



30 January 2020

United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 4, 2019

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

Key results

- 7.8 million cases of eggs were packed in UK egg packing stations during the fourth quarter of 2019. This represents 1.0% decrease on the fourth quarter in 2018 and a 2.2% decrease on quarter three 2019.
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through the fourth quarter of 2019 was 72.8 pence per dozen, this represents a 3.2% increase on quarter three of 2019 and a 4.1% increase on quarter four 2018.
- The production of egg products during the fourth quarter of 2019 totalled 24.3 thousand tonnes, a 1.1% increase on the previous quarter and a 1.8% increase on the fourth quarter 2018.

This quarterly release will be next updated at 09:30 on 30th April 2020. Full time series are available to download at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/egg-statistics>.

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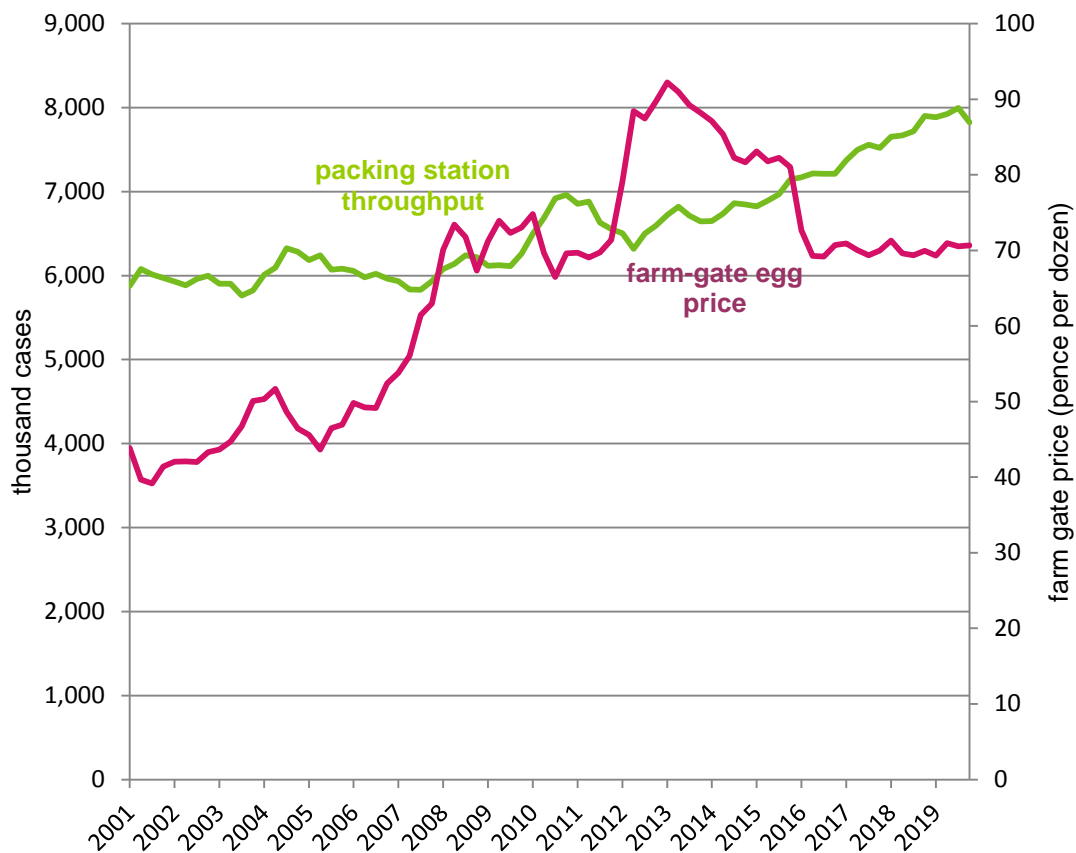
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Section 1: UK egg packing volumes, methods of production, UK country breakdowns and price statistics

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 passed through the packing stations in Q4 2019 decreased 1.0% on the same quarter in 2018.
- Egg prices increased to 72.8p per dozen, a 3.2% rise on Q3 2019 price; 4.1% higher than Q4 2018.

Figure 1: The number of eggs packed in UK packing stations compared to the UK farm-gate egg price: 2001-2019



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
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%
Q4	5,417	996	1,108	7,521	4.3%
Total	21,571	3,927	4,452	29,951	4.0%
2018 Q1	5,524	965	1,165	7,654	3.8%
Q2	5,488	1,043	1,140	7,671	2.3%
Q3	5,542	973	1,202	7,718	2.1%
Q4	5,605	1,047	1,248	7,900	5.0%
Total	22,159	4,028	4,755	30,943	3.3%
2019 Q1	5,688	990	1,208	7,886	3.0%
Q2	5,788	960	1,177	7,926	3.3%
Q3	5,735	998	1,265	7,998	3.6%
Q4	5,599	1,011	1,214	7,824	-1.0%
Total	22,810	3,960	4,863	31,633	2.2%

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

					Thousand cases
Period	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	Total
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
Q4	3,549	87	3,699	187	7,521
Total	14,385	354	14,501	710	29,951
2018 Q1	3,436	106	3,918	195	7,654
Q2	3,396	94	4,021	160	7,671
Q3	3,447	100	3,981	190	7,718
Q4	3,438	141	4,094	227	7,900
Total	13,718	441	16,013	771	30,943
2019 Q1	3,404	136	4,108	238	7,886
Q2	3,299	151	4,219	257	7,926
Q3	3,384	156	4,205	253	7,998
Q4	3,266	158	4,153	247	7,824
Total	13,353	601	16,685	994	31,633

- Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems accounted for 42% of the total throughput in Q4 2019, two percentage points lower than the same quarter in 2018. Free range eggs accounted for 53% of Q4 2019 throughput.

Figure 2: UK egg throughput by production method

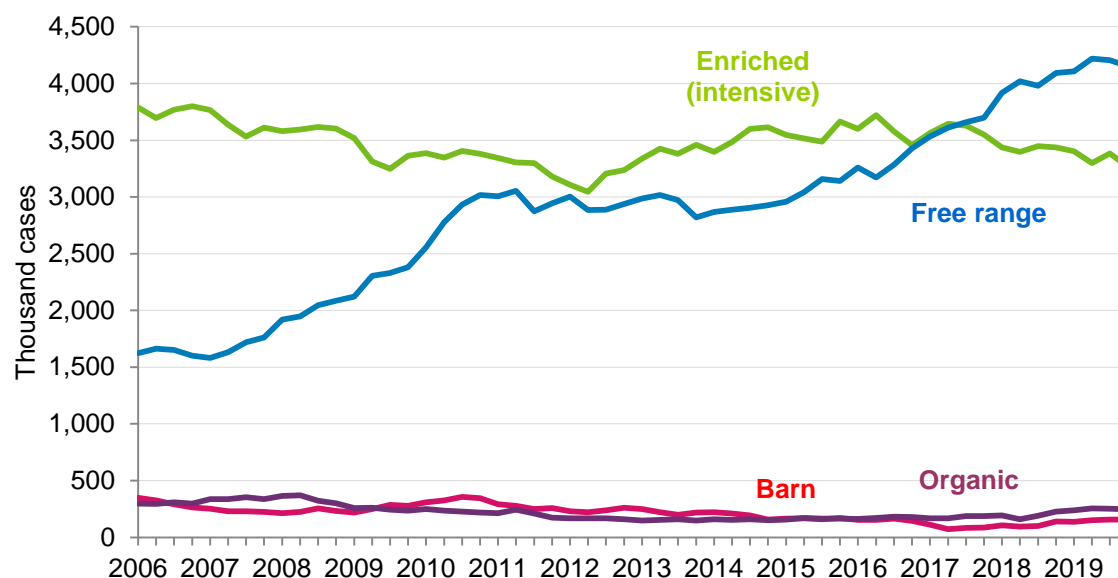


Table 3: Average UK farm-gate egg price (a)

	Pence per dozen					% change on previous year
	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	All Eggs	
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	-2.4%
Q2	53.3	c	83.3	c	70.0	1.1%
Q3	53.2	c	81.4	c	69.4	0.3%
Q4	54.2	c	81.2	c	70.0	-1.0%
Total	53.7	c	82.6	c	70.1	-0.5%
2018 Q1	54.1	c	82.7	c	71.3	0.6%
Q2	52.4	c	81.2	c	69.6	-0.6%
Q3	50.6	c	82.3	c	69.3	0.0%
Q4	51.6	c	81.0	c	70.0	0.0%
Total	52.2	c	81.8	c	70.1	0.0%
2019 Q1	51.7	c	79.2	c	69.3	-2.8%
Q2	53.0	c	80.4	c	71.0	2.0%
Q3	53.5	c	80.2	c	70.6	1.7%
Q4	56.3	c	81.5	c	72.8	4.1%
Total	53.6	c	80.3	c	70.9	1.2%

'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 2019 totalled 1,101 thousand cases (equating to 24.2 thousand tonnes), a decrease of 5.0% on the same period in 2018.
- Liquid egg accounted for 64% of the total production in Q4 2019. Total production was up 1.8% in Q4 2019 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
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	1,087	23,907	-6.0%
	Q4	1,102	24,243	-6.6%
	Total	4,357	95,844	-7.0%
2018	Q1	1,120	24,640	1.2%
	Q2	1,174	25,833	11%
	Q3	1,194	26,264	9.9%
	Q4	1,160	25,512	5.2%
	Total	4,648	102,249	6.7%
2019	Q1	1,007	22,156	-10%
	Q2	1,048	23,059	-11%
	Q3	1,064	23,398	-11%
	Q4	1,101	24,231	-5.0%
	Total	4,220	92,844	-9.2%

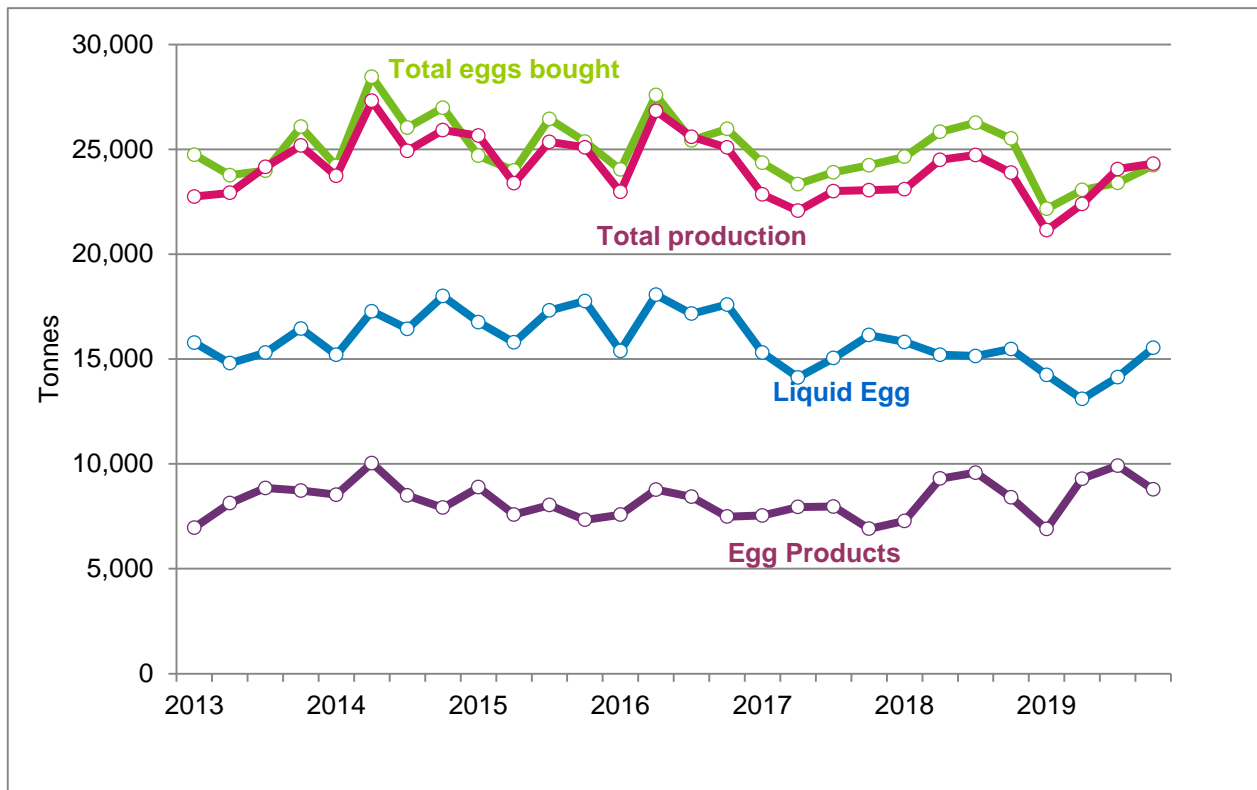
Table 5: Production of egg products by UK Egg Processors

Tonnes

Period		Liquid Egg	Egg Products	Total	% change year on year
			Hard Boiled & Other Products (a)		
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	7,962	23,008	-10.1%
	Q4	16,143	6,907	23,050	-8.1%
	Total	60,613	30,352	90,965	-9.5%
2018	Q1	15,816	7,279	23,096	1.1%
	Q2	15,201	9,300	24,501	11%
	Q3	15,146	9,579	24,725	7.5%
	Q4	15,480	8,400	23,880	3.6%
	Total	61,643	34,559	96,202	5.8%
2019	Q1	14,241	6,894	21,135	-8.5%
	Q2	13,092	9,294	22,386	-8.6%
	Q3	14,135	9,920	24,055	-2.7%
	Q4	15,534	8,780	24,314	1.8%
	Total	57,002	34,888	91,890	-4.5%

(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 2019.

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 2019 shows imports of shell eggs at 64,000 cases, a 52% decrease on the same period last year. Imports of egg products are down 36% at 220,000 cases compared to November 2018.
- Shell egg export figures for November 2019 are 31,000 cases, 47% down compared to the same period in 2018, whilst egg product exports were 22,000 cases, up 79% compared to November 2018.
- The data highlighted in the table below has been subject to challenge with HMRC and should therefore be treated with caution although no errors have been notified.

Table 6: UK Trade in Shell Eggs

Thousand cases

	Imports					12 Month Moving Totals	Exports					12 Month Moving Totals
	2016	2017	2018	2019	% change 18/19		2016	2017	2018	2019	% change 18/19	
January	157	136	111	74	-33%	1,383	18	22	17	32	83%	1,068
February	113	119	106	92	-13%	1,369	21	18	450	54	-88%	673
March	129	206	129	73	-44%	1,312	19	19	246	25	-90%	1,506
April	118	228	170	94	-45%	1,236	24	13	17	53	220%	489
May	106	112	160	141	-12%	1,217	20	18	28	27	-1%	488
June	105	151	111	62	-44%	1,168	20	20	67	42	-37%	463
July	112	178	104	74	-28%	1,139	23	15	25	43	71%	481
August	70	139	111	75	-33%	1,103	22	20	65	109	67%	526
September	110	79	118	103	-12%	1,088	26	26	29	59	104%	555
October	134	76	93	180	95%	1,176	23	76	26	79	208%	609
November	144	75	133	64	-52%	1,108	22	23	58	31	-47%	582
December	184	136	74				25	22	27			
Total	1,482	1,635	1,419	1,033			262	291	1,054	555		

NOTE: HIGHLIGHTED EXPORT DATA HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO CHALLENGE WITH HMRC AND SHOULD THEREFORE BE TREATED WITH CAUTION

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
	2016	2017	2018	2019	% change 18/19		2016	2017	2018	2019	% change 18/19	
January	310	347	296	327	10%	3,881	7	10	8	14	73%	123
February	342	304	330	339	2.8%	3,890	8	11	8	12	50%	127
March	353	360	358	509	42%	4,040	8	21	9	11	33%	130
April	348	300	297	244	-18%	3,987	8	6	7	13	99%	137
May	307	313	367	279	-24%	3,898	8	10	9	14	51%	141
June	379	355	323	264	-18%	3,840	8	8	9	12	32%	144
July	393	309	325	255	-22%	3,769	9	7	9	18	113%	154
August	324	297	307	234	-24%	3,697	9	8	12	13	7.9%	155
September	398	318	289	252	-13%	3,659	9	10	10	9	-4.2%	155
October	311	320	339	354	4.4%	3,674	16	7	14	22	55%	162
November	415	376	345	220	-36%	3,549	7	7	12	22	79%	172
December	335	285	273				17	12	11			
Total	4,216	3,884	3,850	3,276			113	117	117	161		

(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 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 Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB – cereals and oilseeds), 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:** The number of commercial laying hens is estimated based on the Defra Hatchery Survey layer chick placings. Total egg throughput is modelled using the number of commercial laying hens, 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. It collects data on egg production methods (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.

National Statistics status

14. National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.
15. The statistics last underwent a full assessment [[Assessment Report 271 Statistics on Agriculture](#)] against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) in 2014.
16. Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics and have enhanced data quality by reviewing methodologies and data sources.

Revisions policy:

17. 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.