Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

4th December 2017

United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 3, 2017

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

- 7.6 million Cases of eggs were packed in UK egg packing stations during the third quarter of 2017. This represents 4.8% increase on the third quarter in 2016 and a 0.8% increase on quarter two 2017.
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through the third quarter of 2017 was 69.4 pence per dozen, this represents a 1.0% decrease on quarter two of 2017 and a 0.3% increase on the same quarter in 2016.
- The production of egg products during the third quarter of 2017 totalled 23.0 thousand tonnes, a 4.4% increase on the previous quarter and a 10% decrease on the third quarter 2016.

This quarterly release will be next updated at 09:30 on 1st February 2018. Full time series are available to download at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/egg-statistics.

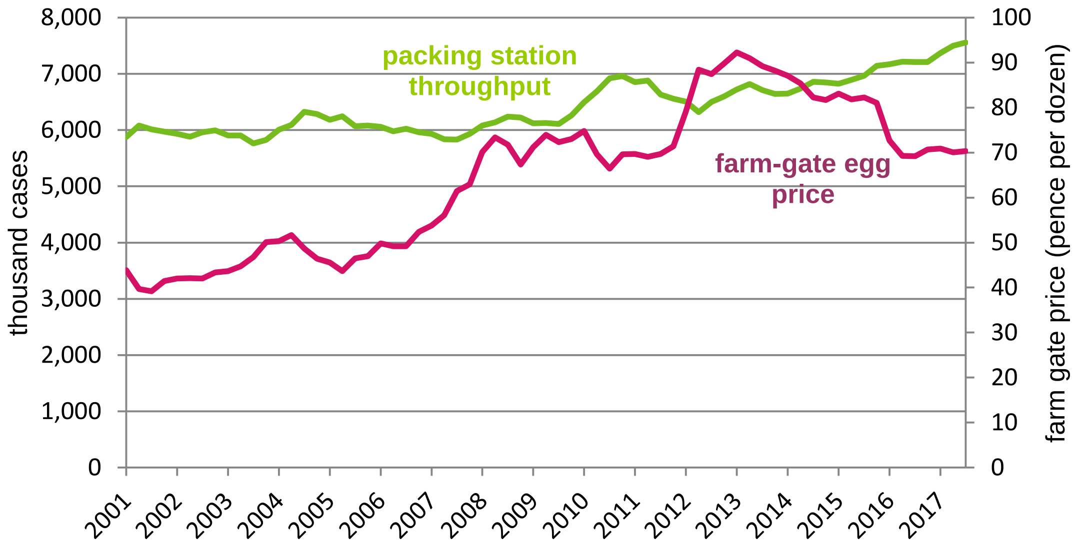
Enquiries on this publication to:
Julie Rumsey, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Room 201, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1 - 2 Peasholme Green, York YO1 7PX. Tel:++ 44 (0)208 0266306, email:julie.rumsey@defra.gsi.gov.uk

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 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 Q3 2017 increased 4.8% on the same quarter in 2016.
- Egg prices increased to 69.4p per dozen, a 0.3% rise on Q3 2016 price.

Figure 1: The number of eggs packed in UK packing stations compared to the UK farm-gate egg price: 2001-2017



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
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%
Total	**20,418**	**3,558**	**3,858**	**27,834**	**2.7%**
2016 Q1	5,219	935	1,018	7,172	5.1%
Q2	5,341	892	984	7,217	4.7%
Q3	5,197	952	1,063	7,212	3.5%
Q4	5,184	956	1,071	7,211	0.9%
Total	**20,942**	**3,735**	**4,136**	**28,812**	**3.5%**
2017 Q1	5,343	971	1,058	7,373	2.8%
Q2	5,393	983	1,122	7,498	3.9%
Q3	5,417	977	1,164	7,558	4.8%

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

Thousand cases

Period	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	Total
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
Total	**14,213**	**661**	**12,301**	**658**	**27,834**
2016 Q1	3,600	153	3,258	161	7,172
Q2	3,720	155	3,172	170	7,217
Q3	3,578	166	3,284	183	7,212
Q4	3,455	146	3,429	181	7,211
Total	**14,353**	**621**	**13,144**	**695**	**28,812**
2017 Q1	3,563	110	3,531	168	7,373
Q2	3,645	72	3,612	169	7,498
Q3	3,629	84	3,658	187	7,558

- Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems (intensive cages pre-2012) accounted for 48% of the total throughput in Q3 2017, two percentage points lower than the same quarter in 2016. Free range eggs accounted for 48% of Q3 2017 throughput, two percentage points higher than in Q3 2016.

Figure 2: UK egg throughput by production method

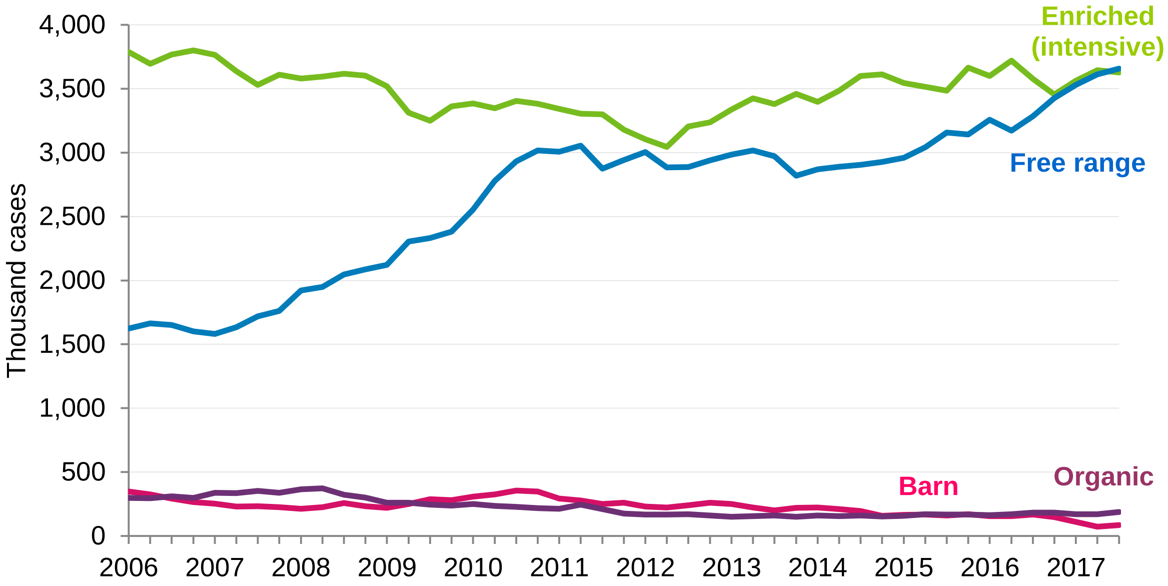


Table 3: Average UK farm-gate egg price (a)

Pence per dozen

	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	**All Eggs**	% change on
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	0.0%
Q4	63.1	c	98.0	c	81.0	-0.8%
Total	**64.1**	**c**	**98.8**	**c**	**82.1**	**-2.4%**
2016 Q1	56.4	c	87.0	c	72.6	-13%
Q2	53.9	c	83.8	c	69.3	-15%
Q3	53.3	c	83.1	c	69.2	-16%
Q4	54.5	c	83.2	c	70.7	-13%
Total	**54.5**	**c**	**84.3**	**c**	**70.5**	**-14%**
2017 Q1	54.0	c	84.3	c	70.9	-2%
Q2	53.3	c	83.3	c	70.0	1%
Q3	53.2	c	81.4	c	69.4	0%

'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 2017 totalled 1.09 million cases (equating to 24 thousand tonnes), a decrease of 5.2% on the same period in 2016.

- Liquid egg accounted for 65% of the total production in Q3 2017. Total production was down 10% in Q3 2017 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%
	Total	**4,568**	**100,491**	-4.9%
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%
	Total	**4,682**	**103,014**	2.5%
2017	Q1	1,107	24,352	1.3%
	Q2	1,061	23,342	-15%
	Q3	1,096	24,110	-5.2%

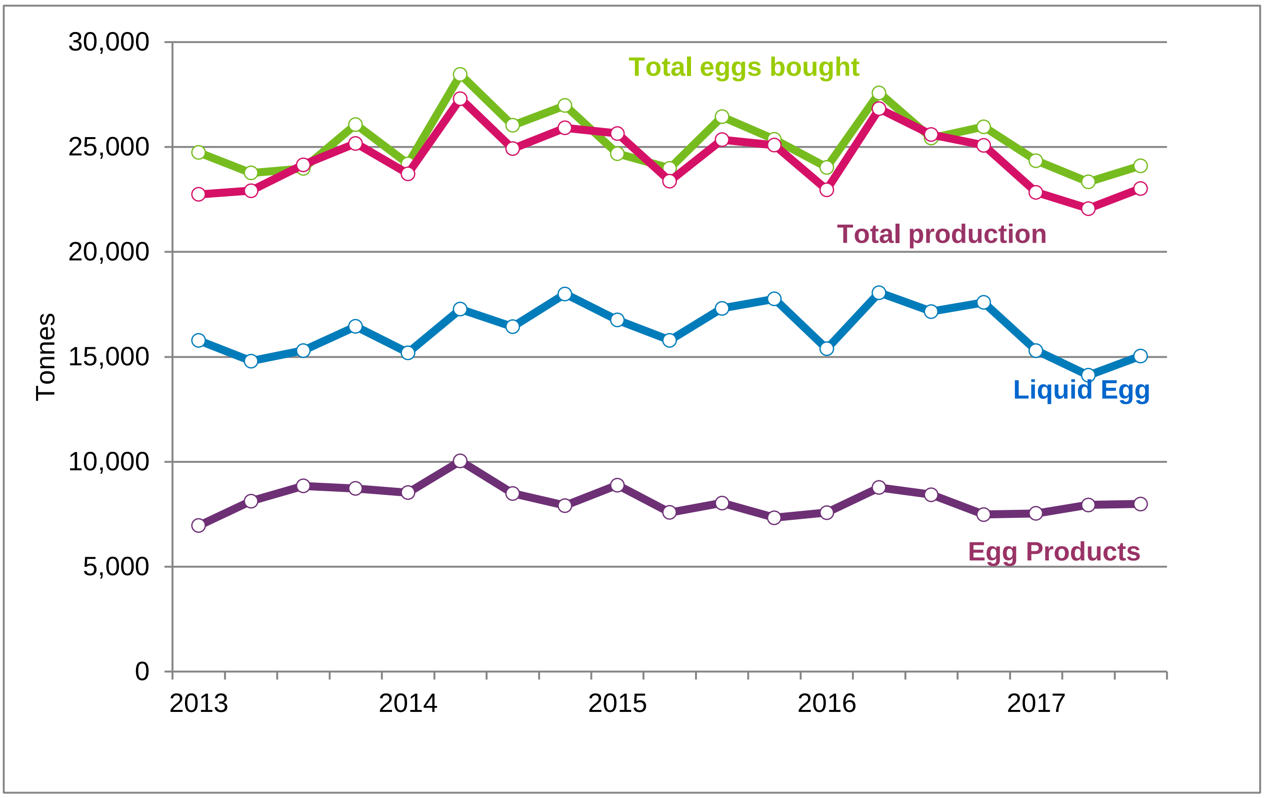
Table 5: Production of egg products by UK Egg Processors

Tonnes

Period		Liquid Egg	Egg Products: Hard Boiled & Other Products (a)	Total	% change year on year
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%
	Total	**67,624**	**31,850**	**99,474**	**-2.4%**
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	17,597	7,486	25,083	-0.1%
	Total	**68,201**	**32,267**	**100,469**	**1.0%**
2017	Q1	15,301	7,540	22,841	-0.5%
	Q2	14,124	7,941	22,066	-18%
	Q3	15,045	7,985	23,031	-10.0%

(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 August 2017 shows imports of shell eggs at 141,000 cases, a 101% increase on the same period last year. Imports of egg products are down 10% at 293,000 cases compared to August 2016.

- Shell egg export figures for August 2017 are 20,000 cases, 11% down compared to the same period in 2016, whilst egg product exports were 8,000 cases, down 17% or 1,000 cases compared to August 2016.

Table 6: UK Trade in Shell Eggs

Thousand cases

	Imports				12 Month Moving Totals	Exports				12 Month Moving Totals
	2015	2016	2017	% change 16/17		2015	2016	2017	% change 16/17	
January	108	157	138	-11.8%	1,463	17	18	22	26%	267
February	145	113	120	6.0%	1,470	9	21	18	-14%	264
March	185	129	209	61.3%	1,550	9	19	19	1%	264
April	164	118	228	93.4%	1,660	9	24	13	-45%	254
May	123	106	112	6.3%	1,667	13	20	18	-10%	251
June	140	105	153	45.7%	1,714	20	20	20	2%	252
July	120	112	180	61.0%	1,783	25	23	15	-33%	244
August	138	70	141	101.3%	1,854	14	22	20	-11%	242
September	127	110				12	26			
October	105	134				17	23			
November	121	144				17	22			
December	94	184				20	25			
Total	**1,571**	**1,482**	**1,281**			**181**	**262**	**145**		

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
	2015	2016	2017	% change 16/17		2015	2016	2017	% change 16/17	
January	283	310	349	13%	4,255	14	7	10	40%	116
February	352	342	305	-11%	4,218	9	8	11	37%	119
March	532	353	361	2%	3,572	10	8	21	163%	111
April	530	348	300	-14%	4,178	9	8	6	-18%	131
May	254	307	313	2%	2,870	8	8	10	24%	85
June	301	379	355	-6%	2,532	9	8	8	-2%	75
July	291	393	306	-22%	2,090	10	9	8	-16%	65
August	350	324	293	-10%	1,753	7	9	8	-17%	56
September	353	398				7	9			
October	406	311				9	16			
November	313	415				13	7			
December	299	335				7	17			
Total	**4,265**	**4,216**	**2,581**			**111**	**113**	**81**		

(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 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 have been revisions to Q2 2017 packing and processing data, the revisions are small.

This quarter there have been revisions to 2017 trade figures due to amended HMRC data.

In the statistical notice published on November 2nd 2017, Table 5 contained a year on year comparison between 2016 and 2017; a figure that should not have been included until all four quarters of both years are available. This comparison and any year-to date totals have been removed from Table 1 through to Table 5 within this notice. The data contained within the tables is unaffected and unchanged by this amendment.