

## **RETAIL EGG SALES**

### **ALL EGG PRODUCERS (including Organic, Free Range, Barn, and Cage)**

Egg Marketing Regulations shall not apply to eggs sold directly to the consumer for their own use by the producer on their own farm, in a local public market\* (see *below*), or by door-to-door selling, provided that the eggs come from their own production and use is not made of any of the quality and weight gradings laid down by the EC. **However for the consumer's advice the 'Best Before' date** (a maximum of 28 days from the date of lay) **should be clearly indicated by:**

- (i) a notice on the stall or vehicle; **or**
- (ii) a pre-printed note on the package or given with the eggs to the consumer at the time of purchase.

**\*All eggs sold on markets whether graded or ungraded have to be stamped with their appropriate producer code.** *This applies to all producers regardless of the number of hens they have. They need to apply to DEFRA Egg Marketing Inspectorate to obtain their flock identification number.* The code on the egg must show method of production i.e. 0=organic, 1 = free-range, 2 = barn and 3 = caged eggs, followed by country of origin i.e. UK, then their respective registration number (5 digits for UK eggs). A brief explanation of this code must be displayed with the eggs – see below.

**CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS** including restaurants, cafes, take-aways, pub kitchens, sandwich bars, bakeries, food manufacturers etc. **must use only Class A eggs if using eggs in shell.** All Class A eggs must be stamped with the appropriate producer code and the eggs must be correctly boxed and labelled with details as below.

### **SHOPS and MARKET STALLS**

**Graded Eggs - Loose sales** - In the case of graded loose egg sales ie: eggs sold on keyes trays, the following must be indicated at point of sale:

- (i) The method of production e.g. "Eggs from caged hens", "Free Range eggs";
- (ii) packing station number which graded the eggs;

- (iii) Best Before date (maximum of 28 days from date of lay);
- (iv) quality (i.e. Class A), and weight grade (eg: “Large” or “L”);
- (v) storage advice e.g.: “Consumers to keep eggs chilled / refrigerated after purchase”;
- (vi) Eggs themselves must be stamped with method of production and producer registration number. i.e. 3UK12345 (see below);
- (vii) Explanation of code stamped on eggs (see below).

**Graded Eggs - Pre-packs - Must** show on the outer surface the following:

- (i) name or business name and address of the undertaking which packed the eggs or had them packed;
- (ii) packing station number;
- (iii) quality (i.e. Class A), and weight grade (eg: “Large” or “L”);
- (iv) the number of eggs packed;
- (v) Best Before date (maximum of 28 days from date of lay);
- (vi) storage advice e.g.: “Consumers to keep eggs chilled / refrigerated after purchase”;
- (vii) method of production e.g. “Free Range”, “Eggs from Caged Hens”;  
*\*\*see below – in packs labelled appropriately as “Eggs from Caged Hens” it may be permissible for the pack to contain eggs of other methods of production.\*\**
- (viii) Eggs must be stamped with method of production and producer registration number. i.e. 3UK12345 – see paragraph below.
- (ix) An explanation of the producer code must be on or in the pack - see below.

<i>Codes on eggs</i>	
<b>0</b>	<b>- Organic</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>- Free-Range</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>- Barn</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>- Cage</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>- Origin</b>
<b>12345</b>	<b>- Producer id</b>

**Please note** when eggs are sold at retailers the different quality, weight gradings and farming method e.g. “Eggs From Caged Hens” *must* be clearly displayed for the consumer. This information should be clear on the small

pack (on the top or front leading edge of the pack) or it should be displayed clearly on a separate notice.

*\*\*The “cascading” of eggs, packing eggs of different methods of production together in order to reduce surpluses etc, is only permitted in prepacks which are NOT sealed. The prepack must show the wording “Eggs from Caged Hens” with a clear indicator under this description i.e. ‘(see in lid for further information)’. Acceptable in-lid text would be:*

***‘where eggs from another production system are packed, they meet the minimum legal requirements for housing & welfare of caged hens’***

*Individual shells must be stamped with the respective farming method showing the original producer distinguishing number in order not to mislead the consumer.*

**All Class A eggs sold at retail level, and all ungraded eggs sold at local public markets** must come from sites registered by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). There are specific internal stocking density requirements for such units as well as providing for sufficient perching, litter area, nest boxes feeders and drinkers as laid down in Council Directive 1999/74/EC. Barn hens do not require outside access. Free Range hens require continuous daytime access to external range with a maximum stocking density allowed of 2500 hens per hectare (one hen per 4m<sup>2</sup>). For further information see DEFRA Explanatory Note No.14

**Note: All producers whose eggs are marketed as Grade A, or producers with flocks of more than 350 hens need to be registered and issued with a unique registration number. This includes producers with less than 350 hens who intend marketing their eggs at a local market.**

This number **MUST** be applied to **ALL** graded Class A eggs, whether sold loose or in pre packs, and to ungraded eggs sold on local markets. The code starts with a number to distinguish production method, this should be ‘0’ = Organic, 1 = Free Range, 2 = Barn, 3 = Caged. This will be followed by two letters denoting country of origin i.e. UK followed by a five-digit number for the site of production. E.g. a Free Range Class A egg will be stamped with: 1UK12345

*An explanation of this code is required on packaging or, if eggs are sold loose on keyes trays at the point of sale e.g.*

*Codes on eggs indicate the following:*

0	- Organic
1	- Free-Range
2	- Barn
3	- Cage
UK	- Origin
12345	- Producer id

**DEFRA - Egg Marketing Inspectorate.**