



30 April 2020

Our survey response was lower than usual at 70% for egg processors and 59% for egg packers, which may be due to the effects of Covid-19. We estimated for non-responders based on the responses received and the companies previous quarter's response. As the full effects of Covid-19 were only present at the end of the reviewed quarter, it is believed there will only be a minor effect on this reviewed period.

United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 1, 2020

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 first quarter of 2020. This represents 1.0% decrease on the first quarter in 2019 and a 0.2% decrease on quarter four 2019.
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through the first quarter of 2020 was 75.5 pence per dozen, this represents a 9.0% increase on quarter one of 2019 and a 4.0% increase on quarter four 2019.
- The production of egg products during the first quarter of 2020 totalled 22.3 thousand tonnes, a 5.0% decrease on the previous quarter and a 5.6% increase on the first quarter 2019.

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

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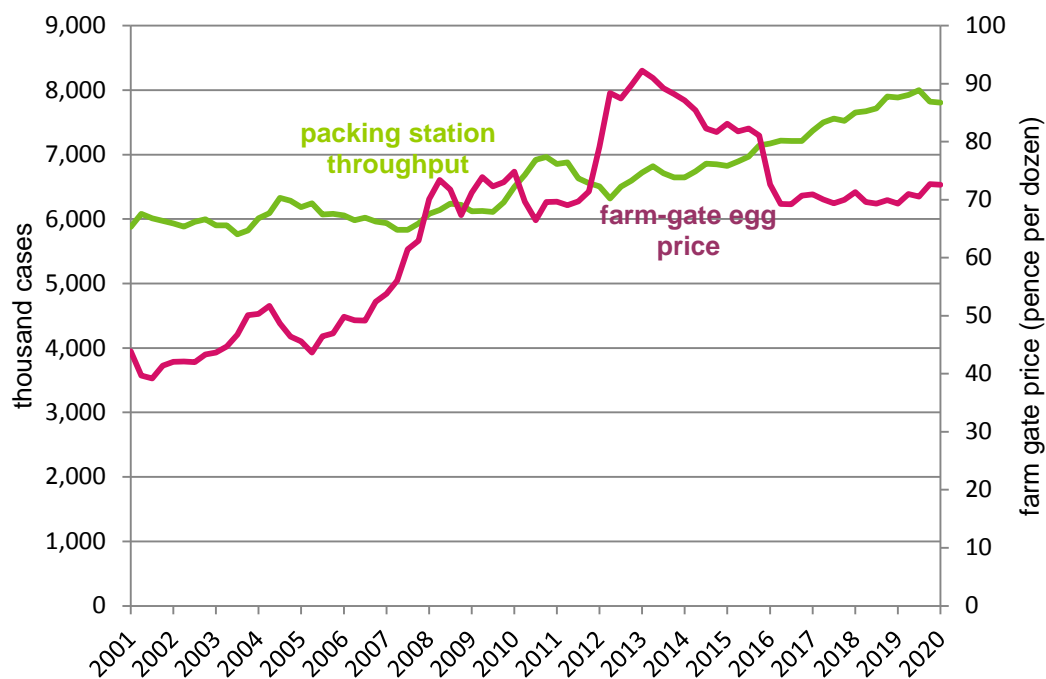
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Section 1: UK egg packing volumes, methods of production, UK country breakdowns and price statistics

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 Q1 2020 decreased 1.0% on the same quarter in 2019.
- Egg prices increased to 75.5p per dozen, a 4.0% rise on Q4 2019 price; 9.0% higher than Q1 2019.

Figure 1: The number of eggs packed in UK packing stations compared to the UK farm-gate price: 2001-2020



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
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	5,612	1,005	1,206	7,824	-1.0%
Total	22,823	3,954	4,856	31,633	2.2%
2020 Q1	5,615	976	1,217	7,808	-1.0%

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

					Thousand cases
Period	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	Total
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	3,306	157	4,114	247	7,824
Total	13,393	601	16,645	994	31,633
2020 Q1	3,326	197	4,032	254	7,808

- Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems accounted for 43% of the total throughput in Q1 2020, remaining the same as the same quarter in 2019. Free range eggs accounted for 52% of Q1 2020 throughput.

Figure 2: UK egg throughput by production method

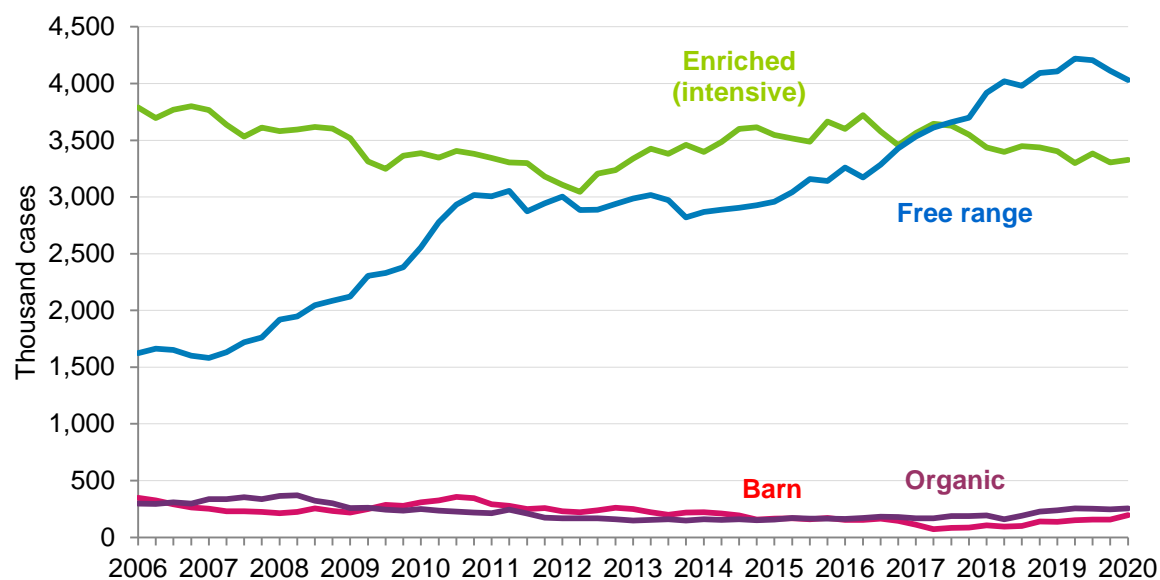


Table 3: Average UK farm-gate egg price (a)

	Pence per dozen					% change on previous year
	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	All Eggs	
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	56.4	c	81.4	c	72.7	3.9%
Total	53.6	c	80.3	c	70.9	1.2%
2020 Q1	56.4	c	86.5	c	75.5	9.0%

'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 Q1 2020 totalled 1,078 thousand cases (equating to 23.7 thousand tonnes), an increase of 7.1% on the same period in 2019.
- Liquid egg accounted for 68% of the total production in Q1 2020. Total production was up 5.6% in Q1 2020 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
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	1,103	24,276	-4.8%
	Total	4,222	92,889	-9.2%
2020	Q1	1,078	23,727	7.1%

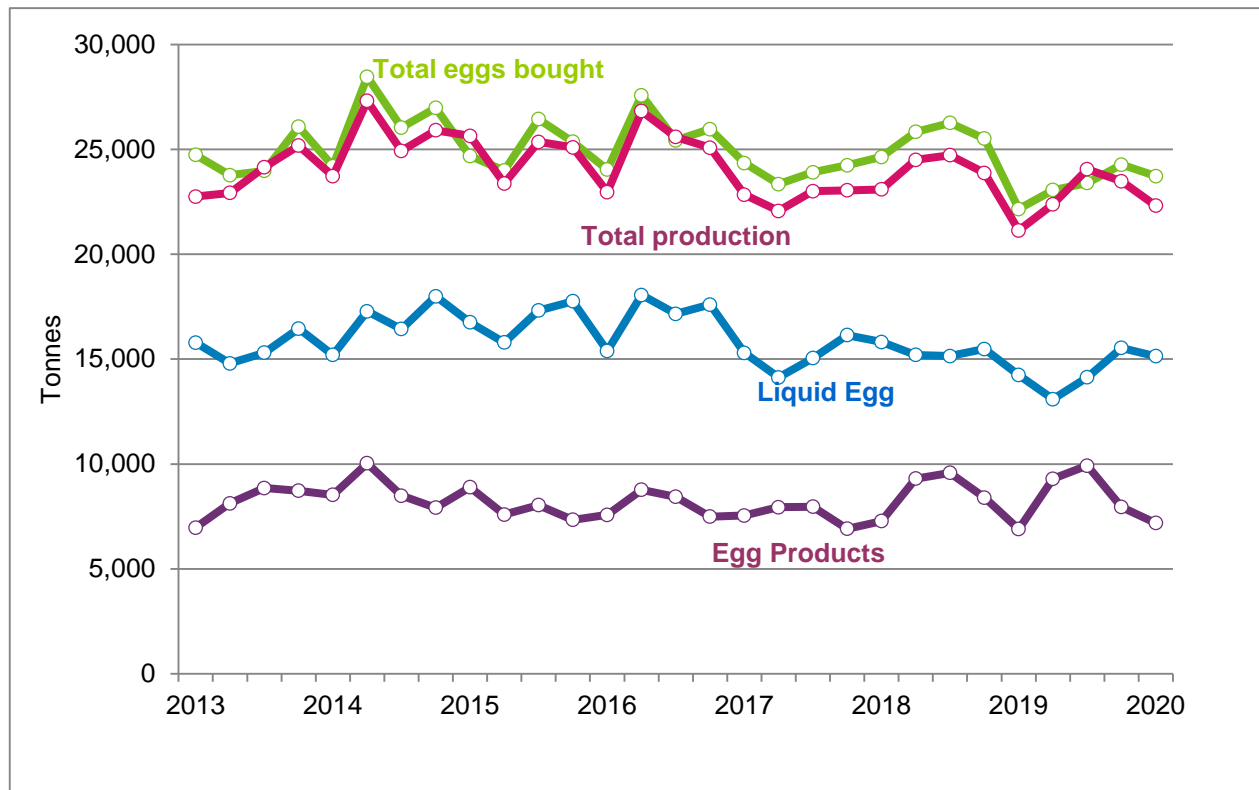
Table 5: Production of egg products by UK Egg Processors

Tonnes

Period		Liquid Egg	Egg Products	Total	% change year on year
			Hard Boiled & Other Products (a)		
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	7,950	23,485	-1.7%
	Total	57,002	34,058	91,060	-5.3%
2020	Q1	15,136	7,183	22,319	5.6%

(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 February 2020 shows imports of shell eggs at 66,000 cases, a 28% decrease on the same period last year. Imports of egg products are down 34% at 455,000 cases compared to February 2019.
- Shell egg export figures for February 2020 are 32,000 cases, 42% down compared to the same period in 2019, whilst egg product exports were 24,000 cases, up 104% compared to February 2019.
- 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
	2017	2018	2019	2020	% change 19/20		2017	2018	2019	2020	% change 19/20	
January	136	111	74	186	152%	1,536	22	17	32	72	124%	2,507
February	119	106	92	66	-28%	1,510	18	450	54	32	-42%	2,484
March	206	129	73				19	246	25			
April	228	170	94				13	17	53			
May	112	160	141				18	28	27			
June	151	111	62				20	67	42			
July	178	104	74				15	25	43			
August	139	111	75				20	65	109			
September	79	118	103				26	29	59			
October	76	93	199				76	26	106			
November	75	133	64				23	58	31			
December	136	74	372				22	27	1885			
Total	1,635	1,419	1,424				291	1,054	2,467			

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
	2017	2018	2019	2020	% change 19/20		2017	2018	2019	2020	% change 19/20	
January	347	296	327	303	-7%	3,482	10	8	14	40	186%	205
February	304	330	339	455	34%	3,598	11	8	12	24	104%	217
March	360	358	509				21	9	11			
April	300	297	244				6	7	13			
May	313	367	279				10	9	14			
June	355	323	264				8	9	12			
July	309	325	255				7	9	18			
August	297	307	235				8	12	13			
September	318	289	252				10	10	9			
October	320	339	356				7	14	22			
November	376	345	221				7	12	21			
December	285	273	226				12	11	19			
Total	3,884	3,850	3,506				117	117	179			

(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.