

# Scottish Egg Producer Retailers Association

## MARKET REPORT

[www.scottisheggs.co.uk](http://www.scottisheggs.co.uk)

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	Size	V. Large	Large	Medium	Small
<b>Farm to Shop</b>	Prices	£1.49	£1.25	£1.15	80p
<b>Scottish Wholesaler</b>	Colony F/R	£1.20 £1.50	90p £1.40	80p £1.30	
<b>English Wholesaler</b>	Colony F/R	£1.40 £1.70	£1.20 £1.45	£1.05(-10p) £1.20	75p 85p
	Colony F/R	£1.45 £1.45	£1.20 £1.45	£1.15 £1.20	75p 85p
<b>Packer / Producer Contracted average Price</b>					
		<b>Organic</b>	<b>FreeRange</b>	<b>Barn</b>	<b>Colony</b>
		£1.20/£1.45	90p/£1.15	75p/95p	65p/85p
<b>Producer / Consumer</b>		<b>V. Large</b>	<b>Large</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Small</b>
<b>- Colony</b>	Prices	£2.00	£1.85	£1.40	90p
<b>- Free Range</b>	Prices	£3.00	£2.35	£1.93	£1.05
<b>Free-Range to Farm Shop</b>	Prices	£1.75/£2.25	£1.31/£1.91	£1.15/£1.45	95p
<b>Central Egg Agency</b>	Colony F/R	£1.05 £1.48	87p £1.38	77p £1.28	60p 98p
<b>Imported Continental Prices in Bulk</b>					
<b>Dutch Eggs</b>	Barn	89p(-1p)	70p(-1p)	65p(-1p)	59p(-1p)
<b>German</b>			74p(-2p)	68p(-2p)	

The market, demand is still quietish with prices holding on, slight adjustment here and there with a wee bit of weakening on Continental prices and we heard of some Spanish Mediums at 58p.

Consensus of opinion is that prices and demand will move up when the clocks change on the 25<sup>th</sup> (8 days away) at present Free Range supplies are extremely tight and prices will move up fairly quickly and most likely pull Colony prices up with them, as it looks like there will not be enough F/R to meet demand.

Although there has been an increase of 6.2% in UK production they are all finding a home and importation figures are also up, mostly in product form but no matter how you look at it the combination of special offers in the supermarkets plus all the good publicity in the media showing that eggs are almost the perfect food to keep you fit and healthy which fits in well with the high protein low fat and starch diets plus exercise, the latest figures show a 21.9% increase in UK egg consumption since 2008.

**James Baxter** he and his family really have something to smile about as he has just been voted Poultry Farmer of the Year all that hard work and planning with no doubt a lot of time on the prayer mat in front of the bank manager is paying off and they now have a business to be proud of, Glenhead Farm is as far west in Dumfries and Galloway as you can go without swimming in the Irish Sea the isolation must help in disease control, but you still need good management and Bio-Security.

He follows on our Scottish tradition of stockmanship first, accountancy second followed by a lot of hard work, he follows last year's winner David Brass of the Lakes Free Range.

James has been extremely busy of late travelling all over the country and even found the time on Tuesday to represent SEPRA at BEIC in London (busy people get things done)

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## Farmers Weekly Awards 2015: Poultry Farmer of the Year

[Philip Clarke](#) Poultry World



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Varney

**James Baxter**

**Glenhead Farm, Stranraer, Dumfriesshire**

“Do it yourself” is the name of the game at Glenhead Farm on the south-west tip of Scotland, where free-range egg producer James Baxter has built up one of the best-performing flocks in the country.

“We only hire people so we can learn from them and do it ourselves in the future,” he says.

This independent approach has seen the family go from a standing start to running a highly profitable 64,000-bird unit, complete with renewable energy investments and manure dryers, in just five years.

Finding the capital to get started was challenging, especially when the credit crunch hit as preparations for the first shed were being made.

## **Farm facts**

- 64,000 free-range layers, half Hy-Line, half Lohmann hens
- Four Morspan sheds with multi-tier systems
- Producing Happy Eggs for Noble Foods
- Five full-time staff

But perseverance paid off, and a combination of a bank loan and a grant under the Scottish Rural Development Programme saw the completion of the first two 16,000 layer units in 2010, for a total investment of £1.3m.

“Each shed took 2,500 man hours of installation work, as we screwed together 75 tonnes of equipment,” James recalls. “Doing it ourselves puts us in the driving seat when it comes to breakdowns and maintenance.”

Building on the success of the first houses, in 2012 a third house was added, followed by a fourth in 2014.

Indicative of his forward-thinking approach, James made an early decision to install multi-tier facilities. “It was obviously the future at the time we were coming in, and we wanted to be in tune with the future.”

This has helped deliver the exceptional performance figures, with the most recent flock producing 327 eggs at 72 weeks, with an average feed consumption of 122g/hen a day and 4% seconds.

## **Winning ways**

- Top production performance
- Self-sufficient approach to building the business
- Clever use of renewable energy
- Putting time and effort back into the industry
- Focus on driving the business forward

All eggs are sold to Noble Foods on a Happy Egg contract. As well as earning maximum bonuses, James has recently signed a four-year feed-linked contract, to protect margins should feed costs rise.

Staffing is very much a family affair, with James’s three sons, brother and wife Margaret fully involved in the business. And cost control is tight, as James keeps a spreadsheet for just about everything. “If you can measure it, you can control it,” is his mantra.

Much use is made of probiotics, which are introduced at the base of each hopper using a home-made mixer. There is also considerable emphasis on renewables at Glenhead Farm, with two 198kW biomass boilers rigged up, providing heat for everything from the laundry room to the manure dryers in the chicken sheds.

As well as earning a good income from the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme, this also improves the atmosphere for the birds, lifts layer performance, while producing a more valuable, semi-dry manure which James hopes, in time, to pelletize.

There is also a 225kW wind turbine – imported from Estonia, self-erected, of course – providing electricity for the chicken sheds, as well as powering immersion heaters to warm the water for manure drying.

From Philip Clarke (sent last week but not to be included till this week)

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### **FOOT DIP EFFECTIVENESS**

A recent study by the Animal and Plant Health Agency on 112 boot-dip liquid samples ‘in vitro’, from commercial layer farms, checked their effectiveness in destroying *Salmonella enteritidis*.

They ranged in effectiveness from 37% to 90%, but it is pointed out that this was only laboratory testing, not carried out in the presence of organic matter, or with impacted material in the cleats of boots.

Given those aspects, it is considered that boot-dips have limited-to-zero use in prevention of transfer of pathogens, especially *Salmonella enteritidis*.

It is recommended that between-house biosecurity is improved by use of separate footwear or overboots.

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There are slight wording differences in the translation from Russian to English, but you can get the gist of the next article that Russia is rapidly catching up but the technology is only as good as you instruct it to be and note the bit saying that EU standards are slipping with the move towards higher welfare standards.

## **Traceability and identification of Russian poultry products**

Poultry farming in Russia has a number of features facilitating introduction of a system of traceability throughout the production of poultry products.

In most foreign productions breeding of birds is concentrated on a set of small farms, and slaughter is carried out at the large enterprises. However in Russia, the practice is that breeding, slaughter and production of chicken products, is generally concentrated in uniform farms. Poultry farms are enterprises

of 'closed type' according to operating veterinary health regulations. Breeding of chickens for slaughter is quite a fast process: from laying the hatching egg to slaughter, less than two months is required. All processes of breeding and processing of a bird are carried out by experts under uniform management and control. Today, poultry farming agroholdings in Russia have the total production cycle in one hand: parental flock, an incubator, youngsters breeding and the management of industrial egg production.

## **Big demand**

The increase in demand for broiler meat caused increased demand for incubatory eggs. Leaders of broiler growing enterprises faced a problem, the shortage of hatching eggs that couldn't but affect prime cost of the final product. To cope with the extra demand the Russian poultry sector (Figure 1) is following two paths. It is providing commodity farms with incubatory eggs at the expense of domestic production of breeding material (82%) and by deliveries from abroad (18%).

The production technology of eggs in poultry farms and other large specialised agricultural enterprises represents a scientifically reasonable system of successive productions and operations, providing rhythmic production at the minimum expenses of fodders, work, energy resources and other material expenditures. It is based on the use of a hybrid bird with highly productive egg crossbreeds, holding them in capital windowless poultry houses with regulated environmental conditions, feeding compound feeds balanced on a complex of nutrients, application of a complex of technical means.

## **Safety and monitoring**

Safety of eggs and egg products – one of the most serious problems in the modern food industry – has to be continuously monitored. It covers the wide range of questions, such as the contents in poultry products of foreign inclusions, pollution by harmful chemical compounds and especially important - existence of pathogenic microorganisms, causing food poisoning in humans. Recently new safety issues emerged, concerning products of genetically modified materials, and also – in theory - production use from the cloned animals.

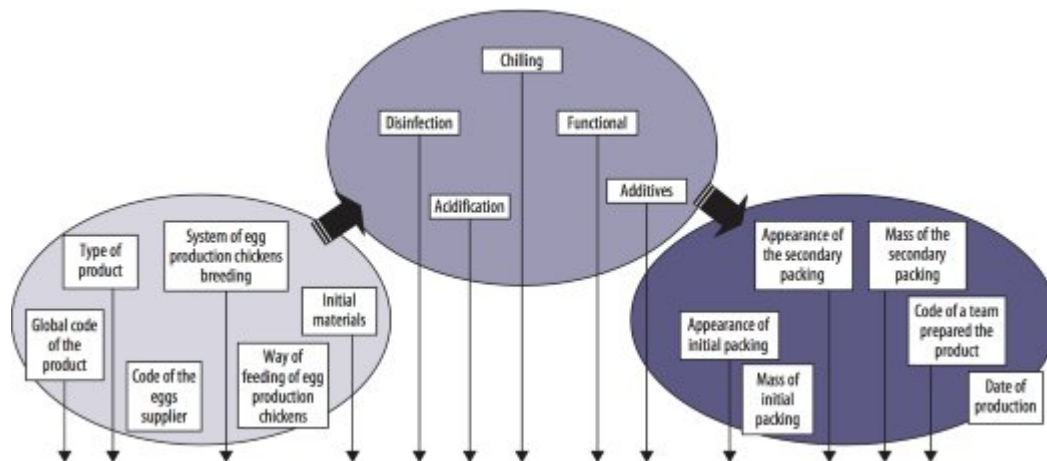
It is established that the surface of an egg which has been just laid by an absolutely healthy chicken, as a rule, is contaminated by several species of bacteria. Usually these bacteria are from the environment and excrement of a chicken. If eggs are left at the room temperature, they spoil soon due to activity of the microorganisms getting inside through an egg shell. Certain pathogenic bacteria are always present in eggs if a chicken was infected.

Thus, one of the main difficulties is that bacteria, pathogenic for humans, can live in an organism of the absolutely healthy bird and their identification and actions directed at decreasing contamination, demand considerable efforts and expense

The safety problem, as well as many other problems connected with egg quality, begins with the period of feeding and the keeping of live birds. In accordance with the EU decision to ban cage housing for egg producing chickens, another set of problems has risen. In alternative systems there is a raised level of pollution of the shell by pathogenic and conditionally pathogenic microorganisms in comparison with the eggs derived from cage layers.

To keep pathogens at bay, automation of processing is important. In this case processing of birds and eggs is carried out with minimum physical human contact. Humans play an important role in cross infection during the course of processing. Personal hygiene of the personnel: clean overalls, devices for frequent washing and disinfecting of hands, etcetera should be in place. The correct design for rooms and equipment is important as well as sanitary and hygienic conditions of vehicles which are used for transportation of birds, incubatory and commodity eggs.

Additional value lies in a system of tracking and tracing of a products origin, “from a farm to fork”. A well designed system allows the sources of danger in the production chain to be revealed quickly, and the introduction of necessary amendments.



### Russian system

The monitoring system created at the poultry processing enterprises has to be able to completely trace the sequence of the controlled factors caused by the movement of a product and change of its condition. For automation of the control process, an algorithm was developed which will allow finding and preventing the emergence of a dangerous factor in due time. In the modern market more and more rely on the prevention of problems through traceability of meat production by automatic identification. This can only be done by assigning a certain identifier (number or a code) and implementing data read-out from a tag by the digital device and the translation of data of a tag in an electronic form.

As the identifier it is possible to use graphic, magnetic, radio-frequency and electronic tags. All of them are intended for automatic identification (a stroke coding) and finding application in various spheres, but the graphic tag in the form of a bar code is the most common. Application of proper coding allows the tracking of all chains of production of egg products, the information on their quality and to reveal all possible dangers. The system’s safety management should include continuous improvement of processes based on objective measurement and increase satisfaction of consumer needs by means of search and elimination of inconsistencies.

Dr Bessonova, Prof Antipova and engineer Fazilova

We still need some new jokes or have you all had enough?



**Bob Dixon**  
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