



## United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 4, 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

- 7.1 million cases of eggs were packed in UK egg packing stations during the fourth quarter of 2015. This represents a 2.5% increase on the previous quarter and a 4.3 % increase on the fourth quarter in 2014. The annual total for 2015 was 2.7% higher than 2014 continuing the long term upward trend.
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through the fourth quarter of 2015 was 81.0 pence per dozen, a 0.8% decrease as the same quarter in 2014. Average egg prices reached a peak in Q1 2013 at 92.2ppd, 12.1% higher than the current level.
- The production of egg products during the fourth quarter of 2015 totalled 25 thousand tonnes, a 3.2% decrease on the fourth quarter in 2014. Across the year, 2015 was 2.4% lower than 2014 but remained above 2012 and 2013 levels.

This quarterly release will be next updated at 09:30 on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Full time series are available to download at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/egg-statistics>.

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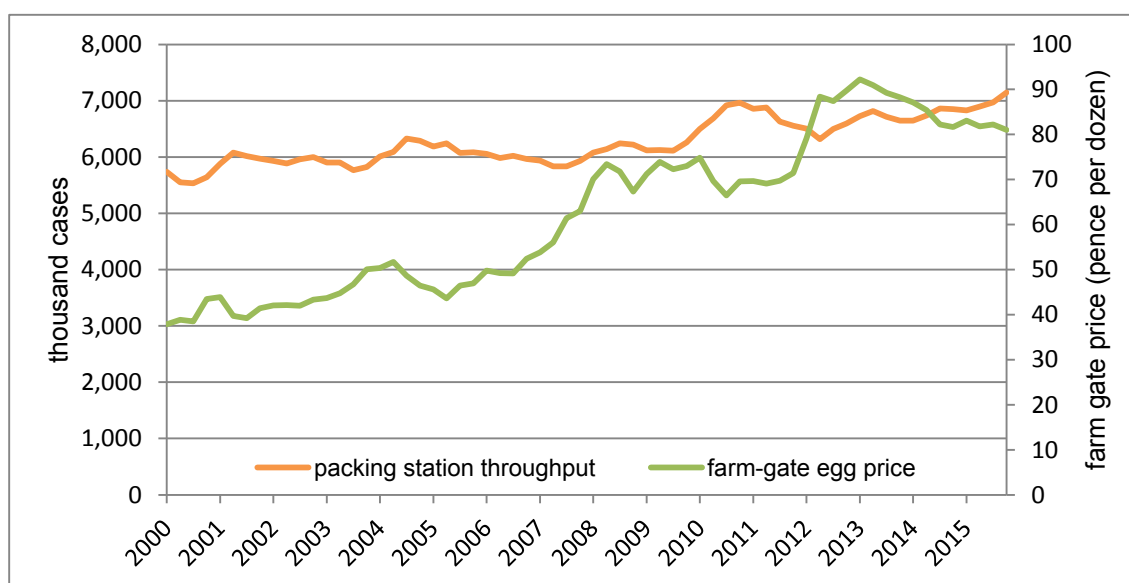
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## Section 1: UK egg packing volumes, methods of production, UK country breakdowns and price statistics

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 Q4 2015 increased 4.3% on the same quarter in 2014.
- Egg prices have decreased to 81.0p per dozen, a 0.8% fall on Q4 2014 price.

**Figure 1: The number of eggs packed in UK packing stations compared to the UK farm-gate egg price: 2000-2015**



Note: Prices are not adjusted for inflation

**Table 1: UK Packing Station egg throughput by country**

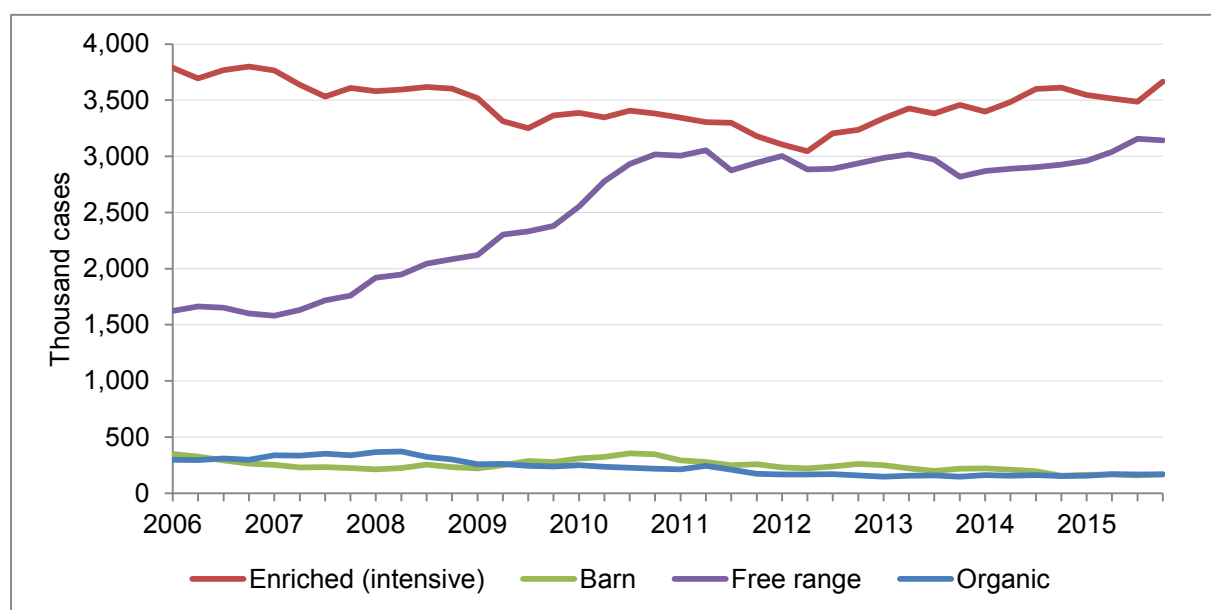
Period		Thousand cases				% change on previous year
		E&W	Scot	NI	UK	
2014	Q1	4,953	864	832	6,649	-1.1%
	Q2	4,970	861	908	6,739	-1.2%
	Q3	5,087	918	855	6,861	2.2%
	Q4	5,015	820	1,014	6,849	3.1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20,025</b>	<b>3,463</b>	<b>3,610</b>	<b>27,097</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
2015	Q1	5,068	871	887	6,826	2.7%
	Q2	5,113	868	913	6,894	2.3%
	Q3	5,114	876	980	6,970	1.6%
	Q4	5,123	943	1,078	7,144	4.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20,418</b>	<b>3,558</b>	<b>3,858</b>	<b>27,834</b>	<b>2.7%</b>

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

Period		Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	Total
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
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,097</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>11,591</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>27,097</b>
2015	Q1	3,545	165	2,960	156	6,826
	Q2	3,515	168	3,041	170	6,894
	Q3	3,486	159	3,158	166	6,970
	Q4	3,666	170	3,142	166	7,144
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,213</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>12,302</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>27,834</b>

- Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems (intensive cages pre-2012) accounted for 51% of the total throughput in 2015, one percentage point lower than in 2014. Free range eggs accounted for 44% of 2015 throughput, one percentage point higher than in 2014.

**Figure 2: UK egg throughput by production method**



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

Period		Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	All Eggs	% change on previous year
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%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>67.8</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>84.1</b>	<b>-6.7%</b>
2015	Q1	65.3	c	100.6	c	83.1	-4.6%
	Q2	64.0	c	98.4	c	81.8	-4.2%
	Q3	64.2	c	98.3	c	82.2	-0.01%
	Q4	63.1	c	98.0	c	81.0	-0.8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>64.1</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>98.8</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>82.1</b>	<b>-2.4%</b>

(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 Q4 2015 totalled 1.2 million cases (equating to 25 thousand tonnes), a decrease of 6.0% on the same period in 2014. Across the year the number of eggs bought fell 4.9% to 4.6 million cases.
- Liquid egg accounted for 71% of the total production in Q4 2015. Total production was down 3.2% in Q4 2015 compared to the same quarter last year, but 1.1% up across the whole year.

**Table 4: Number of eggs bought by UK Egg Processors**

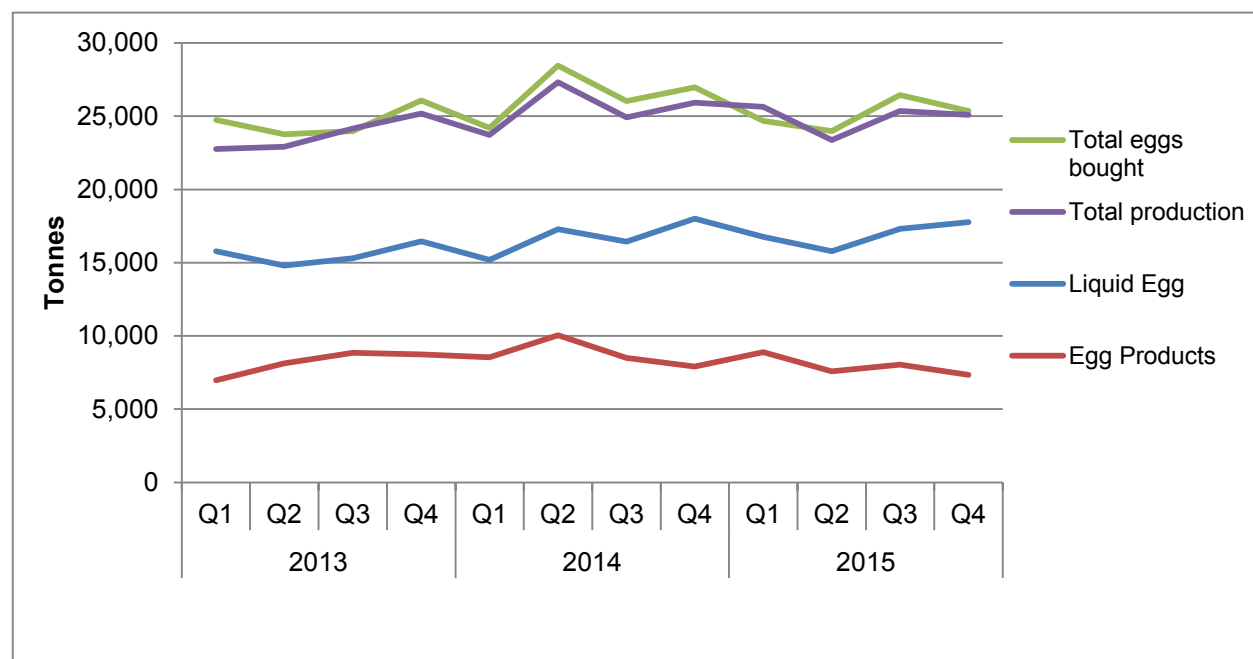
Period		Thousand cases	Tonnes	% change year on year
2014	Q1	1,100	24,200	-2.2%
	Q2	1,294	28,460	20%
	Q3	1,184	26,038	8.6%
	Q4	1,226	26,979	3.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,804</b>	<b>105,677</b>	<b>7.2%</b>
2015	Q1	1,122	24,688	2.0%
	Q2	1,091	23,991	-16%
	Q3	1,202	26,448	1.6%
	Q4	1,153	25,364	-6.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,568</b>	<b>100,491</b>	<b>-4.9%</b>

**Table 5: Production of egg products by UK Egg Processors**

Period		Liquid Egg	Egg Products		Total	% change year on year
			Hard Boiled & Other Products (a)			
2014	Q1	15,198	8,529		23,727	4.3%
	Q2	17,276	10,036		27,313	19%
	Q3	16,436	8,489		24,925	3.2%
	Q4	17,999	7,914		25,913	2.9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>66,910</b>	<b>34,968</b>		<b>101,878</b>	<b>7.2%</b>
2015	Q1	16,757	8,891		25,648	8.1%
	Q2	15,790	7,586		23,377	-14%
	Q3	17,315	8,038		25,354	1.7%
	Q4	17,761	7,334		25,096	-3.2%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>67,624</b>	<b>31,850</b>		<b>99,474</b>	<b>-2.4%</b>

(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 November 2015 shows a 33% decrease in imports of shell eggs on the same period last year. Imports for egg products are down 3.2% compared to November 2014.

- Shell egg export figures for November 2015 showed an increase of 24% over the same period in 2014 and egg product exports were down 10% compared to November 2014.

**Table 6: UK Trade in Shell Eggs (a)**

Thousand cases

Calendar Months	Imports				12 Month Moving Totals	Exports				12 Month Moving Totals
	2013	2014	2015	% change 14/15		2013	2014	2015	% change 14/15	
January	151	142	109	-23%	1,818	29	29	17	-41%	231
February	128	135	146	8.2%	1,829	25	24	9	-64%	216
March	164	168	185	9.9%	1,846	20	35	9	-74%	190
April	126	147	167	13%	1,865	21	17	9	-47%	182
May	122	155	123	-21%	1,833	26	12	13	5.2%	183
June	125	143	141	-1.3%	1,831	22	23	20	-14%	179
July	128	141	121	-15%	1,811	25	22	25	15%	183
August	150	148	139	-6.2%	1,801	23	19	15	-21%	179
September	149	156	128	-18%	1,773	27	19	12	-37%	172
October	144	180	105	-41%	1,699	33	15	17	13%	174
November	184	180	121	-33%	1,640	13	14	17	24%	177
December	147	155				16	15			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,718</b>	<b>1,851</b>	<b>1,485</b>			<b>280</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>162</b>		

(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	2015	% change 14/15		2013	2014	2015	% change 14/15	
January	254	244	278	14%	3,447	106	12	14	19%	133
February	280	237	346	46%	3,556	90	11	9	-19%	131
March	252	221	389	76%	3,724	73	10	10	-1.7%	130
April	251	291	394	35%	3,827	64	12	9	-26%	127
May	310	298	249	-16%	3,778	82	8	8	-3.0%	127
June	309	245	295	20%	3,828	17	9	9	-2.1%	127
July	306	270	286	6.2%	3,845	14	10	10	2.4%	127
August	274	238	351	48%	3,958	13	10	7	-25%	125
September	287	482	343	-29%	3,820	11	14	7	-51%	117
October	335	294	403	37%	3,929	12	9	9	-7.1%	117
November	251	322	312	-3.2%	3,919	15	15	13	-10%	115
December	274	272				7	10			
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,382</b>	<b>3,413</b>	<b>3,647</b>			<b>504</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>105</b>		

(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 have been minor revisions to Q3 2015 figures due to amended hatcheries data.**

**This quarter there have been minor revisions to May-Aug 2015 trade figures due to amended HMRC data.**