminder, Director Nomination Packages were sent out at the end of December, and all nominations must be received at the EFA office by January 20th. Ballots will then be sent out by January 24th along with nominee profiles and instructions for submitting your completed ballot, which must be returned to Deloitte by February 18th. The mail-in voting policy was also recently mailed to producers, providing details about the AGM and the election process. It would also be wise to double-check who the designated representative is for your farm, since the deadline to change that is also January 20th. Results of the election will be announced at the upcoming AGM.

Formal invitations to EFA's AGM will be emailed to registered egg farmers by the end of January, which will include detailed instructions for registering and attending the AGM in person or via Zoom. An extensive pre-AGM package will be mailed to all registered egg farmers by February 15th, which will include a copy of the 2021 Annual Report, minutes from the 2021 AGM, a voting guide, and EFA Rules of Order.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 18,** Regional Meeting - Lethbridge (CANCELLED)
- January 19,** Regional Meeting - Lethbridge (CANCELLED)
- January 25-27,** International Production & Processing Expo - Atlanta
- February 2,** Production Management Committee Meeting
- February 9,** EFC Open Board Meeting
- February 10-11,** EFA Board Meeting



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Healthy Birds



➤ **Fillable PDF's Available on the Portal**

The following stand alone fillable pdfs are now available on the producer portal:

- SOP for foraging material
- Range Management Record
- All Movement Records
- Pullet and Layer logbooks

➤ **2021 Biosecurity Assessment Summary**

The 2021 biosecurity assessment summary is complete. There were no new changes since 2020 and the focus in 2021 was to have producers improve on the current assessment.

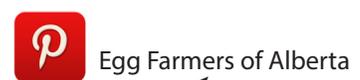
Improvements in 2021 for the long-standing assessment elements include some of the following:

- 88% of barns have signs that indicate where the transition zone is located (previously 70% in 2020).
- 92% of barns have a handwashing or sanitizing station available at the transition zone (previously 79% in 2020).

There were also some improvements in the new elements introduced in the 2020 biosecurity assessment:

- 24% of farms have signage at the primary entrance indicating the area beyond is biosecure (previously 14% in 2020).
- 28% of farms have signage at the primary entrance which includes contact information (previously 12% in 2020).
- 86% of producers with barriers at their primary entrance keep them locked (previously 60% in 2020).
- 94% of producers do not share their equipment/tools/machinery between barns (previously 80% in 2020).

To view the full summary of the 2021 biosecurity assessment, please visit the producer portal. Moving into 2022 EFA will continue to encourage farmers to implement best practices on-farm to improve their biosecurity. There will be no new updates to the assessment and the focus will continue to be on improving the current scores.



➤ **An Update on the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Found in Non-Commercial Flock in Newfoundland**

Since the memo sent to all pullet/egg producers on December 23, 2021 there have been some new developments in the case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) identified on a non-commercial premise in Newfoundland. The following updates have been provided:

- The index farm reported 86% mortality before the CFIA completed depopulation.
- Further testing has been conducted on the East coast to identify HPAI in wild birds.
- Testing of wild birds confirmed HPAI in one black back gull.
- This positive result in wild birds should have no trade impacts.
- In the coming weeks and months, further testing will be performed on wild birds throughout the Atlantic region. The expectation is that more positive results in wild birds will be found.

These events indicate that HPAI is actively circulating in the Canadian wild bird population and will likely further circulating throughout the flyways in Canada and North America. While this positive case was observed in Newfoundland, all farmers should be evaluating their biosecurity to prevent introduction into the commercial system. Due to overlap between eastern and central flyways, Alberta is at heightened risk for HPAI (approximately 70% of the province falls within the range of birds which may overlap the birds from the Eastern flyaway). This risk will further increase once the spring migratory season begins.

Producers should continue good biosecurity practices to protect their flocks. Below are some suggestions of what producers can be doing:

- Farm workers should be staying away from wild birds
- Farm workers should not be picking up/handling dead wild birds
- Farm workers should reinforce the biosecurity measures between wild birds and their flocks
 - Avoid non-essential personnel entries to your farm premises and barns.
 - Change footwear when entering the Restricted Area and prevent wearing contaminated clothing and equipment in production areas.
 - Closely monitor flock health, including mortalities, feed and water consumption, and abnormal bird behaviour.
 - Immediately consult your veterinarian in cases of unexplained mortality or flock illness. Submit unexplained mortalities for testing.

➤ **Quota Exchange Update**

The Quota Exchange for QE1-22 was launched on December 7, 2021; however, we did not receive any eligible applications for quota sales and therefore will not be running the exchange for this quarter. The next Quota Exchange (QE2-22) will launch on March 8, 2022. Notices will be sent to all registered producers and posted to the producer portal.

If you have any questions, please contact Erin Johnston at 403-250-1197 X127 or by email at erin.johnston@eggs.ab.ca



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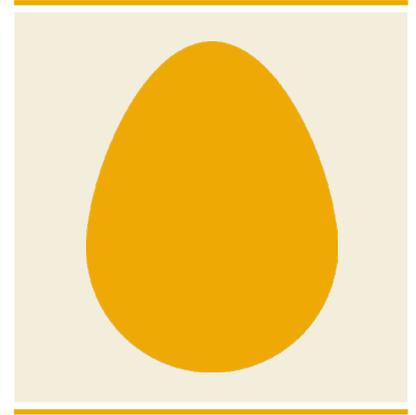
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Healthy Eggs



► 2022 Amendments to the Start Clean - Stay Clean® Farmer Guidelines Manuals

The Start Clean - Stay Clean® (SC-SC™) program is continuously evolving as a result of emerging experiences, science-based research, technical advancements, and government regulations.

Throughout 2021 Egg Farmers of Canada approved several amendments to the SC-SC™ program which became effective January 1, 2022. To reflect these amendments, the SC-SC™ Farmer Guidelines Manuals (Layers and Pullets) have been updated.

The updated pages for the SC-SC™ Layer Manual as well as the full version of the updated Manuals for both Pullets and Layers have been posted to the producer portal. Egg Farmers of Alberta Field Services Coordinators (Dave Lastiwka and Murray Minchin) will be delivering hard copies of these updated pages for the Layer Manual along with new Pullet Manuals in their upcoming field visits. The reissuance of the SC-SC™ Pullet Manuals is due to the extensive revisions in 2021.

► Record Keeping Calendar Template Additions

There have been three additional record keeping templates added to the 2022 calendars. Below, Egg Farmers of Alberta has provided some details on who should be completing these record keeping templates.

1. SOP for Forage Material - The SOP includes knowing the source of material is free from biological hazards, completing visual inspections, and storage. This addition is a result of the new element to the SC-SC™ Layer Program and should be completed by all producers who use enrichment materials in their alternative housing systems.

2. Range Management Record – A range management record has been added to the organic/free range layer calendars only. This was an identified gap between the SC-SC™ Layer Program requirements and the Record Keeping Calendars and was requested by AB EFC auditors. Producers with these production types (free range or organic) need to complete these templates.

3. All Movement Record – An All-Movement Record template has been added to all calendars. This addition is based on CFIA data collection during an emergency. Completion of the template is voluntary but highly recommended for all producers.



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Healthy Farms



► On Farm Programs Statistics

Another year has passed and Alberta's egg farmers continue to demonstrate strong animal care, food safety, worker safety, and environmental performance!

The average score on the Animal Care Program (ACP) for 2021 was 99.68%. The most common corrective action was related to catching crew sign off on guidelines. Farmers also continue to achieve success with the Start Clean – Stay Clean® (SC-SC™) on-farm food safety program. The average score on the SC-SC™ layer program was 99.81%. The most common corrective actions were related to having other poultry production on farm and retention of samples of complete feed mixed on farm. The SC-SC™ pullet program was also delivered on 72 farms with an average score of 99.88%.

In 2021 the average score on the EFA Farm Safety Assessment improved from 66% to 82%. Over 94% of farmers earned their farm safety certificate, a substantial increase over 2020. EFA would like to extend a thank you and congratulations to all farmers who worked hard to achieve their certificate in 2021!

This past year another important milestone was reached – 100% of Alberta's egg farmers achieved a score of 60% or greater and are passing PEEP! Congratulations on this watershed moment. The average score was over 85% which demonstrates a high level of excellence in environmental performance.

As a reminder, up-to-date statistics are available on demand on the producer portal at Farm Programs (Reports and Statistics).

► Workers Compensation Board Yearly Statistics 2021

The Workers Compensation Board has released their 2021 annual statistics on the number of claims, types of injuries, cost of compensation etc. for the Alberta poultry and egg sector. There was a substantial increase in the number of injuries, their severity, and claim cost for 2021 from 2020. The results for 2021 indicated that the highest incident of injury was from overexertion with injuries being predominantly sustained to the back. Injuries spanned all age groups except for 43–50 year-olds.

For further details visit the producer website at Farm Safety (Healthy Farms).



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► **Faba Beans: What Egg Producers Need to Know**

By Matt Oryschak, University of Alberta

Feed costs are a never-ending topic of concern for many producers and the poor yields seen during last year's drought plagued growing season certainly has not helped. Many producers rely on wheat/soybean meal-based diets for their flocks; however, Alberta (and Western Canada in general) is blessed with an abundance of commodities that may offer considerable flexibility in managing feed costs. Many of these commodities remain largely underutilized, either due to a lack of information on their feed value for laying hens or inconsistent supply. One such commodity that falls into both above categories but offers several potential benefits for egg producers is faba bean (*Vicia faba*).

First, a bit about the agronomics. Faba bean is particularly well adapted to the cooler, wetter growing conditions characteristic of the northern Great Plains regions of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Like all pulses, faba can meet much of its nitrogen requirements through biological fixation. In fact, the crop is reported to fix as much as 80 - 200 lb of nitrogen/acre – the most of any pulse crop currently grown in Canada. Another advantage of faba that has become increasingly important is its relative resistance to *Aphanomyces*, a soil-borne pathogen of growing concern in Western Canada (to which both pea and lentil are more susceptible).

Now for what we are really interested in - faba's potential as a feedstuff for laying hens. Probably the most common question many producers have is whether faba bean has the capacity to displace soybean meal from laying hen diets. The best available evidence seems to suggest that when paired with a complementary protein source like canola meal, the answer seems to be 'yes'.

The ability of faba bean to displace soybean meal in rations is a function of the concentration, amino acid balance, and digestibility of these amino acids in the crop. On average, the protein content in faba bean (>28%) is higher than peas (~24%), but still far below that of soybean meal (44-48%). What limited data are available however suggest that the apparent ileal digestibility of most amino acids in faba bean ranges between 80 - 90%, similar to soybean meal and slightly higher than values typically reported for peas.

The question of displacing soybean meal from layer rations was indirectly studied in a trial conducted by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry in 2017. The experiment was specifically looking at the effect of increasing dietary inclusion of faba bean (var 'Snowbird') on laying hen performance and egg quality. In this test diets for this trial, as faba bean level in the diet increased from 0 to 24%, canola meal became more important as a complementary protein and soybean meal content in the diet decreased (Table 1). There were no adverse impacts on hen performance or egg quality observed as a result of increasing faba bean inclusion. The important take home message is that faba bean can be part of a strategy to reduce reliance on soybean meal, but cannot do it on its own due to the differential in total protein content compared with soybean meal.

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Table 1. Composition of test diets from 2017 Alberta Agriculture and Forestry study, in %. (Please note that the following is provided for information purposes and not as a recommendation – talk to your nutritionist if you would like to incorporate faba bean into your feeding program)

Ingredients	Faba bean inclusion level, %			
	Control (0%)	8%	16%	24%
Wheat	59.88	56.66	53.45	50.23
Limestone	11.17	11.27	11.36	11.46
Faba bean	-	8.00	16.00	24.00
Canola meal	14.90	11.85	8.81	5.76
Soybean meal	6.03	4.29	2.54	0.80
Canola oil	5.38	5.31	5.23	5.16
Dicalcium phosphate	0.93	0.90	0.86	0.83
Choline premix	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Layer vitamin/mineral premix	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Salt	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
D,L-methionine	0.12	0.16	0.20	0.24
L-threonine	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.08
L-Lysine	0.09	0.06	0.03	-
Enzyme	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05

One of the big side benefits to using faba bean in hen diets is the huge potential for reducing the greenhouse gas (GHG) intensity of hen diets, which accounts for an estimated 65% of the overall GHG of egg production. While there is some controversy over how GHG intensity estimates for various feedstuffs are calculated, what is beyond question is that faba beans have much lower input requirements compared to other ingredients (wheat, canola) and consequently a lower GHG intensity. For instance, one of the most widely referenced databases for feedstuff GHG intensity puts the GHG footprint of faba bean at about half that of wheat per tonne of grain, so the difference is real.

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Another benefit that has to be mentioned in passing is the opportunity that faba bean offers to organic egg producers in particular. The potential is certainly there, with all current varieties of faba bean being non-GMO. It is unknown whether there is any significant acreage of faba bean being grown under organic management in Alberta currently. It cannot, however, be understated how access to an affordable and local protein ingredient could significantly alter the economics of feeding organic laying hens.

With all of these advantages, it would be logical to ask whether there are any limitations to using faba beans as a feedstuff for laying hens. The evidence (both science- and experience-based) seems to lean in the direction of suggesting there isn't, however there are several key gaps in our understanding that warrant more investigation. The most important gaps relate to the nutrient content and concentration of anti-nutritional factors in Canadian-grown beans. Most of the relevant research into the feedstuff potential of faba beans to date has been conducted in Europe or Australia, where both the growing conditions and varieties grown are different.

To this end a proposed project by researchers at the University of Alberta would fill in most of the knowledge gaps by way of a survey of the Western Canadian faba bean crop. The project would generate information on the range in digestible nutrient content in domestically-grown faba beans so as to allow commercial egg producers in Western Canada to fully exploit their potential. While the project is still under consideration by funding partners (including RDAR), the Egg Farmers of Alberta were the first to recognize its importance for their producers and have signaled their willingness to support the project with research dollars. More details on this project are likely to follow in the near future, so stay tuned.

A final question that many of you might have at this point is how do I source faba beans for my operation? Unfortunately, there is not an easy answer to this question for many reasons. One major reason for this is that the acreage of faba grown in Alberta has been relatively unstable over the past decade. A potential game-changer however might be recent announcements of investments in pulse processing capacity in Alberta. Increased domestic processing capacity will help to stabilize the domestic market for faba beans, which are currently grown primarily for export to Egypt and other Mediterranean-area countries. The net result could be a greater acreage of faba bean grown in Alberta and the availability of both beans and bean processing co-products for the livestock industry. This will be an important development for the egg industry to watch over the coming years.

To briefly summarize, faba beans hold huge potential to alter the way we feed laying hens in Alberta and Western Canada more broadly. We can address many of the knowledge gaps in the short term through research, but the question of tonnage availability will likely take a longer period to address. Thankfully, investments in domestic processing can only help the situation. Much more is still to come so stay tuned.



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Healthy Communities



➤ 2022 Western Poultry Conference Registration Open

Registration for the 2022 Western Poultry Conference has opened. This event will take place on February 28, 2022 and has both in-person and virtual streaming options available. This year's topics include the impact of 24-7 news on your mental health, making your farm FireSmart, a case study analysis on production profits, and the green certificate program. To register, please visit: <https://conventionall.swoogo.com/wpc22/home>

➤ Quarter Four Research Report Update

The quarter four research update is available on the producer website and can be found at Research (Information Center). Owing to COVID-19 many of the funding research projects have been delayed. However, the Novel adjuvant-based in ovo vaccination regime to prevent colonization and infection of poultry by Salmonella and other bacterial pathogens project has provided Egg Farmers of Alberta with an interim report. Initially the researchers were not able to see meaningful protection against Salmonella challenged birds after in-ovo vaccination. However, in the last year the researcher has focused on improving the existing chicken challenge model for Salmonella and is ready for future experiments.

➤ The Green Certificate Program

Egg Farmers of Alberta in partnership with other poultry industry stakeholders and interested parties have come together to create a new Green Certificate Program in Dewberry, Alberta. This program provides hands on experience with agriculture and has a specific focus on poultry production. Visit the below article to read more about this great initiative!

<https://poultryinnovationpartnership.ca/dewberry-school-and-the-green-certificate-program-a-project-of-the-heart/>



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► **Sowing the Seeds of Mental Health Webinar Series**

AgSafe Alberta has joined with other provincial farm safety organizations across the country to provide a virtual mental health series for farms and ranches. Below is the schedule for the upcoming events:

January 18, 2022: Transitioning Through COVID – Hear about how humans respond to stress and the impact of emotional exhaustion. Understand how our values can help us through a crisis. Learn why fostering hope and creativity are important and learn five tips for creating behaviour change.

January 25, 2022: Why Mental Health Matters – Learn about mental health in Canada and the difference between mental health and mental illness. Hear about mental fitness and the link between mental fitness, physical health and social connections. Review the mental health continuum and discuss improving personal resilience and coping.

February 1, 2022: Feeling Less Overwhelmed and Tired – Learn about the formula for feeling overwhelmed and what you can do to manage overwhelmed feelings. Learn how to recognize what is in your control and apply practice tips to reduce feelings of being overwhelmed and tired.

February 8, 2022: Busting Self Stigma – Learn how self-stigma can get in the way of seeking help when we need it. Understand specific steps that you can take to reduce self-stigma and promote help-seeking.

February 15, 2022: Seasonal Work and Overall Wellness – Learn how seasonal work can impact overall wellness. Learn to recognize signs and symptoms of stress and how it can affect our physical and mental wellbeing. Review five tips for improving your overall wellness.

February 22, 2022: Tips for Taming Negative Emotions – Learn how emotions can shape how we show up for ourselves and others. Learn the importance of recognizing negative emotions and five steps you can take to manage negative emotions.

March 1, 2022: The Benefits of Monitoring Daily Charges and Drains – Learn how to monitor your charges and drains and how external stressors and factors can impact your own personal charge. Understand four tips that can support you in generating a positive charge.

March 8, 2022: Insulating for Irritability – Learn what mental fitness is and what factors can contribute to irritability and signs of becoming irritable. Learn four tips for preventing and moving through irritability.

If you are interested in registering for one or more of the sessions please visit <https://www.howatthr.com/products-services/workplace-learning/sowing-the-seeds-of-mental-health/> or contact Carley Frerichs at carley.frerichs@eggs.ab.ca or 403-250-1197 x 125. Please note that all sessions are recorded and will be available on the Howatt HR website for those who registered up to six months after the event.



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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.banaj@eggs.ab.ca or call 587-391-6122.

► **New Year's Resolution Campaign for January**

As part of our 2021 marketing strategy, we've developed a themed monthly campaign as an engaging and creative way to share all the wonderful information about eggs. For January, we are sharing ways people can implement eggs into their daily meals to lead a healthy, balanced lifestyle in 2022. We will also share EFA's resolutions to successfully support all of our pillars (Healthy Birds, Healthy Eggs, Healthy Farms, and Healthy Communities). Follow us on social to check out our upcoming posts!

