



United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 1, 2015

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

- 6.8 million cases of eggs were packed in UK egg packing stations during the first quarter of 2015. This represents a 0.3% decrease on the previous quarter but a 2.7% increase on the first quarter in 2014 .
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through quarter 1 2015 was 83.1 pence per dozen, which is a decrease of 4.7% on quarter 1 2014
- The production of egg products during the first quarter of 2015 totalled 26 thousand tonnes, an 8.1% increase on Q1 2014.
- Total production of liquid egg and egg products in 2014 was 102 thousand tonnes, an increase of 7.2% compared with 2013.

This quarterly release will be next updated at 09:30 on 6 August 2015. Full time series are available to download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/egg-statistics>.

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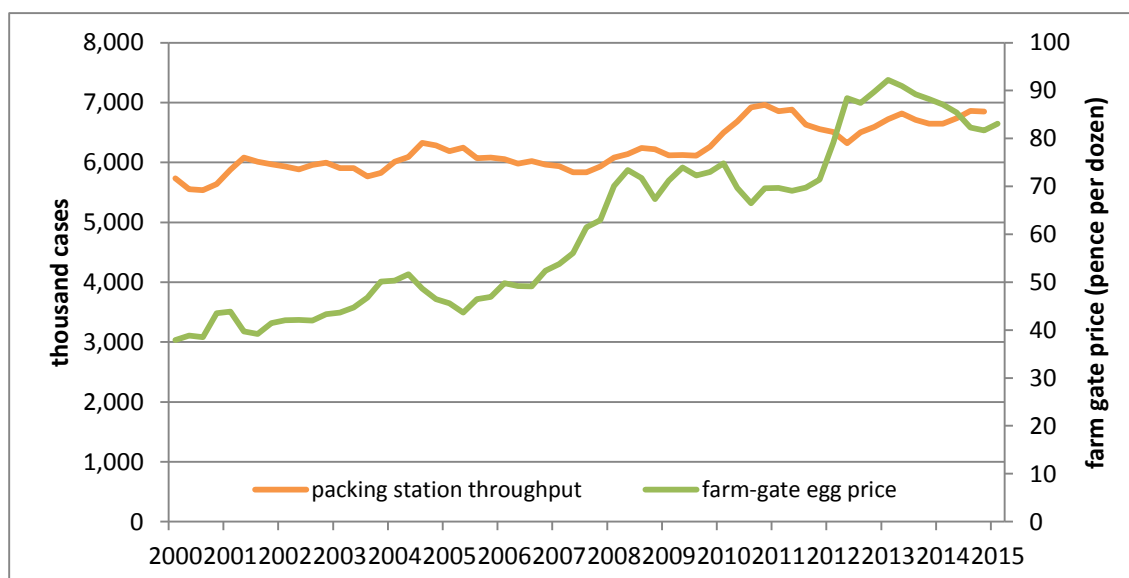
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Section 1: UK egg packing volumes, methods of production, UK country breakdowns and price statistics

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 Q1 2015 increased 2.7% on the same quarter in 2014. 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 risen for the first time since Q1 2013. Although the price for the first quarter of 2015 is down 4.7% compared to the same quarter in 2014.

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

Period		E&W	Scot	NI	UK	% change on previous year
2013	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	5,087	918	855	6,861	2.2%
	Q4	5,015	820	1,014	6,849	3.1%
	Total	20,025	3,463	3,610	27,097	0.7%
2015	Q1	5,068	871	887	6,826	2.7%

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

Period		Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	Total
2013	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	3,601	195	2,905	160	6,861
	Q4	3,613	156	2,927	152	6,849
	Total	14,097	782	11,591	627	27,097
2015	Q1	3,545	165	2,960	156	6,826

thousand cases

- Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems (intensive cages pre-2012) accounted for 52% of the total throughput in 2014, one percentage point higher than in 2013. Free range eggs accounted for 43% of 2014 throughput, one percentage point lower than in 2013. The proportion of eggs produced in the differing systems has changed little over the past 4 years.

Figure 2: UK egg throughput by production method

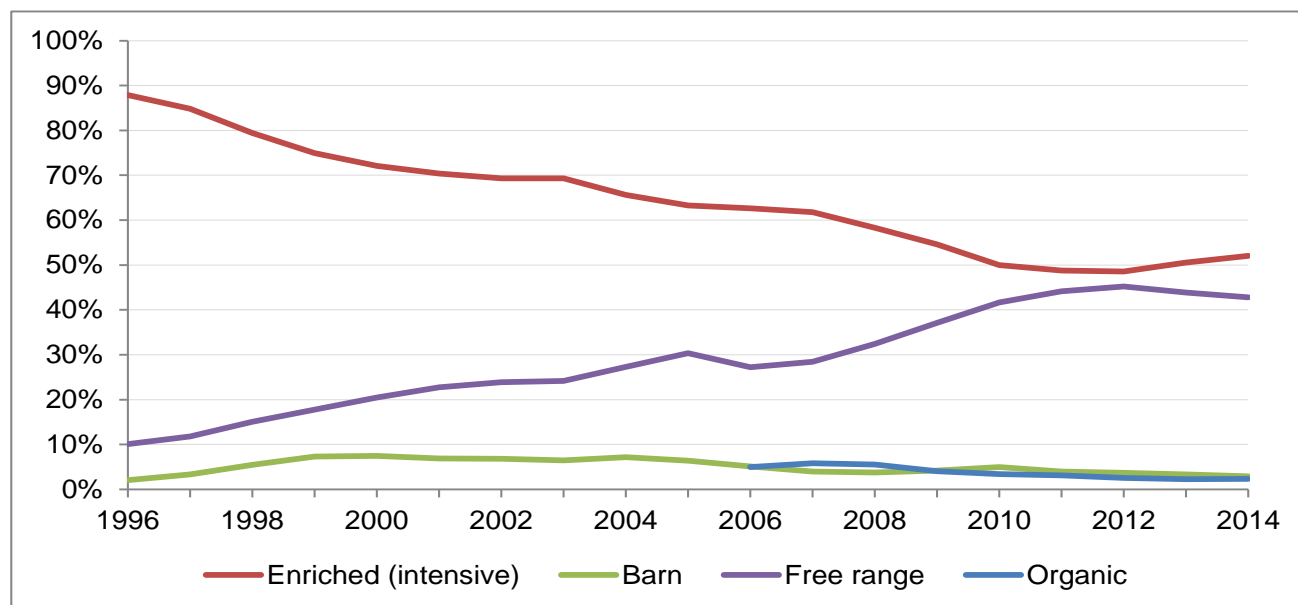


Table 3: Average UK farm-gate egg price (a)

Period		pence per dozen					
		Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	All Eggs	% change on previous year
2013	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%
	Q4	65.7	c	97.8	c	81.7	-7.5%
	Total	67.8	c	100.1	c	84.1	-6.7%
2015	Q1	65.3	c	100.6	c	83.1	-4.6%

'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 Q1 2015 totalled 1.12 million cases (equating to 25 thousand tonnes), an increase of 2.0% on the same period in 2014.
- Liquid egg accounted for 65% of the total production in Q1 2015. Total production was up 8.1% in Q1 2015 compared to the same quarter last year.

Table 4: Number of eggs bought by UK Egg Processors

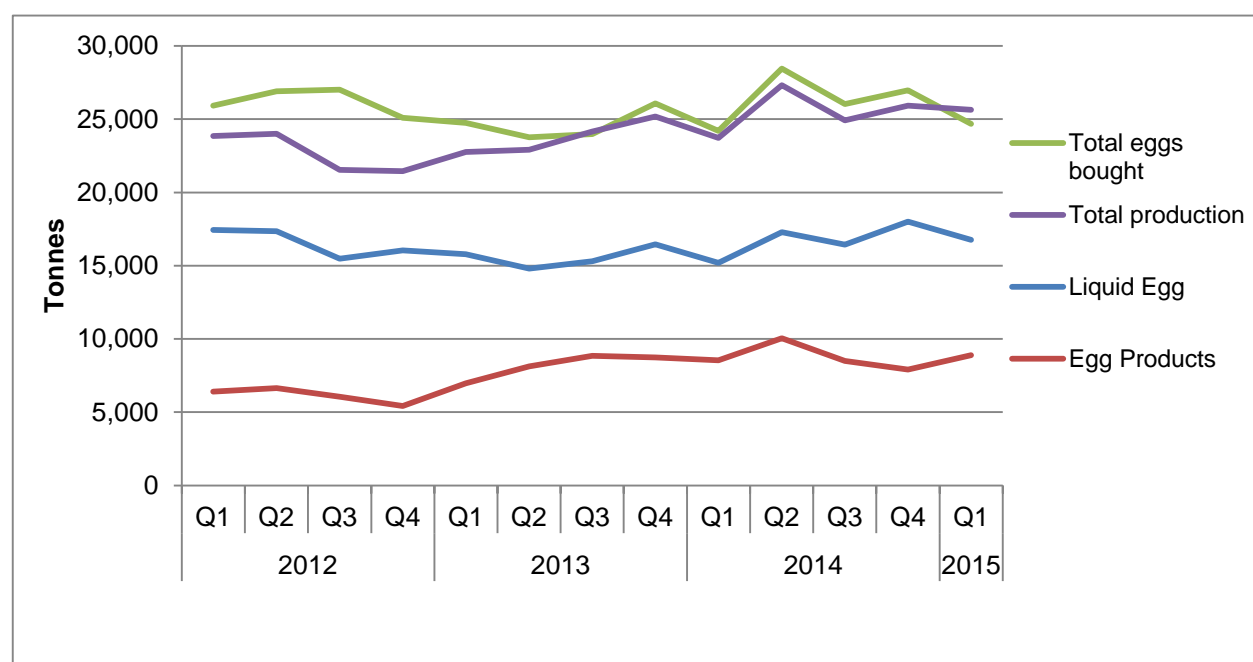
Period		Thousand cases	Tonnes	% change year on year
2013	Q2	1,080	23,769	-11.6%
	Q3	1,090	23,979	-11.2%
	Q4	1,185	26,078	3.9%
	Total	4,480	98,567	-6.1%
2014	Q1	1,100	24,200	-2.2%
	Q2	1,294	28,460	19.7%
	Q3	1,184	26,038	8.6%
	Q4	1,226	26,979	3.5%
	Total	4,804	105,677	7.2%
2015	Q1	1,122	24,688	2.0%

Table 5: Production of egg products by UK Egg Processors

Period		Liquid Egg	Egg Products		Total	% change year on year
			Hard Boiled	Other		
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%
	Q4	17,999	7,914		25,913	2.9%
	Total	66,910	34,968		101,878	7.2%
2015	Q1	16,757	8,891		25,648	8.1%

(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 data for February 2015 shows a 5.2% decrease in imports of shell eggs on the same period last year. Imports for egg products are up 41% compared to February 2014.

- Shell egg export figures for February 2015 showed an decrease of 64% over the same period in 2014 and egg product exports were also down 20% compared to February 2014.

Table 6: UK Trade in Shell Eggs (a)

thousand cases

Calendar Months	Imports			12 Month Moving Totals	Exports			12 Month Moving Totals
	2014	2015	% change 14/15		2014	2015	% change 14/15	
January	142	109	-23%	1,830	29	17	-41%	231
February	146	139	-5.2%	1,822	24	9	-64%	216
March	168				35			
April	147				17			
May	155				12			
June	143				23			
July	141				22			
August	148				19			
September	156				19			
October	180				15			
November	180				14			
December	155				15			
Total	1,862	248			243	26		

(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
	2014	2015	% change 14/15		2014	2015	% change 14/15	
January	244	278	14%	3,446	12	13	16%	132
February	237	335	41%	3,544	11	8	-20%	130
March	219				10			
April	291				12			
May	298				8			
June	245				9			
July	270				10			
August	238				10			
September	482				14			
October	294				9			
November	322				15			
December	272				10			
Total	3,412	613			130	22		

(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 obtain 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 trade figures from November 2014 due to amended HMRC data (For example, imports of egg products during November 2014 were revised upwards by 21% (67.2th cases) to 322th cases.