Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

6 November 2014

United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 3, 2014

This release shows quarterly information on the numbers of eggs packed in UK packing stations (which covers the vast majority of total eggs produced), usage and farm-gate egg prices. It also includes monthly information on the trade in eggs and egg products.

Key results

- 6.9 million cases of eggs were packed in UK egg packing stations during the third quarter of 2014. This represents a 2% increase on the previous quarter and continues the upward trend seen over the past year back up towards the high levels last seen in 2010/11. Egg production in the coming months is not expected to continue increasing, as recent UK layer chick placings (Defra poultry statistics) have stabilised.
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through Q3 2014 was 82.3 pence per dozen, which continued the steady price decreases seen since the peak of 92.2 pence per dozen in Q1 2013.
- The production of egg products during the third quarter of 2014 totalled 25 thousand tonnes. The production of liquid egg and egg products increased by 3% compared to the same period the previous year.

This quarterly release will be next updated at 09:30 on 5 February 2015. Full time series are available to download at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/egg-statistics.

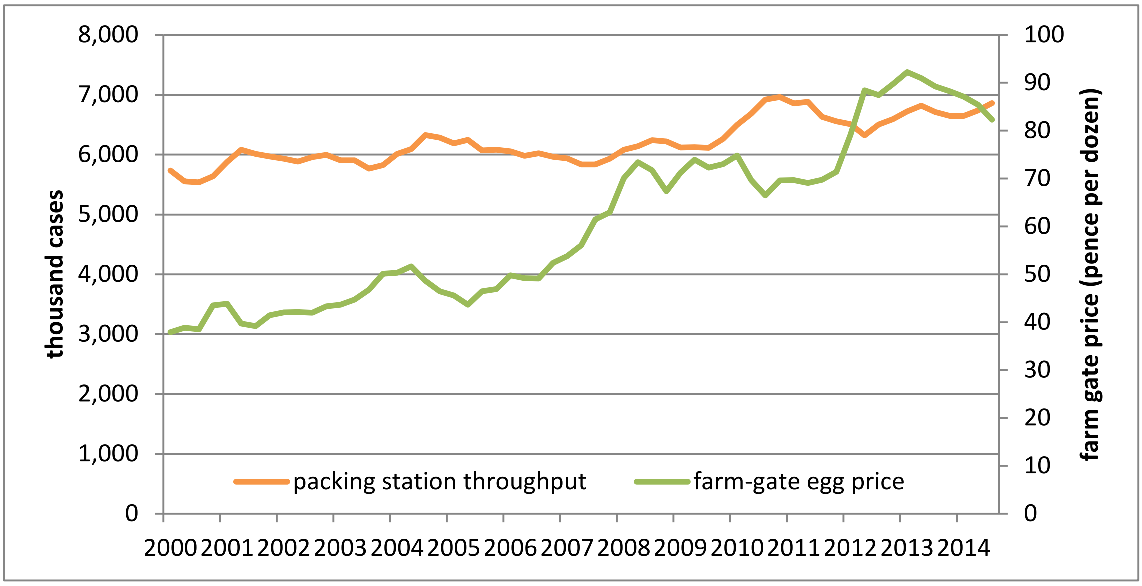
Enquiries on this publication to:
Leigh Riley, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Room 201, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1 - 2 Peasholme Green, York YO1 7PX. Tel:++ 44 (0)1904 455095, email:leigh.riley@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Section 1: UK egg packing volumes, methods of production, UK country breakdowns and price statistics

The tables in this section show quarterly information on the volumes of eggs passed through the UK egg packing stations. These eggs generally account for over 90% of total egg production. Packing station figures include throughput of both graded and ungraded eggs.

- The number of eggs which went through the packing stations in Q3 2014 increased by 2% on the previous quarter and continue the upward trend seen generally over the past year back up towards the high levels last seen in 2011 (Figure 1). Egg production is expected to stabilise in the coming months with no significant movement in the number of placings seen in the last few months.
- Egg prices have been steadily falling since the peak in Q1 2013. Looking at longer term trends over time, high egg prices have tended to precede increases in egg production, reflecting the influence this can have on the market.

Figure 1: The number of eggs packed in UK packing stations compared to the UK farm-gate egg price: 2000-2014



Note: Prices are not adjusted for inflation

Table 1: UK Packing Station egg throughput by country

thousand cases

Period		E&W	Scot	NI	UK	% change on previous year
2012	Q1	4,875	1,003	628	6,506	-5.1%
	Q2	4,751	908	660	6,319	-8.2%
	Q3	4,836	955	709	6,501	-2.0%
	Q4	4,966	967	663	6,596	0.6%
	Total	**19,428**	**3,834**	**2,660**	**25,922**	**-3.7%**
2013	Q1	5,088	942	693	6,723	3.3%
	Q2	5,119	975	725	6,819	7.9%
	Q3	4,999	936	778	6,713	3.3%
	Q4	4,909	936	801	6,646	0.8%
	Total	**20,114**	**3,790**	**2,996**	**26,901**	**3.8%**
2014	Q1	4,953	864	832	6,649	-1.1%
	Q2	4,970	861	908	6,739	-1.2%
	Q3	5,088	919	854	6,861	2.2%

Table 2: UK Packing Station egg throughput by egg production type

thousand cases

Period		Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	Total
2012	Q1	3,106	229	3,004	167	6,506
	Q2	3,046	222	2,885	167	6,319
	Q3	3,206	238	2,888	169	6,501
	Q4	3,238	259	2,939	159	6,596
	Total	**12,596**	**948**	**11,716**	**662**	**25,922**
2013	Q1	3,339	250	2,986	148	6,723
	Q2	3,426	222	3,017	155	6,819
	Q3	3,381	199	2,973	159	6,713
	Q4	3,460	218	2,820	148	6,646
	Total	**13,606**	**890**	**11,795**	**610**	**26,901**
2014	Q1	3,398	221	2,869	160	6,649
	Q2	3,485	210	2,889	154	6,739
	Q3	3,600	195	2,906	160	6,861

- Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems (intensive cages pre-2012) account for 52% of the total throughput whilst free range eggs account for 42%. The proportion of eggs produced in the differing systems has remained virtually unchanged over the past 4 years.

Figure 2: UK egg throughput by production method

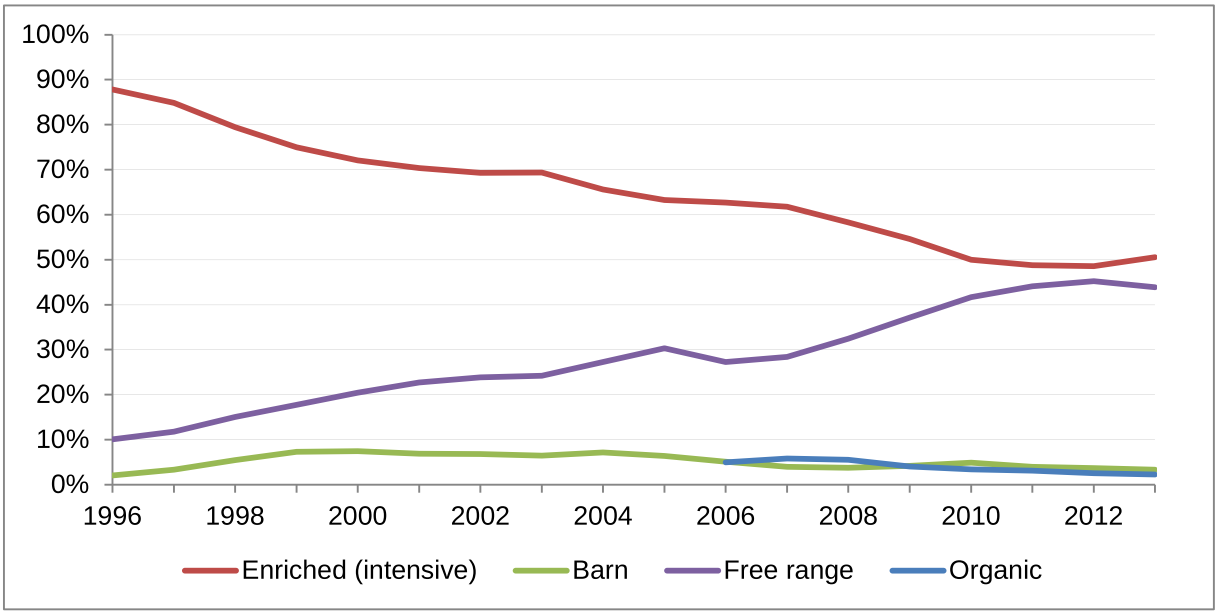


Table 3: Average UK farm-gate egg price (a)

pence per dozen

Period		Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	**All Eggs**	% change on previous year
2012	Q1	65.3	c	89.8	c	79.1	13.5%
	Q2	74.4	c	99.7	c	88.4	28.0%
	Q3	73.4	c	99.4	c	87.4	25.4%
	Q4	75.8	c	101.7	c	89.7	25.7%
	Total	**72.2**	**c**	**97.7**	**c**	**86.2**	**23.2%**
2013	Q1	77.5	c	105.6	c	92.2	16.6%
	Q2	75.4	c	105.5	c	91.0	2.9%
	Q3	72.9	c	104.3	c	89.2	2.1%
	Q4	71.3	c	105.5	c	88.2	-1.7%
	Total	**74.3**	**c**	**105.2**	**c**	**90.2**	**4.6%**
2014	Q1	69.8	c	103.6	c	87.1	-5.6%
	Q2	69.1	c	101.4	c	85.4	-6.1%
	Q3	66.7	c	97.5	c	82.3	-7.8%

'c' confidential

(a) From 2012 the price is an average across the survey period rather than an end of period weekly spot price and weighted according to the volumes packed by each packing station. Bonus payments paid are included.

Section 2: UK egg processing statistics

- The number of eggs bought by UK egg processors in Q3 2014 totalled 1.2 million cases (equating to 26 thousand tonnes), an increase of 9% on the same period in 2013, as shown in Table 4.

- Liquid egg accounted for 66% of the total production and shows a 5% decrease on the previous quarter. Production of other egg products also decreased on the previous quarter (-15%), as shown in Table 5.

Table 4: Number of eggs bought by UK Egg Processors

Period		Thousand cases	Tonnes	% change year on year
2012	Q1	1,178	25,926	-7.7%
	Q2	1,223	26,900	-8.8%
	Q3	1,228	27,017	-9.3%
	Q4	1,141	25,095	-10.9%
	Total	**4,770**	**104,938**	-9.2%
2013	Q1	1,125	24,742	-4.6%
	Q2	1,080	23,769	-11.6%
	Q3	1,090	23,979	-11.2%
	Q4	1,185	26,078	3.9%
	Total	**4,480**	**98,567**	-6.1%
2014	Q1	1,100	24,200	-2.2%
	Q2	1,294	28,460	19.7%
	Q3	1,184	26,038	8.6%

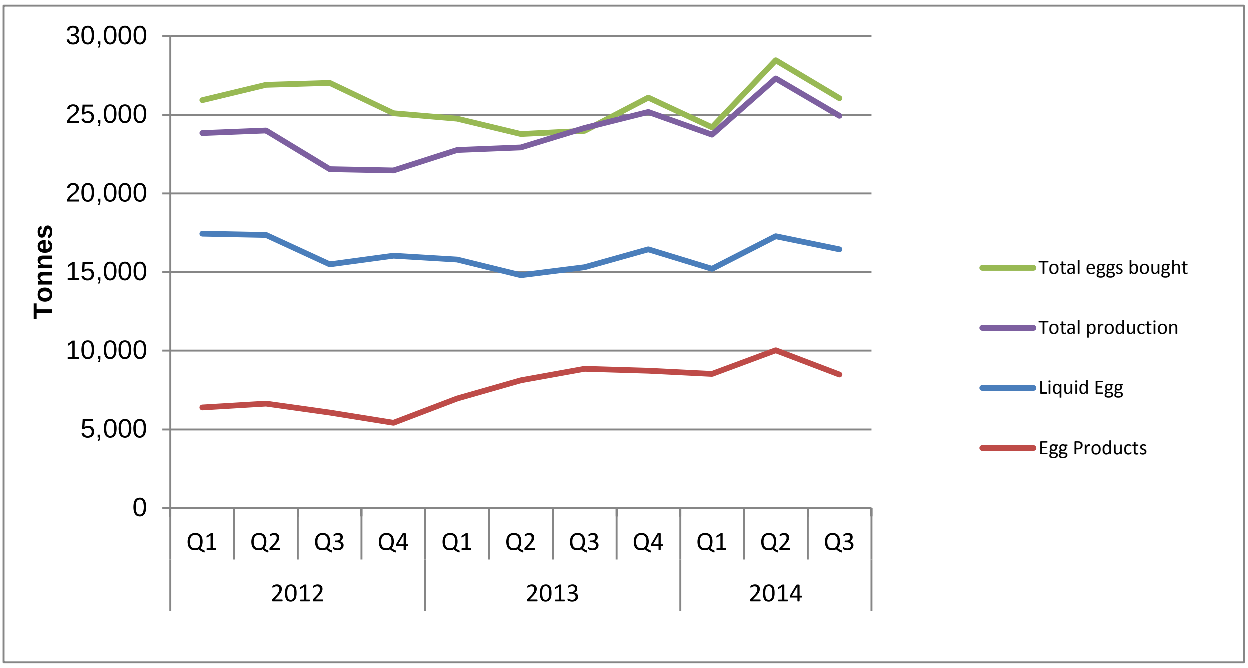
Table 5: Production of egg products by UK Egg Processors

tonnes

Period		Liquid Egg	Egg Products: Hard Boiled (a)	Egg Products: Other Products (a)	Total	% change year on year
2012	Q1	17,447	6,393		23,840	-0.6%
	Q2	17,361	6,641		24,001	-6.5%
	Q3	15,485	6,060		21,545	-17.7%
	Q4	16,045	5,409		21,454	-12.8%
	Total	**66,338**	**24,503**		**90,841**	**-9.5%**
2013	Q1	15,785	6,964		22,749	-4.6%
	Q2	14,797	8,126		22,923	-4.5%
	Q3	15,303	8,852		24,155	12.1%
	Q4	16,453	8,726		25,179	17.4%
	Total	**62,338**	**32,667**		**95,005**	**4.6%**
2014	Q1	15,198	8,529		23,727	4.3%
	Q2	17,276	10,036		27,313	19.2%
	Q3	16,436	8,489		24,925	3.2%

(a) Separate data for Hard Boiled Eggs and Other Products is currently unavailable to avoid disclosure of confidential information.

Figure 3: Intake and Production of Egg Products by UK Egg Processors (a)



(a) The volume of eggs processed also includes any processing carried out for external customers who supply their own eggs. This can cause the overall volume of eggs processed to be higher than the volume of eggs purchased, as in the statistics for Q3 2013.

Section 3: UK Egg Trade

Trade figures are supplied by HM Revenue and Customs. Trade data marked as provisional may be subject to revision. A recent investigation by HMRC has concluded the high volume of egg product exports reported between July 2012 and May 2013 were correct, though the reason for this large increase is still unclear and results look very unusual.

- The latest trade data from HMRC for August 2014 shows a 10% decrease in imports of shell eggs on the same period last year. Shell egg export figures also show a decrease (-18%) over the same period last year. These volumes are fairly small, so to give context to these figures, the number of imports in Q1 2014 (443 thousand cases) only compares to approximately 7% of the volumes of home-produced eggs packed in UK packing stations in the same period.

Table 6: UK Trade in Shell Eggs (a)

thousand cases

Calendar Months	Imports			12 Month Moving Totals	Exports			12 Month Moving Totals
	2013	2014	% change 13/14		2013	2014	% change 13/14	
January	151	142	-6%	1,708	29	29	2%	281
February	128	135	6%	1,715	25	24	-3%	280
March	164	171	5%	1,723	20	35	79%	296
April	126	147	16%	1,744	21	17	-23%	291
May	122	155	27%	1,777	26	12	-53%	277
June	125	139	11%	1,790	22	23	5%	278
July	128	140	9%	1,802	25	22	-15%	275
August	150	136	-10%	1,788	23	19	-18%	271
September	149				27			
October	144				33			
November	184				13			
December	147				16			
Total	**1,718**	**1,164**			**280**	**181**		

(a) From 2012 comm codes changed from 04070030 to 040721000, 040729100 and 040790100,
All trade data are provisional

Table 7: UK Trade in Egg Products (a)

thousand cases

Calendar Months	Imports			12 Month Moving Totals	Exports			12 Month Moving Totals
	2013	2014	% change 13/14		2013	2014	% change 13/14	
January	254	244	-4%	3,372	106	12	-89%	410
February	280	235	-16%	3,327	90	11	-88%	331
March	252	219	-13%	3,294	73	10	-86%	268
April	251	291	16%	3,334	64	12	-81%	216
May	310	284	-9%	3,308	82	8	-90%	142
June	309	245	-21%	3,244	17	9	-47%	134
July	306	270	-12%	3,208	14	10	-27%	130
August	274	232	-15%	3,166	13	10	-22%	128
September	287				11			
October	335				12			
November	251				15			
December	274				7			
Total	**3,382**	**2,020**			**504**	**82**		

(a) Figures are based on SITCs: 025.21, 025.22 and 025.30, converted to shell egg equivalent
All trade data are provisional
A recent investigation by HMRC has concluded the high volume of egg product exports reported between July 2012 and May 2013 were correct.

Section 4: Data users, methodology, notes and revisions policy

Data users

1. Users of the egg statistics include the EU Commission who require the UK farm gate egg price weekly under Regulation EC 546/2003. They have also recently issued a voluntary request for Member States to submit egg production estimates to fill a data gap that exists.

2. Representatives of the egg and poultry industry are also major users of the data. The data on egg production volumes and egg type are key sector indicators for the British Egg Industry Council (BEIC) as they reflect the size of the national laying flock. The British Free Range Egg Producers Association also make heavy use of our data as it indicates the size of the free range sector. We work closely with these users and consult widely when considering any changes to our surveys or associated datasets.

3. The Home Grown Cereals Authority (HGCA), part of the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board, rely on egg production data as a good indicator of the commercial layer flock and associated feed demand and hence grain usage by the sector.

4. Our statistics are also often heavily referenced in industry publications such as “Poultry World” and “The Ranger”, the official magazine of the British Free Range Egg Producers Association.

Methodology

5. **Egg Packing Statistics:** Total egg throughput is modelled using the number of commercial laying hens (which is based on the Defra Hatchery Survey layer chick placings), average egg yields, average mortality rates and the proportion of UK eggs that go through packing stations. To estimate further breakdowns from this total output, Defra runs a quarterly survey of registered UK egg packing stations to collect data on egg production method (i.e. free range, enriched cages etc.), country of packing and prices. This “Egg Packers survey” is a voluntary survey of 27 packing stations across the UK, which accounts for around 75% of eggs packed in the UK. The response rate is typically 100 per cent.

6. The prices obtained on the survey are weighted according to the volume of eggs packed by each packing station to obtained average prices for the UK. From 2012, prices include any bonus payments paid to producers.

7. **Egg processing statistics:** Defra runs a quarterly survey of all registered egg processors. It is a voluntary survey of 11 respondents that collects information on the number of eggs bought by egg processors and the quantity of egg products produced. The response rate is typically 100 per cent.

8. In tables that show numbers of eggs the units used are 'thousand cases'. There are 360 eggs in one case.

9. **Trade statistics:** These figures come from HM Revenue and Customs, but are validated and adjusted if necessary prior to publication. The Standard Industrial Trade Classification codes used to produce each table are given in the footnotes below the tables.

10. The data are subject to a variety of validation checks which identify inconsistencies in the data. All data are cleaned prior to publication.

11. The percentage changes shown are calculated using unrounded figures. Thus any percentage changes calculated using the published (rounded) figures may not equate exactly with the changes shown.

12. The UK 12 month moving totals represent the sum of the 12 months up to and including the date indicated. They can be seen as a trend measure that is not affected by seasonality.

13. Contact details are available on the front page of this notice, for you to send feedback or ask questions about the information provided.

Revisions policy:

14. Figures in this notice are provisional and subject to revision. We will provide information about any revisions we make to previously published information in this statistics notice, and the associated datasets. Revisions could occur for various reasons, including:

a. if we have not received survey data from respondents we make an estimate based on their previous returns. These estimates will be replaced with actual survey data when it is received.

b. survey respondents occasionally supply amended figures for previous periods.

15. This quarter there are revisions to previously published packing station figures from Q1 2014 due to revised hatchery data. For example, the total UK throughput for Q2, 2014 has been revised from 6.77 million cases to 6.74 million cases (-0.5%). There are also minor revisions to previously published trade figures from January 2013 due to revised HMRC data (For example, Imports of shell eggs during March 2014 were revised by 1.8%, 168 th cases to 172 th cases).