<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>V. Large</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Small</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm to Shop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prices</td>
<td>£1.49</td>
<td>£1.25</td>
<td>£1.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Wholesaler</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prices</td>
<td>£1.20</td>
<td>90p</td>
<td>85p</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Wholesaler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colony F/R</td>
<td>£1.20</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
<td>£1.30</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£1.20</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
<td>£1.30</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colony F/R</td>
<td>£1.20</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
<td>£1.30</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Packer / Producer Contracted average Price

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organic</th>
<th>FreeRange</th>
<th>Barn</th>
<th>Colony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£1.30</td>
<td>£1.15</td>
<td>£1.15</td>
<td>£1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Producer / Consumer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>- Colony</th>
<th>- Free Range</th>
<th>Free-Range to Farm Shop</th>
<th>Central Egg Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prices</td>
<td>Prices</td>
<td>Prices</td>
<td>Colony F/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Large</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>£1.07(+2p)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£2.00</td>
<td>£1.85</td>
<td>£1.93</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3.00</td>
<td>£2.35</td>
<td>£1.05</td>
<td>87p(+2p)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1.75/£2.25</td>
<td>£1.31/£1.91</td>
<td>£1.15/£1.45</td>
<td>80p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imported Continental Prices in Bulk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dutch Eggs</th>
<th>Barn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prices the market is reasonably stable, but struggling a bit to hold prices up, there are a lot of old hens going out to make way for pullets coming in around Easter which is only 5 weeks away, on the Continent they are trying to hold prices too, trying to avoid putting prices down to put them back up again.

Big changes in retailers are a coming!
A few years ago the big retailers dominated the market as in many ways they still do, they had that confidence that they would steamroller on and had complete control and regarded that the so called discounters would only be capable of getting the crumbs from their table.
What a difference, recently we think it was a speaker from the London school of economics talking on the future of food retailing predicted that over the next 5 years the big supermarkets would only grow by 8% but the discounters would grow by 65% convenience stores by 29% but that online food purchasing would expand by 98% we are not sure how these figures work out as discounting the online percentage food retailing would be expanding by 102% which is impossible, but big things are happening and some organisation has to lose out, as an example Morrisons despite squeezing their suppliers to the bone have
announced that they have successfully lost a shed full of £50 notes, that they are having to start online deliveries and that their only future is to join the discounters!!!!! Watch out suppliers!!!!!!

They seem to have forgotten that all the big supermarkets are PLC’s they rely on their shareholders and have to via with one another to show colossal profits to gain finance from the city and pension funds, the discounters are nearly all privately owned and based in countries that have taxation systems that encourage the retention of private ownership, they work on a much lower percentage mark up as they do not have the overheads or shareholders to please, which makes it easier to finance expansion.

Aldi as an example now have over 500 stores in the UK and state that they now have 50 in Scotland promoting Scottish products and identifying local image, something the big supermarkets have forgotten.

It is Scottish Egg Quality Award time again and whether you are a mega producer/marketer or only have 350 hens it is something everyone should take part in, it is free and is a very useful tool in the promotion of your business whether it is the corner shop or the supermarket buyer, so if you haven’t already entered get on with it, for we are deeply in debt to BOCM Pauls and Nick and the staff at SRUC Auchincruive for promoting our Scottish industry. (Details and entry form are listed below, if you haven’t received them.)

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Online tool to benchmark feather loss in laying hens

A collaborative project in the UK has produced a new online tool to help monitor and benchmark feather loss in laying hens.

AssureWel, a five-year collaborative project led by the RSPCA, Soil Association and the University of Bristol, created the tool so that non-caged laying hen producers can compare their scores for feather loss to other non-caged industry flocks.

The tool will help self-assessment of feather loss and provides guidance on improving feather cover.

Mia Fernyhough, RSPCA senior scientific officer, said: "Feather loss has been identified as a key indicator of hen welfare and is a concern across the laying hen industry due to its economic implications and, of course, the impact on the birds themselves through stress, temperature regulation, pain and injury.

"As such it is essential that poultry keepers monitor their flocks for early warning signs, identify the cause of any feather loss and take action to control and improve it.”
Feather cover is already being measured during welfare outcome assessments, which have been part of Freedom Food farm assurance inspections for more than two years.

Sophie Butcher, scientific officer at the RSPCA, said: "Producers can access information on how to self-assess their flock for feather cover on the AssureWel website, and for the first time can now use the online benchmarking tool to continually monitor how their flock compares to the rest of the industry - just by the click of a button!"

World Poultry

Greece lubricates stalled GM crops debate

The old adage says you should beware of Greeks bearing gifts – a reference to the Wooden Horse of Troy. However the Greek EU presidency is attempting to bring a gift, in the shape of a deal to end years of stalemate over the approval and use of GM crops.

The suggestion from the presidency, despite Greece being in the opposition camp on GM crops, is that approval procedures in the EU should be simplified, and in return Member States would be allowed to decide whether or not to grow the GM crop approved. This would allow decisions to be made on scientific grounds, while giving individual Member States the power to decide on socio-economic or environmental grounds whether to grow GM crops. This would have to be done in consultation with the company whose product is the subject of the challenge – and the grounds would have to be separate to those already considered by the European Food Safety Authority as part of the approval process.

This thinking appears to have support, although some Member States, including the UK, have suggested it’s a compromise that could undermine free trade between Member States.

Over GM crops the public and 12 Member States, including their scientific advisers, are more ready to follow the views of pressure groups than the EU’s own scientific adviser, Professor Ann Glover, or indeed the European Food Safety Authority. Continuously kicking an issue into touch and using procedural voting rules to avoid decisions is not policy making. Take away the EU politics and the reality is that the rest of the world is marching on with GM, with no regard to what Europe’s doing.

Figures published recently confirm the degree to which GM crops have been taken up elsewhere. Last year, 18 million farmers in 27 countries grew GM crops. The area planted was 175m hectares, meaning there’s been a hundred-fold increase in 18 years. Each of the top 10 countries planted more than a million hectares, meaning that in those countries GM crops are the norm.

For the second year in a row more GM crops were planted in developing than developed economies, with countries such as India, China and Brazil viewing GM as a way to increase productivity and reduce costs. Significantly they also cite the benefits, in term of fewer chemical sprays and less fuel for field activities. Interestingly Europe grew around 150,000ha of GM crops on a commercial scale, mainly in Spain, and,
perhaps surprisingly, Romania.

Whether you like or loathe GM crops the science is now global. If you were an investor looking for future growth GM science looks like a good area for your funds. A major reason is that the science going into plant breeding is focused on using GM as the main tool for development.

This whole debate raises moral and social issues, and research trends are moving away from better pest and disease resistance or better crop yields into more complex benefits. Drought resistance is now a big driver in GM crops and drought is the biggest constraint to grain production in Africa.

The most interesting moral argument, however, is over a GM rice, known as golden rice. This variety successfully tackles vitamin A deficiency in Asia, which causes over 600,000 deaths a year in children under five. Yet it is being opposed by mainstream activist environmental groups, simply because it is based on GM science.

These are complex issues, but regardless of where they stand on the science, the 500m citizens of Europe are not being served well by Member States’ governments and a European Commission that put their collective heads in the sand about what’s going on in the rest of the world.

26th Scottish Egg Quality Awards - 2014

I am writing to invite you to participate in the above. The Scottish Egg Quality Awards are now an established part of the poultry calendar and as such the organisers and joint sponsors, namely the SRUC (SAC) and BOCM PAULS LTD, are pleased to announce the timetable for this year’s competition.

We are delighted to announce that there will be no entry cost again this year and that for the first time we will be presenting 3 awards;

- Shield and overall trophy - Producer/Retailer.
- Quaich - Producer.
- Trophy - Organically produced Eggs.

**Timetable:**
- Closing dates for entries will be Friday 4th of April 2014.
- Judging will be held at SRUC Poultry Unit, Auchincruive, Ayr on April 10th 2014.
- Entries to be picked up on the 9th of April by mutual arrangement by Iain Campbell who will deliver direct on entrants behalf to SRUC. Delivery by local producers can be made on the 9th of April between 9am and 5pm. No entries will be accepted on the day of judging 10th April.
- The prize giving dinner will take place on Thursday, 12th June at the Murrayshall House Hotel, Perth. Results will not be announced prior to the dinner. If you are invited to attend the dinner, you will have been awarded a position in the top group.

I do hope you will enter the 2014 Scottish Egg Quality Competition and look forward to receiving your
Factors that will affect your egg quality score

This information note is intended to provide information on the factors that can affect the score awarded in the Scottish Egg Quality Competition and to help you to maximise the points awarded to your eggs in that competition. The criteria used to assess egg quality in the Competition have been selected to reflect the criteria that consumers may also use; therefore this note may also provide some information that could be of use to you when appraising eggs.

The rules of the competition include the following points:

1. **Large (63-72g) eggs from domestic fowl only will be accepted.**
2. **Sixty eggs should be supplied on keyes trays within a box which is clearly labelled with the name of the entrant.**
3. **Eggs must be taken from a flock of 300 birds or more that has been, or is intended to be, in lay for 40 weeks or more.**

Once submitted for testing the entry is assigned a code (to ensure anonymity during judging), and then subjected to a series of assessments. For each criterion a maximum score is awarded and then, for each fault identified on an egg or the packaging, points are deducted.

First to be assessed is the external quality. Marks are deducted for every egg that has a **shell fault**. Faults would include features such as cracks, rough or irregular surface, washed or buffed shells, uneven shell colour and similar. Maximising scores in this section requires that the packaging and eggs are inspected critically, in good light and by candling where appropriate, before submission.

The judges then select six eggs (using a predetermined selection process that ensures that the eggs are selected without any bias).

The shells of the six eggs are then assessed for **shell colour** (reflectance scores greater than 35 being penalised) and the uniformity of colour (a mean score is calculated for the six eggs and points are deducted for every egg whose reflectance is +/- 4 units away from the mean value).

**Light coloured shells in brown egg layers can be a sign of stress however older flocks will also tend to lay eggs that have lighter shell colours.**

Next the six eggs are weighed and points deducted for every egg that falls outside the pre-specified weight range of 63-72g. Eggs will lose weight over time as water is lost through the shell by evaporation.
from the egg contents. Eggs should be weighed as near as is feasible to being submitted to ensure that they fall within the weight band required.

**Albumen Quality** is assessed as Haugh units. This is a measure of albumen height and reflects the tendency of albumen quality (and so height) to deteriorate over time. The rate of deterioration is linked to rate at which carbon dioxide is lost from the egg contents (by diffusion through the shell). Older eggs, which tend to have more porous shells, will lose carbon dioxide and hence albumen quality, more rapidly than eggs from young hens. Higher storage temperatures will also increase the rate at which carbon dioxide is lost from the egg.

**Yolk colour** The six eggs will be assessed on the uniformity of yolk colour.

Shell thickness is measured on pieces of shell taken from the equator of the egg. Eggs that have shells that are < 300 µm thick have marks deducted. Thin shells are a feature of eggs from older hens but can also be caused by stress, the hens experiencing warm temperatures (eg sufficient to cause the bird to pant) or (although rarely if using feed from a reputable compounder) poorly formulated or inadequate feed.

Finally the egg contents are assessed for **blood spots** (blood on or near to the yolk) or **meat spots**. Blood spots are normally caused by blood haemorrhaging from the ovary when the yolk is released into the oviduct Inclusions whereas meat spots tend to be pieces of the oviduct that have broken away from the lining of the oviduct and have become incorporated into the albumen. Points are deducted from any egg that has an inclusion > 2mm in size.

Blood can be associated with stress, such as enhanced activity, at the time of ovulation (i.e. approximately 24h prior to lay). The incidence of meat spots may be enhanced in older birds and birds in ill-health. Also some strains of bird may be more susceptible than others to meat spots. The larger meat spots in particular can be detected by candling.

This guide is not intended to be an exhaustive guide to egg quality issues but rather to raise awareness of factors that influence egg quality. More detailed advice can be obtained from a range of sources including your local SRUC office.

What kind of eggs does a confused hen lay?

**Scrambled eggs!**

No points deducted for this in the competition to enter just fill in the form below or Phone Iain Campbell on 0780 328 6724
THE 2014 SCOTTISH EGG QUALITY COMPETITION
ENTRY FORM

Sponsored By BOCM PAULS LTD & Scottish Rural University College

Please tick relevant box to identify the category you wish to enter:

PRODUCER ........................................................................................................
(Eggs produced within any production system sent for packing by others)

PRODUCER / RETAILER ENTRY ......................................................................
(Eggs produced within any production system marketed under your own label)

ORGANIC ...........................................................................................................
(Organic eggs either self-market or sent for packing by others)

Name: ....................................................................................................................
Company: ...........................................................................................................

Address: ..............................................................................................................

Postal Code: ........................................................................................................
Telephone: ............................................................................................................
Email: ...................................................................................................................

Sixty eggs (size 63g-72g) on 2 trays will be collected for judging from your premises by
arrangement on the day prior to judging. Eggs will be selected at random by the SRUC
judging panel from the sixty eggs entered and these sample eggs shall be inspected and
scored as per the judging criteria. The organisers' decision is final.

I/we agree to abide by the rules of the competition;

Signature(s): ......................................................................................................

Closing date for entries is Friday 4th April 2014. Entries accepted by post or scanned
email of this form.

Postal Address:
Sonya Donaldson
BOCM PAULS LTD
Mardale Road
Penrith Industrial Estate
Penrith, Cumbria,
CA11 9EH
Telephone no: 01768 860362 Email: sonya.donaldson@bocmpauls.co.uk
THE 2014 SCOTTISH EGG QUALITY COMPETITION

COMPETITION RULES

4. Large (63-72g) eggs from domestic fowl only will be accepted.

5. Entries will be only accepted from Scottish registered sites.

Entries will be collected by Iain Campbell (or can be delivered direct to SRUC Auchincruive) on 9th April 2014, between the hours of 9am to 5pm. Entries delivered to SRUC on 10th April will not be accepted.

6. Sixty eggs should be supplied on keyes trays within a box which is clearly labelled with the name of the entrant.

7. Eggs must be taken from a flock of 300 birds or more that has been, or is intended to be, in lay for 40 weeks or more.

8. Competitors may enter only one category. Either;
   A. Producer,
   B. Producer/Retailer or
   C. Organic.

9. The eggs will become the property of the organisers on delivery to SRUC.

10. In the event of a tie, a joint prize will be awarded.

11. The decision of the judges is final.