



2nd February 2017

## United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 4, 2016

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

- 7.2 million cases of eggs were packed in UK egg packing stations during the fourth quarter of 2016. This represents 0.9% increase on the fourth quarter in 2015 but virtually unchanged on the quarter three 2016.
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through the fourth quarter of 2016 was 71.4 pence per dozen, this represents a 2.0% increase on quarter three of 2016, although it represents a 12% decrease on the same quarter in 2015.
- The production of egg products during the fourth quarter of 2016 totalled 24.9 thousand tonnes, a 2.3% decrease on the previous quarter and a 0.4% decrease on the fourth quarter 2015.

This quarterly release will be next updated at 09:30 on 4th May 2017. Full time series are available to download at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/egg-statistics>.

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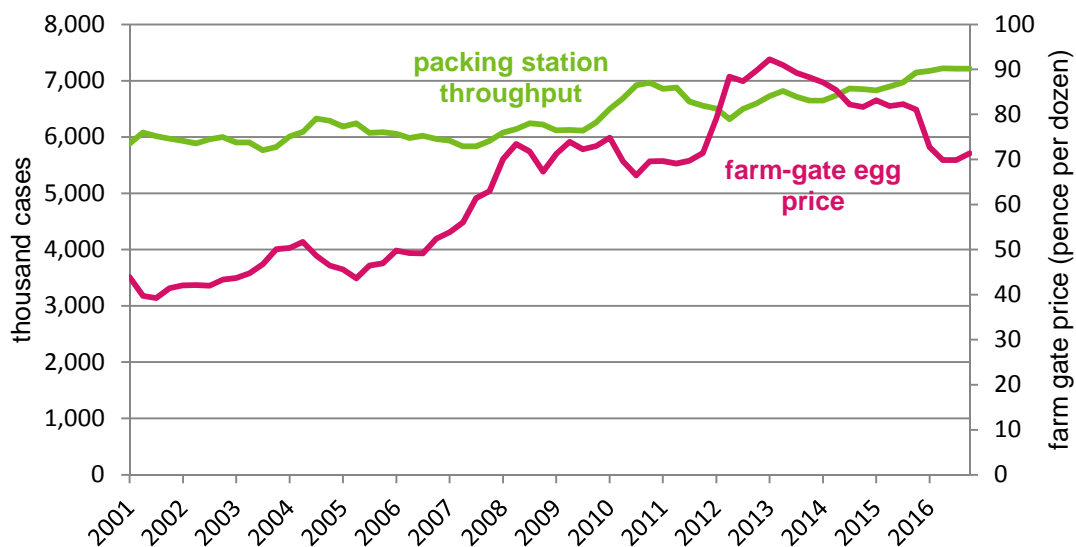
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## Section 1: UK egg packing volumes, methods of production, UK country breakdowns and price statistics

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 nearly 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 2016 increased 0.9% on the same quarter in 2015.
- Egg prices increased to 71.4p per dozen, a 12% fall on Q4 2015 price.

**Figure 1: The number of eggs packed in UK packing stations compared to the UK farm-gate egg price: 2001-2016**



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	
2015 Q1	5,060	875	891	6,826	44.0%
Q2	5,104	873	917	6,894	48.4%
Q3	5,104	880	986	6,970	49.6%
Q4	5,112	948	1,084	7,144	52.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,380</b>	<b>3,576</b>	<b>3,878</b>	<b>27,834</b>	<b>48.5%</b>
2016 Q1	5,210	940	1,023	7,172	5.1%
Q2	5,261	930	1,026	7,217	4.7%
Q3	5,108	994	1,110	7,212	3.5%
Q4	5,095	998	1,118	7,211	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,674</b>	<b>3,862</b>	<b>4,277</b>	<b>28,812</b>	<b>3.5%</b>

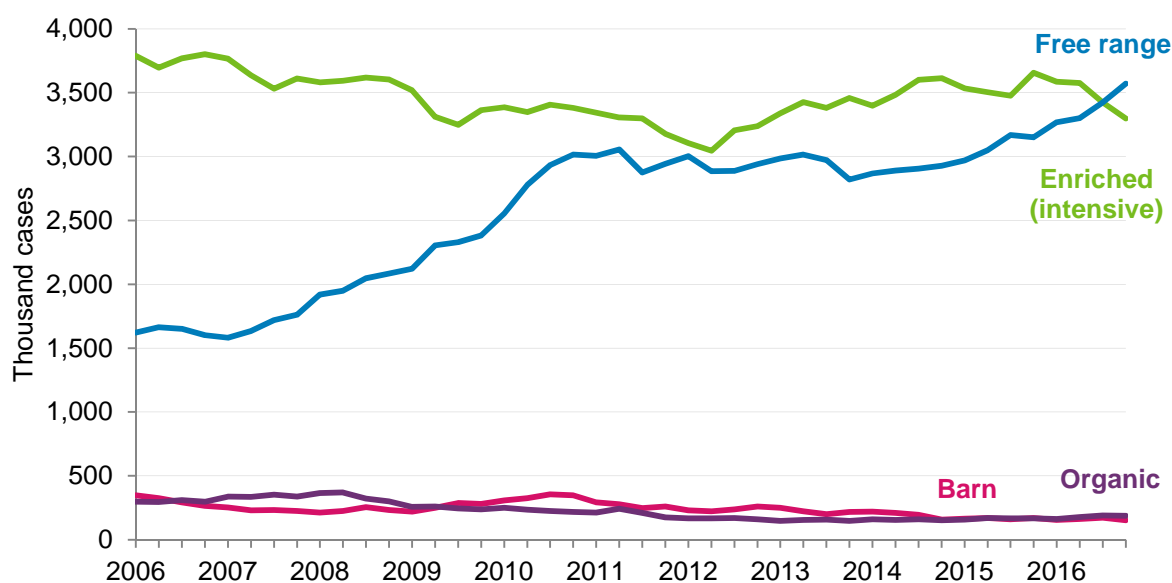
**Table 2: UK Packing Station egg throughput by egg production type**

Thousand cases

Period	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	Total
2015 Q1	3,534	166	2,970	157	6,826
Q2	3,504	169	3,050	171	6,894
Q3	3,475	159	3,167	167	6,970
Q4	3,657	171	3,150	167	7,144
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,170</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>12,338</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>27,834</b>
2016 Q1	3,587	154	3,269	162	7,172
Q2	3,577	161	3,302	177	7,217
Q3	3,424	174	3,423	191	7,212
Q4	3,298	153	3,572	189	7,211
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,886</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>13,566</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>28,812</b>

- Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems (intensive cages pre-2012) accounted for 48% of the total throughput in 2016, three percentage points lower than in 2015. Free range eggs accounted for 47% of 2016 throughput, three percentage points higher than in 2015.

**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
2015	Q1	c	100.6	c	83.2	-4.6%
	Q2	c	98.3	c	81.9	-4.2%
	Q3	c	98.3	c	82.3	0.0%
	Q4	c	98.0	c	81.1	-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>
2016	Q1	c	87.0	c	72.7	-13%
	Q2	c	83.8	c	69.9	-15%
	Q3	c	83.0	c	69.9	-15%
	Q4	c	83.2	c	71.4	-12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>84.3</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>71.0</b>	<b>-14%</b>

'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 Q4 2016 totalled 1.2 million cases (equating to 26 thousand tonnes), an increase of 2.4% on the same period in 2015.
- Liquid egg accounted for 70% of the total production in Q4 2016. Total production was down 0.4% in Q4 2016 compared to the same quarter last year.

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

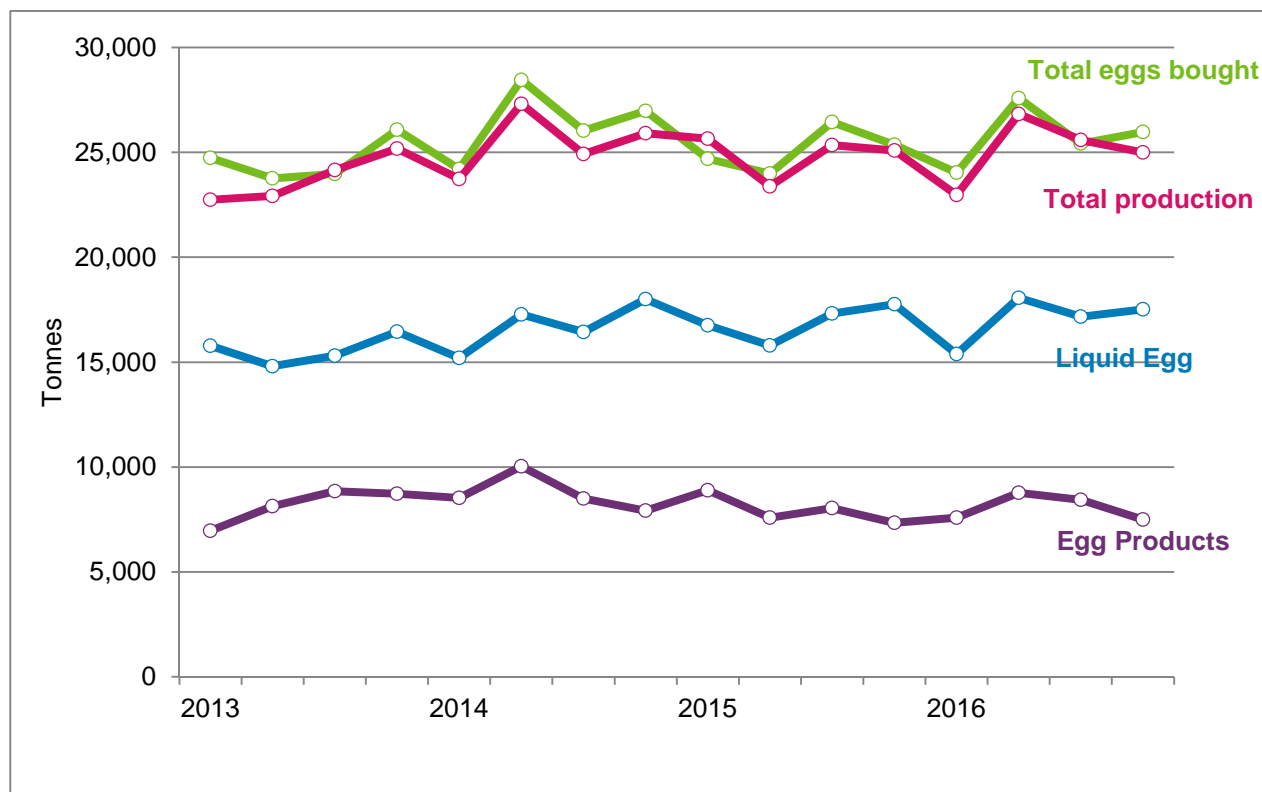
Period		Thousand cases	Tonnes	% change year on year
2015	Q1	1,122	24,688	2.0%
	Q2	1,091	23,991	-16%
	Q3	1,202	26,448	1.6%
	Q4	1,153	25,364	-6.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,568</b>	<b>100,491</b>	<b>-4.9%</b>
2016	Q1	1,092	24,034	-2.7%
	Q2	1,254	27,583	15%
	Q3	1,156	25,431	-3.8%
	Q4	1,180	25,966	2.4%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,682</b>	<b>103,014</b>	<b>2.5%</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)		
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>
2016	Q1	15,387	7,577	22,964	-10.5%
	Q2	18,058	8,770	26,828	15%
	Q3	17,160	8,434	25,594	0.9%
	Q4	17,511	7,486	24,997	-0.4%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68,116</b>	<b>32,267</b>	<b>100,383</b>	<b>0.9%</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 Q1 2015.

### Section 3: UK Egg Trade

Trade figures are supplied by HM Revenue and Customs. Trade data marked as provisional may be subject to revision.

- The latest data for November 2016 shows in imports of shell eggs at 126,000 cases, a 4.2% increase on the same period last year. Imports of egg products are up 32% at 414,000 cases compared to November 2015.
- Shell egg export figures for November 2016 are 22,000 cases, 29% up compared to the same period in 2015, whilst egg product exports were 7,000 cases, down 43% or 6,000 cases compared to November 2015.

**Table 6: UK Trade in Shell Eggs**

Thousand cases

	Imports				12 Month Moving Totals	Exports				12 Month Moving Totals
	2014	2015	2016	% change 15/16		2014	2015	2016	% change 15/16	
January	142	108	158	45%	1,620	29	17	18	2.6%	182
February	135	145	113	-22%	1,588	24	9	21	139%	194
March	168	185	129	-30%	1,533	35	9	19	104%	203
April	147	164	118	-28%	1,487	17	9	24	176%	219
May	155	123	106	-14%	1,470	12	13	20	58%	226
June	143	140	105	-25%	1,435	23	20	20	1.7%	226
July	141	120	112	-6.3%	1,427	22	25	23	-7.9%	224
August	148	138	70	-49%	1,359	19	14	22	54%	232
September	156	127	111	-13%	1,342	19	12	26	123%	246
October	180	105	120	14%	1,357	15	17	23	36%	253
November	180	121	126	4.2%	1,362	14	17	22	29%	258
December	155	94				15	20			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,851</b>	<b>1,571</b>	<b>1,268</b>			<b>243</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>238</b>		

All trade data are provisional

**Table 7: UK Trade in Egg Products (a)**

Thousand cases

	Imports				12 Month Moving Totals	Exports				12 Month Moving Totals
	2014	2015	2016	% change 15/16		2014	2015	2016	% change 15/16	
January	244	283	310	9.4%	4,291	12	14	7	-49%	105
February	237	352	343	-2.5%	4,282	11	9	8	-9.0%	104
March	221	532	354	-34%	4,104	10	10	8	-20%	102
April	291	530	349	-34%	3,923	12	9	8	-16%	100
May	298	254	307	21%	3,976	8	8	8	3.7%	101
June	245	301	380	26%	4,055	9	9	8	-9.2%	100
July	270	291	394	35%	4,157	10	10	9	-13%	99
August	238	350	325	-7.2%	4,132	10	7	10	30%	101
September	482	353	399	13%	4,178	14	7	9	22%	102
October	294	406	311	-23%	4,084	9	9	16	86%	110
November	322	313	414	32%	4,185	15	13	7	-43%	104
December	272	299				10	7			
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,413</b>	<b>4,265</b>	<b>3,886</b>			<b>130</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>97</b>		

(a) Figures are based on SITCs: 025.21, 025.22 and 025.30, converted to shell egg equivalent

All trade data are provisional

## 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 makes 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 revisions to Q3 2016 packing and processing data, the revisions are small.**

**This quarter there have been revisions to 2016 trade figures due to amended HMRC data.**