

WHAT WE FEED OUR HENS



A nutritionally balanced diet is vital for maintaining optimum health for the laying hens and also plays an important role in the quality of eggs produced.

The level of energy, protein, minerals and vitamins in the diet of the laying hens is carefully monitored by poultry nutritionists and frequently adjusted according to the age and body weight of the hens.

Grains such as wheat and corn provide the primary energy source in the feed.

Proteins and amino acids are mainly provided by soybean meal or canola meal.

Calcium, primarily coming from limestone and oyster shells, is critical to support daily eggshell formation and maintenance of strong healthy bones.

Laying hen feed is free from hormones, steroids and antibiotics. Egg farmers follow feed regulations set by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO®



If you would like to see how laying hens are raised on local farms in Manitoba, please visit our website and watch the videos in the Animal Care section.



WE'RE EGG FARMERS



THE CHORES WE DO

For egg farmers like the Doerksen family (featured on the front cover), taking proper care of the hens requires a daily time commitment and a great deal of expertise. Here are some of the chores all egg farmers do to ensure the health and well-being of their hens.

- ✓ Provide the hens with fresh water and a well-balanced diet to meet their specific nutritional needs.
- ✓ Monitor the health of the hens by visually checking the birds daily.
- ✓ Look for signs of illness and if necessary contact a veterinarian for a diagnosis.
- ✓ Ensure all equipment is working efficiently. Proper air quality, temperature and lighting are required to ensure the comfort of the hens.
- ✓ Check egg shell quality and remove any cracked eggs.
- ✓ Clean the barn and equipment to prevent the build-up of dust.
- ✓ Remove the manure from the barn and dispose of it in an environmentally friendly manner.
- ✓ Protect the hens from disease carriers like mice or flies.
- ✓ Inspect the perimeter of the barn to prevent wild birds or predators from gaining access to the hens.



HOW WE HOUSE OUR HENS

On regulated egg farms in Manitoba, hens are raised in a variety of different ways. Each housing environment provides the hens with a clean place to lay their eggs, access to nutritious feed and fresh water, and ensures they are safe from predators.

Conventional



Hens are housed in small groups. Each hen has access to fresh food and water.

Enriched



Hens can perch, scratch and lay their eggs in private nesting areas.

Free-Run (Floor Raised)



Hens can perch, scratch and lay their eggs in private nesting areas.

Free-Run (Aviary)



Hens have access to the barn floor and elevated levels where they can perch, feed, drink and lay their eggs.

Free-Range



Hens have access to the outdoors (weather permitting), where they can scratch, dust bathe and forage.

PROGRAMS WE ADHERE TO

Regulated egg farmers follow best practices in food safety and animal care and each farm is audited annually. Here are some of the programs farmers must adhere to:



Start Clean-Stay Clean™

A HACCP¹-based On-Farm Food Safety Program accredited by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The goal of this program is to ensure the health of the hens and the safety of the eggs by utilizing good management practices on-farm.

¹ HACCP - Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point

Code of Practice

Developed by poultry scientists, veterinarians and experienced egg farmers, the National Code of Practice sets out guidelines on proper handling, feeding, lighting, ventilation and housing for egg-laying hens at different ages.

National Animal Care

The National On-Farm Animal Care Program has been developed, based on the Code of Practice, to ensure a standardized approach throughout the layer industry.

Manitoba Egg Farmers' Quality Assurance Program

Manitoba Egg Farmers (MEF) enforces a Quality Assurance Program to reassure consumers that farmers follow good management practices and adhere to high standards in food safety and animal care.