

EggNotes

Board of Director

Chair & EFC Alternate: Beatrice Visser
780-674-6297

Vice Chair: Susan Schafers
780-722-3238

EFC Director: Joe Kleinsasser
403-653-4480

Director: John Hofer
403-641-2030

Director: 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

Industry Development Officer: 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
Application Support Specialist: Kelly Pow
ext: 105

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 multiple days over
Christmas, please see events calendar

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: January 11, 2019

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



EFA Board Update

Egg Farmers of Alberta implemented the Director Development Program (DDP) earlier this year, to engage the membership and stimulate Board succession planning. A Board-appointed registered producer may participate in EFA Board meetings as a non-voting Director, to gain exposure to how the EFA Board operates and to become more familiar with a number of topics that are critical to the egg industry.

Any farmer interested in applying must submit a letter of interest, explaining why they might like to be an EFA Director. Any potential applicants from a Hutterite Colony must also submit written authorization from their elders, as required. The letter must be submitted to the EFA Board office, to the attention of the Board Manager, by March 1st, 2019.

The EFA Board will review all submitted letters of intent at the first Board meeting following the Board's organizational meeting, and may choose to appoint a producer to the DDP for a period of 1 year. If you would like to learn more about the DDP, please contact any of the current EFA Directors or Susan Gal, EFA's General Manager.

EFA Board of Director's Nomination

At EFA's upcoming Annual General Meeting, two seats on the EFA Board of Directors will need to be filled. Susan Schafers has completed two consecutive 3-year terms and must stand down. Beatrice Visser has completed her first term and is eligible for re-election.

Producers will receive a nomination package in December, which will include a nomination form. The nomination form must be signed by two different registered producers (cannot be a Board Director) and must have signed consent by the nominee. Nomination forms can be submitted via email, fax or by hand, and must be received by no later than 14 days prior (February 12, 2019) to the AGM. Nominations are no longer permitted from the floor at the AGM.

EFA Annual General Meeting

EFA is preparing for its 50th Annual General Meeting, which is being held in Red Deer on Tuesday, February 26, 2019. EFA is looking forward to hosting a large crowd of registered egg farmers, value chain partners and industry stakeholders. Stay tuned for more information about EFA's upcoming AGM in the January issue of EggNotes.



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Levy Update

For 2019, The Rate of Lay (ROL) for period 1 to 7 is 25.44/dozen/hen and for periods 8 to 13 the ROL will be 26.54/dozen/hen

EFC's budget for 2019 has the national levy at \$.2695/dozen which is unchanged from current with the PIF levy at \$.2340/dozen.

The EFA Board reviewed the 2018 Operational Plan, budget and levy requirements at their December meeting. They set the total provincial levy at \$.3633/dozen, to be effective December 30, 2018 (week 1/19), which equates to \$9.242/bird for period 1 to 7 and \$9.642/bird for period 8-13.

Quota Update

The EFC Board of Directors approved a motion in November that seeks prior approval for a quota increase of 1,443,475 birds nationally, to be effective December 30, 2018 (week 1/16). Alberta's share of this allocation amounts to a total of 200,066 layers.

EFC has submitted the appropriate quota order amendments to Farm Products Council of Canada (FPCC) for prior approval. The quota increase will not take effect until EFA has received confirmation that the quota has been approved by FPCC and ratified by EFC. At that time, all producers will be notified in writing. Please note that EFA staff and Directors will not provide any information about the quota increase over the phone.

Service Fee Update

As an update on the Service Fee situation: the EFC Board of Directors has deferred a decision on the QAC Compliance Policy until their February 6, 2019 Board meeting. The EFA Board sees this deferral as an opportunity to continue discussions and is communicating with EFC and working on logistics for a meeting to discuss solutions that will benefit all the stakeholders.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish all the producers a very Merry Christmas and health and happiness for the New Year.



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Over Base Quota Fee Update

As part of the producer consultation regarding the development of the new Quota Allotment Policy, concerns were expressed about continuing on with any type of fee on issued quota. Accordingly, the Board decided to remove the Quota User Fee and replace it with levy. The Sustainable Growth Fund will replace the Over Base Quota Fund to provide funds for program based initiatives over and above what the administrative levy was intended for.

A breakdown of where the funds is spent are provided on the producer website and will be updated on a quarterly basis

The Sustainable Growth Fund levy is set on an annual basis using the following criteria:

- The levy is set at the beginning of each year
- The annual user fee will be a minimum of \$0.00/dozen/annum and a maximum of \$0.04/dozen/annum
- The estimated year-end balance in the Sustainable Growth Fund is not to exceed \$500,000

Based on the above criteria, the Sustainable Growth Fee for 2019 will be set at \$0.0012/dozen.

Quota Leasing Pool - GST Update

On August 31, 2018 a letter was sent to all producers regarding the GST treatment on the transactions for the Quota Leasing Pool. Since then we have continued to rectify the issue. The steps taken are as follows:

- Shared the unintended consequence of the GST legislation with other Egg Boards, and the Alberta SM5 group.
- Paid the producers that leased to the pool the GST on their September 2018 lease payments.
- Filed a voluntary disclosure with the Canada Revenue Agency.
- Filed a request for legislative change so that the unintended consequence of the GST legislation can be rectified. It is our hope that the change will be made retroactively.

Please contact Kari with any questions that you may have regarding this.



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Healthy Eggs

December 31st Deadline for Specialty Production Coverage

All farmers with specialty production including free run, free range and organic, can opt-in for specialty production coverage through CEIRA until December 31, 2018.

All farms with specialty production should have received an invoice directly from CEIRA for their supplemental premium. If the supplemental premium is paid to CEIRA by the deadline, specialty coverage is confirmed.

The subscriber's charge for specialty production coverage is as follows:

- Free Runbase premium + 2 cents;
- Free Rangebase premium + 4 cents;
- Organicbase premium + 6 cents.

If the invoice for specialty production coverage is not paid by December 31, the farmer has not opted into specialty coverage and conventional, caged white coverage applies to the specialty production flock for the entire production year.

To date, 66 of the 114 subscribers that have been issued an invoice have secured specialty production coverage for the 2019 production year.

If you have lost or have not received an invoice, please contact CEIRA at info@ceira.ca or call toll free at 1-877-628 9564.



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Healthy Birds



Ventilation Flock Talks

In November, over 50 attendees participated in the Flock Talk, “Ventilation: Exchanging Expertise”. EFA would like to thank the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) for helping to fund the workshops as well as our speakers Len Mandel, Mike Froese, and Luke and Kyle from 3D Energy. A big thanks also goes to Valerie Carney and Brenda Reimer from Alberta Agriculture for their key role in organizing and facilitating the event.

Over 65% of farmers who attended the event indicated that they would be implementing new practices as a result of attending the Flock Talk. We recognize not everyone was able to attend and therefore, we are making efforts to extend the learnings to all Alberta egg farmers. A videographer was present, and the sessions will be edited down into a series of short themed videos. Stay tuned for these on the producer website! In addition, over the coming months EFA will be sharing learnings on core themes in EggNotes. For this month, we will start off by sharing learnings about measuring ammonia. Other topics to be covered include minimum winter ventilation, tunnel ventilation, heating systems, cooling and misting systems, and light and rain traps.

The following advice was discussed regarding measuring ammonia in your barn:

- Keep in mind when you are measuring. Ammonia levels will fluctuate day to day and by what is going on in the barn. In thinking about when to measure ammonia, consider what your birds are exposed to and how this might impact production.
- If you are having difficulties managing high ammonia a first point of investigation is to look at your water nipples and make sure they are not leaking.
- Ammonia meters built into controllers need a lot of maintenance. An alternative is to link your controller to CO2 levels. There is a direct relationship between CO2 and ammonia. Anything above 1700 ppm CO2 and you will also see above 10 ppm of ammonia. Once you get to 5000 ppm CO2 you are likely at critical ammonia (25 ppm).
- If using CO2 as a proxy for ammonia typically you are trying to keep levels under 1700 ppm. 3500 ppm is a good level to set your minimum ventilation to kick in during winter. Some farmers have it set at 2600 ppm but this may result in losing excess heat and energy.

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- CO2 sensors on controllers can be calibrated between flocks. They usually remain accurate for 3-4 years.
- If you are using CO2 as a proxy for ammonia to manage your automatic set points, you will still need to measure and record ammonia for your animal care program. This can be done simply using test strips.
- If you are using test strips, make sure they are stored in a sealed container and not exposed to a high ammonia environment during storage. It is good practice to keep them stored in your office.
- If you are using an ammonia meter, make sure to start it up in fresh air. If you turn it on half way down the barn it will have no reference point for fresh air and will not be able to establish a baseline (your readings will be inaccurate).



For farmers in loose housing systems:

- Starting with a warm floor at placement can help facilitate ammonia management. A recommendation is to preheat the floor, making sure it is dry before putting down any bedding. Bedding should not be put down if the floor is below 22 degrees Celsius.
- Keep in mind if your barn gets very cold or freezes between flocks during cleanout it will take a lot of energy to get it back to temperature again.
- An easy test is to put newspaper down, put something heavy on it (ex. a phone book) and walk away for a while. If the concrete is still moist and/or cold condensation will appear on the bottom of the newspaper.

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. As always, EFA recommends farmers designing or changing ventilation systems to consult their own experts who have knowledge of their specific barn and systems.



More Insights on Feather Cover

Throughout 2018 EFA has been providing information to support farmers in monitoring and managing feather cover. At this time, EFA would like to reflect on why we started down this path, and then share some of what we have planned for 2019!



For a number of years, we have been hearing that outcome based measures, or measurements that look at the birds themselves, are becoming an increasingly important tool in animal welfare audits as well as for flock management. A number of EFA Board, farmers and staff were trained in the welfare quality assessments, that looked at outcome based measurements of everything from body condition, to feather cover, to beak health and bird behaviour. All that took part in the training felt that there was a lot of value from these measurements for managing flocks, but we also agreed that adopting all of the measurements at once would likely be ineffective. We decided to start by introducing one outcome based measurement to our farmers. Feather cover was selected because we had heard from a number of our farmers that feather cover was a challenge. We also know how important feather cover is for overall bird welfare and for quality egg production.

In the 2018 record book, we included a quick, easy, reliable tool for monitoring feather cover that was developed here in Canada. We encouraged farmers to monitor and record feather cover scoring 3-4 times in the flock cycle. As you've heard many times before, you can't manage what you don't measure, and these measuring tools were added so that issues could be identified and addressed early, and so that egg managers could better understand the effectiveness of changes they were making to resolve feather cover issues.

Once the feather cover monitoring was introduced, we also began to provide information on managing feather cover so that once a problem was identified, there would be a toolbox to go to for potential solutions. We launched a new page on the producer website focused on feather cover, and included articles throughout the year showcasing information about feather cover management.

Feather cover is still an area where research is underway and farmers are continuing to learn new methods for managing it in their flocks. We are looking forward to sharing new information from the Canadian Feather Cover research early in 2019 and will continue to provide further updates as they are available. We sincerely hope that farmers will use the monitoring tools provided to help inform management decisions going forward.

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We are pleased to announce that in 2019, we will be introducing a second outcome based measure to our record keeping book for monitoring. Foot health was selected as the new addition for 2019 by EFA's Production Management Committee. Foot health was selected because it can impact flocks in any type of housing system, and has a significant impact on animal welfare throughout the life of the bird. Detail on how the monitoring works will be shared at the January regional meetings.

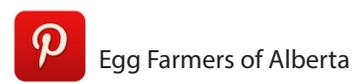


To wrap up this 2018's resources on feather cover, we are pleased to provide some insights from one of our farmers, Mike Stahl at Rosalind Colony, on managing feather cover. Mike has found success in managing feather cover by implementing the steps noted below.

Start in the pullet barn

- Add ½ KG per tonne of #1 insoluble grit (ie granite grit) in the starter– to get the crop in the birds going and the gizzard going – benefit is priming the digestive system so birds can get the most value out of their food and improves bird satiety (if they are more satisfied, they won't feel the need to search out more to eat).
- At 3 weeks move to ½ KG of #2 grit
- 6 weeks 1KG per tonne of #2 grit
- 10 weeks 2KG per tonne of #2 grit
- 15 weeks 3KG per tonne of #2 grit for the remainder of the flock cycle
- Place a 1/4 " sieve on the grinder mill at 14 weeks of age until the end of lay– this brings you to approximately 25% large particle or whole grains – this is also good for crop and gizzard development and then the nutrients break down slower so that throughout the night the birds have nutrients available.
- Raise birds on 10 hours of light (no lower) – to help improve bird weights as longer periods of light allow for more feeding time.
- Empty out feed trough once a day. Then, 4 hours before the lights go out have an evening feeding. This encourages all birds to eat at the same time, improving uniformity. If the trough is kept full all day long then uniformity goes out of wack – some birds eat really well, others that go into the scratch area and don't eat as much.
- Start peck stones at 14 weeks so that birds can get used to them. He has found that peck stones introduced in the layer barn are not as helpful as birds don't seem to adapt to them. Keep peck stones clean, or they won't be appealing (to do this you can rotate them once a day as you are completing your flock checks).

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Continue As you Move to the Layer barn



- Move birds to the layer barn at 18 weeks. This way birds can get used to the system before lay and it is less stress on the bird.
- Keep light intensity at 15 lux when the birds are first moved to the layer barn until the water consumption is the same as it was in the pullet barn (typically 2-3 days) - then you know they all have found water. At 30 weeks move to 10 lux, at 40 weeks , 5 lux and if pecking is a problem in the flock, go down as low as 3 lux.
- To increase light during lay, add 15 minutes 2 times a week, always in the evening. Moving from 12 hours per week when first moved in, up to 15 hours of light per day.
- When birds are moved over, there are 3 feedings in the morning and 3 in the afternoon to keep the feed troughs full, so that all birds find feed.
- Move peck stones from pullet barn into the lay barn – and add more if you need to (1 for every 600 birds) this is an inexpensive device for redirecting pecking behaviour.
- At 40 weeks hang free choice feeders with large particle grit.
- Give birds vitamins in their water when you move them over and a B complex a few days before you move them to help reduce stress levels. Continue with vitamins until you reach peak production – but only 2 days per week.
- The first feeding starts 2 hours after lights go on in the morning, with a feeding every hour – so that there are 3 feedings in the morning. There will be 3-4 feedings in the afternoon depending on the day length. The first few weeks of lay there will be 3 feedings, but this will move to 4 after reaching 14+ hours of light. These feedings are also spread 1 hour apart. Feeders are only filled to ½ full with each feeding. The last feeding is about 45 minutes before the lights go out. Afternoon feeding times are critical and need to be linked to the light schedule. To get your timing right, always start the first afternoon feeding 5 hours before the lights go out and keep this steady as you increase light.

We would like to thank Mike for sharing some of the strategies that have worked in his organic free run brown flocks!

Please Remember that any suggestions for managing feather cover can vary depending on bird strain, housing system and hen behavior. Work with your experts including nutritionists and veterinarians to ensure that the solutions you want to implement will be appropriate for your farm and your flock!



PEEP Update

The Board continues to have a goal that by 2020, all farmers are passing PEEP. In 2018, 149/168 farm sites assessed passed with a score of 60% or greater. Congratulations to the 21 farms scoring more than 90%!



There are two changes to PEEP for 2019. These changes were made as a result of feedback from the Production Management Committee.

Question 3.3 related to manure drying has been adjusted to reflect the goal of best nutrient use. The recommendation to dry manure has been replaced with a question focused on manure nutrient testing, soil testing, and spring or fall manure application based on agronomic requirements.

Based on feedback from farmers about last year's changes, the PMC also requested EFA adjust scoring on Question 4.7: Cooler Fans and Motors so as not to penalize producers for not having the newest technology (ex. scroll compressors and ECM motors). Accordingly, the question has been adjusted to a "stretch" element where scoring is 0-3 points versus the previous 0-10. PEEP is now scored with 163 total possible points with 98 points being considered a pass (60%).

The PMC requested that after this year, effort be made not to make any further changes to PEEP for a period to bring stability to the program.

All farmers will receive new pages for their producer manual prior to their 2019 assessment.

LAPS Update

In 2014, with funding from Growing Forward 2 (GF2), Egg Farmers of Alberta (EFA) and Alberta Hatching Egg Producers (AHEP) purchased the LAPS unit with the goal of investigating the feasibility of creating a service for routine end of lay depopulation and emergency response. Since purchasing the unit, we have had grant monies for capital improvements, program development, and service subsidization from GF2, the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA), and Alberta Agriculture and Forestry.

Funding to develop the unit and service is coming to an end and therefore, it was critical for

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the Board to evaluate the LAPS program and develop future plans. Recently, the decision was made to sell the unit. The goal is to find a purchaser who is interested in keeping the unit in Alberta with the view that it would remain accessible for depopulation.



EFA has initiated discussions with AHEP and the existing service provider to determine their interest in purchasing the unit as well as to better understand the access and service they would be willing and able to maintain without EFA.

While we wrap up grant expenditures and investigate a new service model EFA is not able to subsidize the cost of new LAPS bookings. As of November 30th, LAPS service as previously offered will be unavailable. If you have been using the LAPS unit, it is important to ensure you have an acceptable method and plan in place for your next depopulation.

If you have questions or comments about this, please call Jenna Griffin at the EFA office at 403-250-1197 x. 129.

Upcoming events

Office Closed - **December 24-26 & January 1 2019**

Calgary Regional Meeting – **January 15**, Winston Golf Club

Edmonton Regional Meeting – **January 16**, Royal Executive Inn

Lethbridge Regional Meeting – **January 23 & 24**, Coast Hotel

EFC Meeting – **February 5 & 6**, Ottawa

EFC Industry Orientation Session – **February 7**, Ottawa



Healthy Farms



Reducing the Risk of Fire on Your Farm

EFA would like to share the following article on Fire Safety, which was recently published in AgSafe's Newsletter. You can sign-up to get more great information like this by signing up to receive AgSafe's newsletter – just go to www.agsafeab.ca and click on the Newsletter sign-up button to subscribe!

There are three leading causes of farm fires, as reported by fire services, including:

- mechanical/electrical failure,
- misuse of ignition sources or igniting equipment, (heating equipment)
- design, construction or maintenance deficiencies.

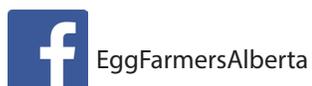
There are also other factors that contribute to the impact of fire growth and the magnitude of losses from fires. Combustible materials cannot be totally avoided on the farm, but reducing their use in construction and establishing good housekeeping practices goes a long way in reducing fire growth. Early detection and rapid fire response are key to reducing the magnitude of farm fires. Farm and agribusiness owners should periodically review potential hazards and conditions that could lead to a fire and develop a fire safety plan.

There are several operational and maintenance practices that farm operators can use to reduce the risk of fires on the farm.

GENERAL BUILDING SAFETY

- All farm buildings, regardless of size, should have a minimum of two exits, both easily accessible.
- Use building materials that are flame retardant or fire resistive. Install and maintain lightning rods and grounding cables.
- Practice good housekeeping; cobwebs and dust are combustibles.
- Remove brush, weeds, and tall grass from around buildings. Keeping a clean, clear space around buildings and general yard areas can help reduce the risk of fire spreading from one building to another.

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- Store hazardous products (e.g., herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, fertilizers) according to manufacturer's recommendations and applicable regulations.
- Compressed air cylinders should be kept in good repair; protect valves from mechanical damage.



For more information on reducing the risk of fires through electrical safety, controlling potential ignition sources, and fire safety planning [click here](#).

EFA Biosecurity Program Launching this January!

EFA would like to support our farmers in developing and maintaining effective biosecurity programs on farm! A good biosecurity program that all farm employees and visitors follow is the most important and cost-effective thing you can do to protect your flocks from disease and pathogens. While the goal of biosecurity is pretty simple – “keep what’s out of the barn out and what’s in the barn in” it takes commitment and good habits to ensure that biosecurity is maintained each and every time someone enters the barn.

Starting in January, EFA's Field Coordinators will begin delivering a bite sized, practical assessment of biosecurity while they are on farm to count or sample your flock. The assessment will focus on the barn entry and transition area, as getting this right is central to a good biosecurity program. This assessment will not be scored, but you will get a report and resources with suggestions to assist you in improving your biosecurity.

We hope that you find the time spent reviewing your biosecurity practices to be worthwhile, and that it will support you in implementing measures that will help keep your flocks healthy, productive and disease free!

Cleaning & Disinfection Resources Now Available

A new web page has been developed on the Producer website to provide easy access to the cleaning and disinfection resources available. Completing an effective cleaning & disinfection of your barn after each flock is an important step in the management of your barn—these resources provide the information needed to ensure your process is effective and breaks the cycle of infection!

To find the page, go to the Best Practices Menu option and select Cleaning & Disinfection.



Healthy Communities



World Egg Day – Get Engaged!



This past World Egg Day – October 12, 2018 – more than 60 egg farmers across Canada appeared in grocery stores, to talk with consumers and share their stories. Consumers want to know more about the food they feed their families, and enjoy meeting the farmers who provide them with fresh, local, delicious food!

Here in Alberta, 5 Egg Ambassadors participated on World Egg Day, appearing in grocery stores in Edmonton, Calgary, Okotoks and Lethbridge. Events like these are a fun and rewarding opportunity for egg farmers to interact with the people who eat the food they produce. For the consumers, it's an unexpected and wonderful chance to meet a real farmer and ask questions about all the different types of eggs, how the food was produced, and what it takes to care for laying hens.

EFA would like to thank all Egg Ambassadors for a highly successful year of engaging and educating, to help foster public trust for the egg industry!

EFA Wins 2 CAMA Awards!

Egg Farmers of Alberta was nominated for 2 CAMA awards in 2019, related to the launch of Crack'd YYC, Calgary's first egg-themed food truck. CAMA – the Canadian Agri-Marketing Association – is a network of agribusiness professionals from across Canada. Each year, CAMA hands out over 40 awards related to marketing, advertising, public relations, social media, and crisis management within the Canadian agriculture sector.

EFA is proud to announce that we are the winners of the 2018 CAMA Award for 'Company or Producer-Funded Public Relations Campaign Directed to Consumers', and the Certificate

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of Merit recipient (runner-up) for 'Company or Producer Funded PR Campaign Element (ie: tactic) Directed to Consumers'. EFA is honored to share these awards with Chef Jordon Henkel and our partners at AdFarm!



To learn more about CAMA and Best of CAMA 2018 awards, please visit: www.cama.org/best-of-cama



The Griffin Family is Growing

We are very pleased to announce that Jenna's family is about to grow. First time parents Jenna and Brad are VERY prepared for their new bundle of joy and are eagerly awaiting her expected arrival on December 26. Jenna plans to take 2 months of maternity leave and then return to work part time, and then transition back to full time hours.

During Jenna's absence, Christina will help field emails and phone calls that would otherwise have gone to Jenna.



Be sure to look in the next edition of EggNotes for some Griffin baby updates.

