



28th January 2021

United Kingdom Egg Statistics – Quarter 4, 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.

The key results for Quarter 4 2020

- 8.0 million cases of eggs were packed in UK egg packing stations during the fourth quarter of 2020. This represents 2.3% increase on the fourth quarter in 2019 and a 3.5% increase on quarter three 2020.
- The average UK farm-gate egg price through the fourth quarter of 2020 was 81.7 pence per dozen, this represents a 12% increase on quarter four of 2019 and a 0.6% increase on quarter three 2020.
- The production of egg products during the fourth quarter of 2020 totalled 18.5 thousand tonnes, a 2.1% increase on the previous quarter and a 21% decrease on the fourth quarter 2020.

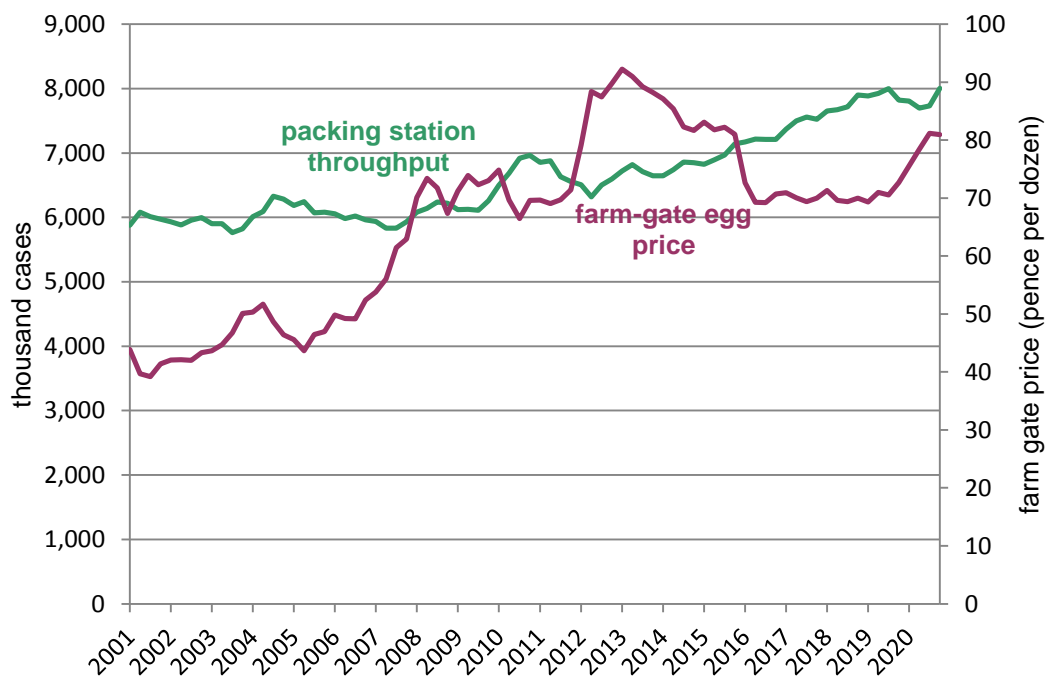
Section 1 – UK egg packing volumes, methods of production, UK country breakdowns and price statistics

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 2020 increased 2.3% on the same quarter in 2019.
- Egg prices increased to 81.7p per dozen, a 0.6% rise on Q3 2020 price; 12% higher than Q4 2019.

1.1 UK egg packing statistics

Figure 1.1: The number of eggs packed in UK packing stations compared to the UK farm-gate egg price: 2001-2020



Note: Prices are not adjusted for inflation

Table 1.1: 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%
Q2	5,439	1,086	1,174	7,698	-2.9%
Q3	5,340	1,093	1,302	7,734	-3.3%
Q4	5,435	1,164	1,405	8,004	2.3%
Total	21,829	4,318	5,097	31,245	-1.2%

Table 1.2: UK Packing Station egg throughput by egg production type

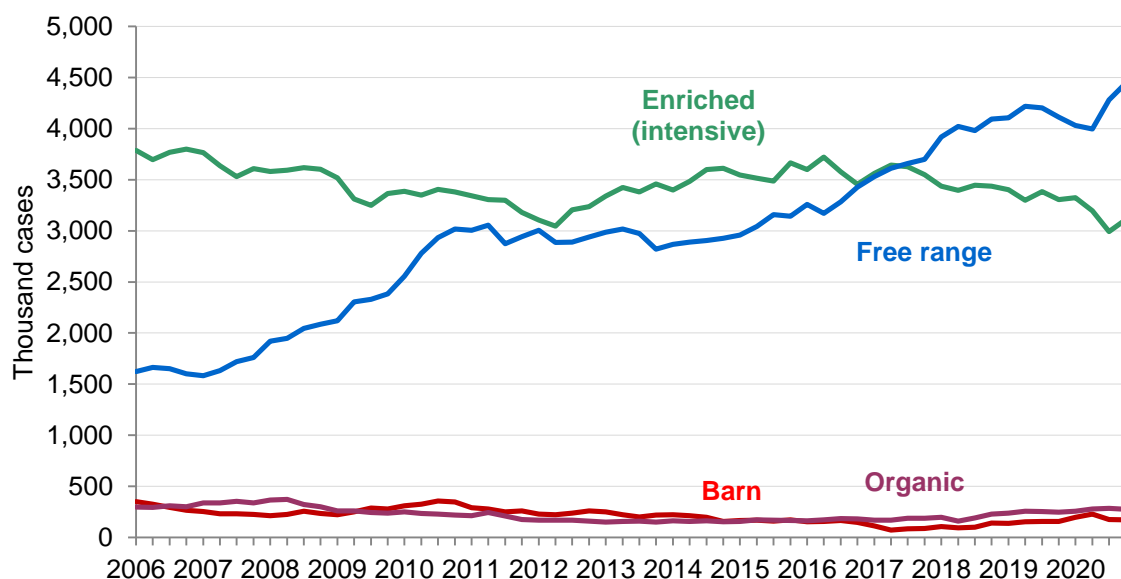
(Thousand cases)

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
Q2	3,197	229	3,996	277	7,698
Q3	2,993	174	4,282	285	7,734
Q4	3,111	171	4,448	274	8,004
Total	12,627	771	16,757	1,090	31,245

Eggs produced from hens in enriched colony systems accounted for 39% of the total throughput in Q4 2020. Free range eggs accounted for 56% of Q4 2020 throughput.

1.2 UK egg throughput

Figure 2: UK egg throughput by production method



1.2 Average UK farm-gate egg price

Table 1.3: Average UK farm-gate egg price

	Pence per dozen					
	Enriched cage	Barn	Free Range	Organic	All Eggs	% change on previous year
2017 Q1	54.0	c	84.3	c	70.9	-2.3%
Q2	53.4	c	83.3	c	70.1	1.2%
Q3	53.3	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	69.4	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%
Q2	57.0	c	90.0	c	78.4	10%
Q3	59.0	c	91.5	c	81.2	15%
Q4	58.9	c	92.4	c	81.7	12.4%
Total	57.8	c	90.1	c	79.2	11.7%

'c' confidential

Section 2 – UK egg processing statistics

The number of eggs bought by UK egg processors in Q4 2020 totalled 1244 thousand cases (equating to 27.3 thousand tonnes), an increase of 13% on the same period in 2019.

Liquid egg accounted for 70% of the total production in Q4 2020. Total production was down 21% in Q4 2020 compared to the same quarter last year.

Table 2.1: Number of eggs bought by UK Egg Processors

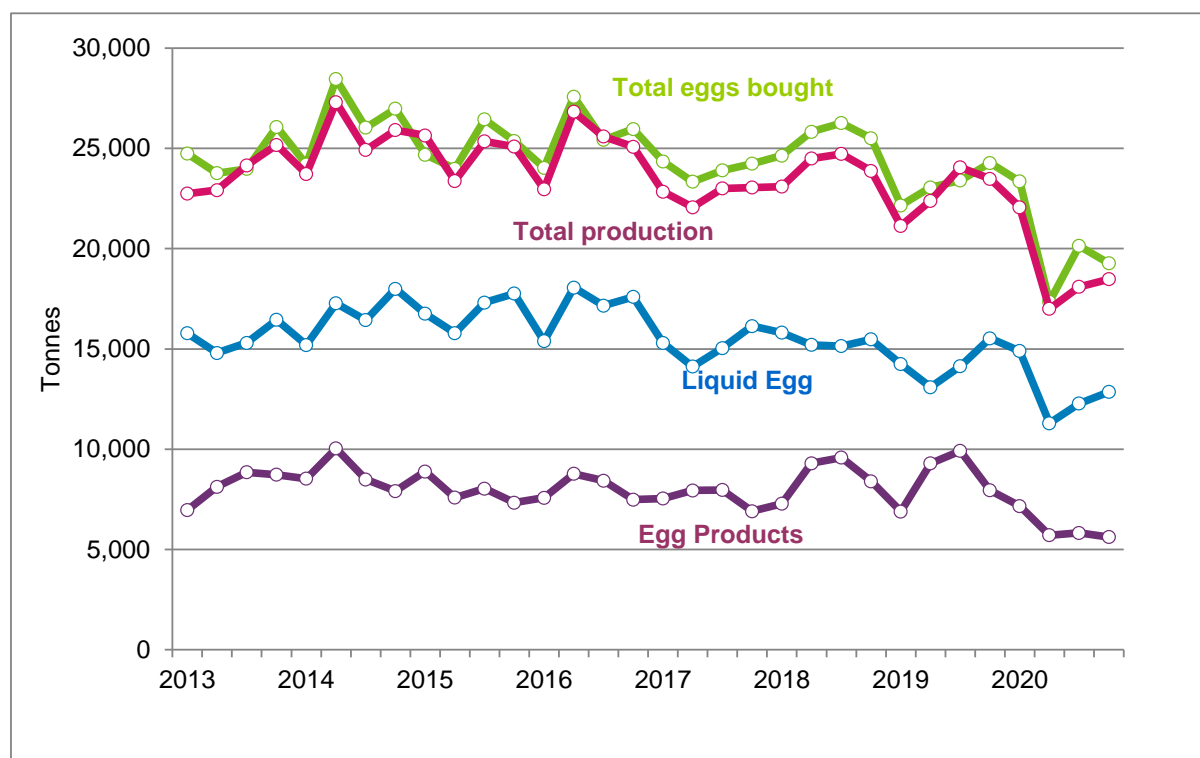
Period		Thousand cases	Tonnes	% change year on year
2017	Q1	1,107	24,352	1.3%
	Q2	1,061	23,342	-15%
	Q3	1,087	23,907	-6.0%
	Q4	1,102	24,243	-6.6%
	Total	4,357	95,844	-7.0%
2018	Q1	1,120	24,640	1.2%
	Q2	1,174	25,833	11%
	Q3	1,194	26,264	9.9%
	Q4	1,160	25,512	5.2%
	Total	4,648	102,249	6.7%
2019	Q1	1,007	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	1,062	23,356	5.4%
	Q2	789	17,356	-25%
	Q3	915	20,140	-14%
	Q4	876	19,273	-21%
	Total	3,642	80,125	-13.7%

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)			
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	14,902	7,168		22,070	4.4%
	Q2	11,294	5,709		17,003	-24%
	Q3	12,277	5,824		18,101	-25%
	Q4	12,859	5,623		18,482	-21%
	Total	51,332	24,325		75,657	-17%

(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)



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 2020 shows imports of shell eggs at 61,000 cases, a 7% decrease on the same period last year. Imports of egg products are up 80% at 402,000 cases compared to November 2019.
- Shell egg export figures for November 2020 are 37,000 cases, up 18% compared to the same period in 2019, whilst egg product exports were 18,000 cases, down 14% compared to November 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 3.1: 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	73	186	154%	1,616	22	17	32	72	124%	2,511
February	119	106	92	66	-28%	1,590	18	450	54	32	-41%	2,488
March	206	129	74	82	10%	1,598	19	246	25	40	57%	2,503
April	228	170	100	130	29%	1,627	13	17	53	72	37%	2,522
May	112	160	157	173	11%	1,644	18	28	27	63	130%	2,558
June	151	111	73	93	28%	1,664	20	67	43	47	10%	2,562
July	178	104	99	74	-25%	1,639	15	25	45	51	12%	2,567
August	139	111	85	42	-50%	1,597	20	65	110	49	-55%	2,507
September	79	118	103	68	-34%	1,562	26	29	59	48	-18%	2,496
October	76	93	206	82	-60%	1,438	76	26	106	50	-53%	2,440
November	75	133	66	61	-7%	1,433	23	58	31	37	18%	2,446
December	136	74	375				22	27	1885			
Total	1,635	1,419	1,503				291	1,054	2,471			

NOTE: HIGHLIGHTED EXPORT DATA HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO CHALLENGE WITH HMRC AND SHOULD THEREFORE BE TREATED WITH CAUTION
All trade data are provisional

Table 3.2: 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	325	303	-7%	3,548	10	8	14	40	187%	206
February	304	330	339	456	35%	3,665	11	8	12	24	104%	218
March	360	358	514	252	-51%	3,404	21	9	11	24	114%	231
April	300	297	246	201	-18%	3,358	6	7	13	22	66%	240
May	313	367	282	218	-23%	3,294	10	9	14	26	85%	252
June	355	323	283	278	-2%	3,288	8	9	12	30	142%	269
July	309	325	263	266	1%	3,291	7	9	19	18	-6%	268
August	297	307	249	247	-1%	3,289	8	12	13	19	40%	273
September	318	289	252	297	18%	3,334	10	10	9	19	104%	283
October	320	339	362	335	-7%	3,308	7	14	22	16	-27%	277
November	376	345	223	402	80%	3,486	7	12	21	18	-14%	274
December	285	273	232				12	11	19			
Total	3,884	3,850	3,570				117	117	180			

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

What you need to know about this release

Contact details

Livestock statistics team

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National Statistics Status

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in 2014 following a compliance check by the UK Statistics Authority (now the Office for Statistics Regulation) against the Code of Practice for Statistics.

For general enquiries about National Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Enquiry Service:

Tel: 0845 601 3034

Email: info@statistics.gov.uk.

You can find National Statistics on the internet at www.statistics.gov.uk

Future publications

This quarterly release will be next updated at 09:30 on 29th April 2021. Full time series are available to download at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/egg-statistics>.

Section 4 – About these statistics

Data users

1. 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.
2. The Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB – cereals and oilseeds), rely on egg production data as a good indicator of the commercial laying flock and associated feed demand and hence grain usage by the sector.
3. 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

4. **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.
5. 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.
6. **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.
7. In tables that show numbers of eggs the units used are 'thousand cases'. There are 360 eggs in one case.
8. **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.

9. The data are subject to a variety of validation checks which identify inconsistencies in the data. All data are cleaned prior to publication.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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

13. 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.
14. The statistics last underwent a full assessment [[Assessment Report 271 Statistics on Agriculture](#)] against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) in 2014.
15. 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:

16. 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.