

EggNotes

Board of Director

Chair Beatrice Visser
780-674-6297

Vice Chair: John Hofer
403-641-2030

EFC Director: Joe Kleinsasser
403-653-4480

Director: Conrad Vanessen
403-635-7998

EFC Alternate: Peter Waldner
403-795-8621

Director: Bernadette Vandeborn
780-349-6311

EFA Staff

General Manager: Susan Gal
ext: 124

Marketing & Comm. Manager: David Webb
ext: 126

Marketing & Social Media Coordinator: Angie Lang
ext: 103

Farm Programs Manager: Christina Robinson
ext: 125

Programs & Research Manager: Jenna Griffin
Ext: 129

Office Manager: Laurel Martin
ext: 121

Logistics Coordinator: Brandy Addai
ext: 101

Farm Services Administrator: Erin Johnston
ext: 127

Business Manager: Kari Buijs
ext: 132

Fields Services Coordinator: Dave Lastiwka
ext: 128

Fields Services Coordinator: Murray Minchin

EFA Vision Statement

Healthy Food, Healthy Farms,
Healthy Families

EFA Mission Statement

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

EFA Office Hours

Office will be closed April 19 for Good Friday

Egg Price Update Effective May 27, 2018

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

Note: From the minimum paying price, processors can only deduct charges as authorized by the EFA Board. Farm-gate pickup rates were set in August 2010, and no increase in individual freight rates have been approved since that time.

EggNotes is the official newsletter of
Egg Farmers of Alberta.

Submissions should be sent to:
info@eggs.ab.ca

Next Issue: May 10, 2019

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



Board Update

Your Egg Farmers of Alberta Board of Directors would like to congratulate the United Conservative Party for their win in the provincial election. The Board would like to thank the outgoing Alberta New Democratic Party for their support and effort over the past four years, to help build and promote the province's agriculture industry. EFA looks forward to working collaboratively with the new government, in order to cultivate a prosperous and sustainable egg industry in Alberta.

The Board recently attended the Egg Farmers of Canada AGM, and will be reviewing all proposed changes that could potentially impact the national egg industry's various on-farm programs. Stay tuned for more information.

Upcoming events

CEIRA AGM – **April 17, 2019** - Ottawa
Research Committee Meeting – **April 18, 2019** - EFA Board Office
Good Friday – **April 19, 2019** - Office Closed
EFA Board Meeting – **May 1, 2019** - EFA Board Office
EFC Strategic Planning – **May 8, 2019** - Ottawa
FPA Meeting– **May 9, 2019** - Ottawa
Egg Board Consultation – **May 9, 2019** - Ottawa
Victoria Day– **May 20, 2019** - Office Closed

June 2019 Regionals

June 12, Calgary
June 13, Grande Prairie
June 14, Edmonton
June 18 & 19, Lethbridge



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Egg Farmers of Alberta



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Healthy Birds

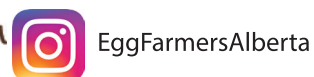


Ventilation Flock Talks: Cooling and Misting Systems

In November, over 50 attendees participated in the Flock Talk, “Ventilation: Exchanging Expertise”. We are including a series of articles in EggNotes as part of an ongoing effort to share learnings from those sessions. This, our final article in the series, focuses on cooling and misting systems which you may find helpful as the temperatures start to rise.

- A cooling system can be more effective and efficient than just bringing in more air. If it is particularly hot outside, you may just be bringing in more hot air as it may be cooler in your barn than outside.
- Cooling has to be measured by how much air is being used in barn and how much moisture we can actually add to the air.
- If you are putting in a misting system, it should not be part of the ventilation system, you need to maintain the same airflows. It is important to ensure that you have enough fan CFM to cool the barn down without having to run the misting system. Misting systems should be treated as an optional accessory or insurance policy only otherwise if your cooling system goes down you will be in big trouble.
- Your nozzles should be lined up with your inlets. This is a German manufacturer where the system slides together which prevents leaking. You punch a hole and put the nozzle in where you want it.
- The temperature of the source water matters. Well water may be preferred over dugout water because it is cooler.
- Regular maintenance is needed as part of flock changeover, at a minimum:
 - It is a good idea to remove all nipples/nozzles and soak them in CLR before putting them back on.
 - If you have hard water it could be an issue and impact the longevity of the nozzles.
 - It is a good idea to flush the line out before placing birds.
 - Once summer is over and you aren't using the misting system anymore, it is a good idea to blow out the line with air so you are not keeping old stale water in the lines.
 - Water quality will impact the longevity of the nozzles.
- Nozzles with an integrated filter may be hard to maintain. A 20 micron filter in front of the pump will typically work but it needs to be changed often or it will let some dirt through.

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If this isn't working and maintenance of the nozzles becomes an issue you can go down to a 1 micron filter.

- It is recommended to keep the cooling system a minimum of 30" from the ceiling. You might be able to get away with 24" but you will need to precisely control the spray to avoid watering the ceiling and creating problems.
- Consider the use of a higher quality nozzle. While stainless steel can be 50% higher, it will only need to be changed every 7-8 years as opposed to brass which will need to be changed every cycles. You can also get a finer mist with stainless steel nozzles.
- Don't overdo it:
 - Usually, you only need a nozzle every second inlet. If an average barn has 40-60 inlets you only need 20-30 cooling nozzles spread out evenly through the barn.
 - Typically a number 2 or 3 nozzle size is sufficient (a number 2 nozzle will move 2L/hour each)
 - Nozzles welded on four feet apart isn't a misting system it's an irrigation system!
 - It's a good idea to have your controller lock out the cooling if humidity gets up over 65%. This can work alongside your cycle timer - 3 minutes typically gives nice uniform air and humidity.
 - Watch the dew point when using cooling because that is what the bird actually feels in terms of temperature. If you go over 85% humidity you can cause serious harm to the birds.
 - Moisture is most impactful in the air, not on the floor/cages/ceiling: There needs to be enough air moving to suspend the moisture you have added in the air.
 - If the air looks cloudy/foggy it is too much, shut it off!
- If your barn is tunnel ventilated, you can put manifolds at the front of barn and the moist air will be drawn through the barn.
- If you have problems with low humidity in your cooler, there are humidifiers designed specifically for coolers.



The above represents information presented and discussed at three Flock Talk meetings in November 2018 by experts with a broad base of perspective. Information is from the perspective of those experts present. Farmers designing or changing ventilation systems are advised to consult their own experts who have knowledge of their specific barn and systems.

By the end of April, EFA will be launching a page on ventilation on our producer website where you will be able to find a video summarizing workshops as well as audio recordings on different topics covered in the workshops. If you have questions regarding your ventilation system, we encourage you to take a look!

Code Interpretation on Litter

The Code of Practice requires that hens housed in litter based systems must be provided with continuous access to litter. A request for a Code of Practice Interpretation was submitted to ask for clarification on whether bedding must be added to aviary systems, or whether the gradual accumulation of litter over time is sufficient.



Following a review of the Code, clarification was provided:

- The Code does not require that bedding must be added to Single-Tier and Multi-Tier Housing systems at placement, or at any other point during production. Consequently, it would not be considered a violation of the Code if supplemental bedding was not provided at or shortly after placement.
- It is acceptable to rely exclusively on the gradual build-up of litter produced naturally over the course of time in lieu of providing bedding at the time of placement.

To read the full update from NFACC on this interpretation, please visit our Code of Practice page on the Producer Website under Healthy Birds.

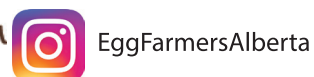
Foot Health and Litter Management

Earlier this year, EFA introduced a tool for monitoring foot health in your record keeping books. We hope that you are finding this to be a helpful management tool for your flock.

A key factor in laying hen foot health is litter quality. Keeping litter in free run facilities dry and friable is critical for foot health and requires active management. Below you will find some helpful tips and advice for managing litter quality.

- Maintain litter at the right depth – it is suggested that the optimal litter depth is about 1 inch. Hens are more likely to peck, scratch and turn the litter if it is not too deep. Working the litter in this way increases aeration and helps keep the litter dry. Lighting in the litter area can also help encourage birds to move to the litter areas.
- Frequent raking or turning of the litter can also help maintain the proper moisture level in the litter and prevent caking.

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- Maintain the right humidity level in the barn. If your barn is too humid, wet, caked litter can result and ammonia levels can increase. Dry conditions can result in increased dust and bacteria levels.
- Drinking systems that reduce spillage can help keep litter dry.
- Nipple drinkers with drip cups can help reduce water spillage.
- Check your drinking system regularly for leaks.
- Ensure the appropriate water pressure is used. If the pressure is too low, the birds won't be able to consume enough water. If the water pressure is too high, water leakage will occur, leading to wet litter.
- Water quality is also important in maintaining good quality litter. How? It keeps your bird's digestive system healthy and prevents diarrhea. I'm sure you can imagine that diarrhea in your flock could contribute to wet litter! Drinking water should have a low bacterial count and be free from E.coli and Pseudomonas.
 - Regular disinfection and flushing or cleaning of the drinking system will prevent the build-up of biofilms.
- During cold weather litter caking is typically caused by under ventilation. Air leakage can also cause litter caking – cold air has very little moisture holding ability, so very little moisture is removed from the litter in the vicinity of the cold air leak. By keeping air moving in your barn, addressing any air leaks, and possibly turning your litter more often, litter quality can be maintained.



Healthy Eggs

Investigating Salmonella

At the January Regional meetings, a number of farmers requested that EFA provide options for farmers who want to investigate reoccurring cases of Salmonella.

On farm follow up of is currently available for farms that test positive for a provincially reportable serotype of Salmonella including Enteritidis, Heidelberg and Typhimurium DT104. These on farm investigations are coordinated in partnership with Alberta Agriculture.

While EFA has resources on Cleaning and Disinfection available for all farmers, there are currently no specific follow-up actions taken when other types of Salmonella are found on farm. Other types of Salmonella are not deemed as significant of a food safety threat as they are not vertically transmitted (into the egg) and/or are not resistant to antibiotics for treatment in human health.

We understand that farmers finding themselves testing positive year after year for the same sero-type of Salmonella can be frustrated and would like to have some options available to support their efforts to eliminate the bacteria in the barn. Below we have outlined 2 options currently available for farmers to pursue if they would like to further investigate and troubleshoot their Salmonella results.

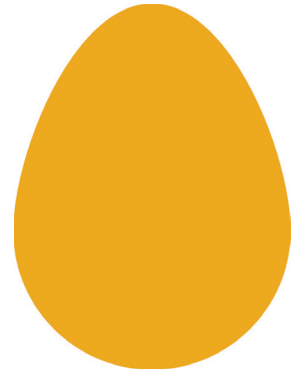
Option 1: Submit Samples to a Private Lab

Farmers can submit their own samples to a private lab. The lab will process environmental swabs from the barn to look for the presence or absence of Salmonella. This can be of benefit, because it can tell the farmer if their cleaning has been effective, or if Salmonella is present in a specific area, but does not provide a serotype.

One private lab that has confirmed their availability for processing environmental swabs for the presence of Salmonella is Exova. Exova provides sponges for sampling at a cost of \$33.64 for 10 sponges. The cost to process is \$46.69/sample. Results are ready in 3 business days.

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Samples are processed at the lab in Calgary and can be couriered or dropped off at their Edmonton location for shipping. There is a maximum 24 hour holding time for swab samples, which is important to keep in mind when sending/dropping off samples.



Exova

Ph: 1-403-291-2022

E-mail: americas@exova.com

Website: www.exova.com

Option 2: Work with a Veterinarian to Investigate

The poultry veterinarians in Alberta have indicated that they have services available to support farmers with Salmonella investigation and follow up. These services are flexible based on the needs of the farmer but can include advice on cleaning and disinfection, follow-up testing, etc.

Costs vary depending on the services requested.

Poultry Health Services

Ph: 1-888-950-2252

E-mail: pinfo@poultryhealth.ca

Website: www.poultryhealth.ca

Located in Airdrie, AB

Marshall Swine and Poultry Health Services

Ph: 1-780-672-5876

E-mail: office@marshallswineandpoultry.com

Website: www.marshallswineandpoultry.com

Located in Camrose, AB

Salmonella Testing for Cats

In January, the SC-SC program was updated, allowing cats to be used in barns in conjunction with a comprehensive pest control management system. One condition of using cats is that their litter is swabbed for SE at least once a year. We have had a number of farmers ask us where they can get their cat litter tested. The poultry veterinarian offices listed above have confirmed that they will assist farmers in completing this test.



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Healthy Farms



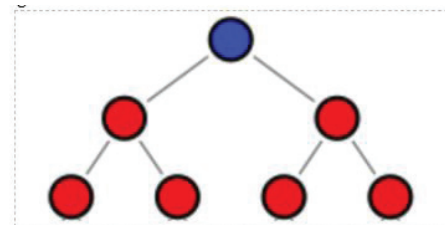
Help Promote Be Seen Be Safe!

Imagine that a serious, highly contagious poultry disease is suspected on a layer farm in Alberta. The impacted farm is visited regularly by field staff from EFA and EFC, a grader who pick-up eggs, their feed company to delivery feed, a nutritionist and salesmen representing hatcheries and other service providers.

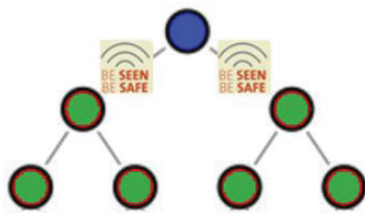
Now imagine that you get to choose what happens next:

Option 1

The government body overseeing the response initiates a traditional trace-back investigation upon confirmation of the disease. The purpose is to determine who has been on farm, and where these visitors went next. This investigation uses paper log books and interviews to work out the pathways. It is time consuming, and before the trace-back is complete, 6 more farms are found to be positive for the disease – all with direct or indirect contact with the original farm



Result: 6 positive farms. Disease is unknowingly tracked from one farm to the next.



Result: no additional positive farms. Be Seen Be Safe informs those potentially exposed and preventative action stops the spread of disease!

Option 2

When the first suspicion of disease is reported, the Alberta Poultry industry uses Be Seen Be Safe to complete a digital track and trace of visitors who have been on the impacted farm. Within seconds, anyone who has been on that farm, or has been in indirect contact with the impacted farm is sent a message advising them to increase their biosecurity and take additional caution. Farmers and service personnel take preventative action to protect the industry and no additional farms are positive for the disease.



Which option would you choose? I think everyone can agree that stopping disease spread in it's tracks through quick communication and preventative action is the ideal option. It has been proven time and again that the cost of preventing disease is significantly less than responding to an outbreak. A perfect example is happening right now in California where the government has just committed \$45 million dollars to respond to the outbreak of Newcastle disease in the State! The costs and measures for disease response impact all stakeholders in the industry and it benefits us all to do our part to prevent disease.



The good news is that the Alberta Poultry industry has the technology available to make Option 2 a reality – and with little effort from everyone involved! Please ask that every visitor to your farm downloads the Be Seen Be Safe app to their phone OR if they work for a company that has a fleet, suggest that their company gets Be Seen Be Safe installed on their truck's logistics system. Once Be Seen Be Safe is downloaded the digital log book will automatically do the rest! Keep in mind that this technology is no more invasive than a traditional log book – the difference is that it allows us to trace-back, communicate and respond much more quickly. For more information, FAQs and user guides visit www.beseenbesafe.ca.

Nielsen Update

The Nielsen retail sales data is available up to March 2nd, 2019, and indicates that in the latest 4-week period 3.3 million dozen eggs were sold in Alberta; a 1.1% increase from the previous 4-week period (ending February 2nd), and a 0.6% increase in sales compared to the same period in 2018.

Nielsen retail sales in the last 52 weeks are up 3.5% over the previous 52 weeks in Alberta, to 41.7 million dozen eggs. Specialty eggs (excluding Omega-3) have seen the largest sales growth; a 5.9% increase over the previous 52 weeks, to 3.4 million dozen eggs (8.3% of the total eggs sold in Alberta).

As a reminder, additional Nielsen trend data is available on the producer website.



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Form 7 Marketing Reports

EFA is working together with Egg Farmers of Canada to improve the quality of information collected from the Form 7 Marketing reports. Earlier this year, we began collecting information on the type of egg production including egg colour and housing type – thank-you for including this information in your reports!



There is now an additional change that will help us better understand how many eggs are sold at farm gate and how many eggs are used on the farm. Previously, all eggs sold or used on farm were reported together. In the updated form, there is a section for you to report your farm consumption (eggs used in your own kitchen) and a separate section for farm gate sales (eggs sold off the farm).

Here are some quick instructions for the new form.

- Report all eggs used on farm in the Farm Consumption section. If you do not grade eggs, note the total dozens where you see the “X”. If you are a CFIA registered grader, report your eggs used on farm by filling in the number of dozens for each grade, your total will calculate automatically.
- Report all eggs sold off farm in the Farm Gate Sales section. Ungraded dozens are recorded where you see the “Z”. Again, registered graders fill in the dozens of each grade sold.
- The total of graded and ungraded dozens will also calculate automatically.

Farm Consumption TOTAL UNGRADED X

Graded	XL	L	M	S	PW	B	C	Rejects	Leakers	GRADED DOZENS

Farm Gate Sales TOTAL UNGRADED Z

Graded	XL	L	M	S	PW	B	C	Rejects	Leakers	GRADED DOZENS
										0

An updated fillable PDF form has been added to the Producer Website with these changes. Please download a new form before you report your marketings for April. EFA is investigating the possibility of updating our online form to simplify the reporting process for you. We will keep you updated on any further changes.



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Establishing a Valid Vet/Client Relationship

In December of 2018 new federal regulations came into effect, requiring that all antibiotics (category 1, 2 and 3) be dispensed only by veterinarian prescription. Feed mills also require a prescription in order to sell medicated feed. Category 4 antibiotics can still be purchased over the counter and included in feed with no prescription.



A valid vet/client relationship (VCPR) is required for prescriptions to be written. A VCPR is a relationship between the farmer and the veterinarian and requires that the veterinarian has enough knowledge of the poultry farm, its management practices and the animals that they can make an effective assessment and treatment plan.

Do you have a veterinarian that you consider to be “your vet”? If not, you likely don’t have a valid VCPR at this time. Establishing a valid VCPR before you are facing health challenges with your flock is the ideal approach. Working with a veterinarian on a regular basis will mean that you are prepared in the event your birds require a prescription, but there are further benefits. Veterinarians can provide valuable advice to help prevent disease in your flocks and improve the production of your flock.

The Alberta Veterinary Medical Association has created a website to help you find a veterinarian to meet your needs. You can use the search function on this website to find the veterinarians in Alberta that works with commercial poultry: <https://www.abvma.ca/company/roster/companyRosterView.html>



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Healthy Communities



Egg Ambassadors

EFA would like to thank all the egg farmers who came out to the Egg Ambassador workshops last month, which were hosted in Leduc, Calgary and Lethbridge. In total, 36 farmers participated, including 16 new recruits. It is fantastic to see so many egg farmers getting engaged to help share the story of local food and farming, and to promote the Alberta egg industry!

Aggie Days Calgary was a huge success once again this year, hosting elementary schools during the week and the public on the weekend (April 3-7). Aggie Days Lethbridge was also a big draw for local elementary school students (April 10 & 11). EFA would like to thank all the Egg Ambassadors – farmers and contractors – for helping to make both Aggie Days events entertaining and educational for everybody who visited our booth!

Upcoming Events:

- April 30 – May 2 Amazing Agriculture (Edmonton)
- May 14 In-store appearances @ Save-on Foods
- June 18 In-store appearances @ Save-on Foods
- July 4-14 Calgary Stampede
- August 17/18 Alberta Open Farm Days
- Summer EFA farmer profiles

If you would like more information about EFA's Egg Ambassador program or how you can get engaged, please check the Egg Ambassador section of the producer website or call David Webb (ext.126) at the EFA office. If you would like to learn more about one of the upcoming events or sign-up for a shift, please contact Angie Lang (ext.103) at the EFA office.

The Egg Ambassador section of the producer website has been completely revamped, to include more details and resources about the program:

- Egg Ambassador toolkit
- Egg Ambassador policy & annual Code of Conduct sign-off form
- Egg Ambassador workshop presentation
- Egg Ambassador expense form template
- Key messages
- Assorted EFA resources

