

Retail sale and labelling of hens eggs

This leaflet covers the retail sale of hens eggs, bought in on keys trays or pre-packed. For the sale of eggs by the producer directly to the consumer, e.g. from the farm gate, please see our separate leaflet 'A guide for producers of eggs selling directly to consumers' (http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/std25_tcm44-8373.pdf).

Markings stamped on eggs:

All eggs sold at retail level must be stamped with a code describing the type of farming method used, the country of origin and the production site's individual code.

For example, **3UK12345** would relate to the information required as follows:

3 - The method of farming:

- 0 - organic
- 1 - free-range
- 2 - barn
- 3 - caged hens

UK - The country of origin

12345 - The production site code, provided to the packer on registration with the Egg Marketing Inspectorate

Labelling accompanying eggs at retail level:

Graded packed and loose eggs sold from trays must be accompanied by the following information:

- packing centre code.*
- quality grade (Grade A for retail)
- weight grade

Std11 04/12



- type of farming method with number code: these are 0 'organic', 1 'free range', 2 'barn' or 3 'cage' - these markings may be added to the producer's number or code - the information, including the producer's distinguishing code, can be explained on a separate notice for clarification
- best before/B.B (maximum 28 days from date of laying)
- appropriate directions for storage, such as 'keep refrigerated after purchase'
- explanation of the code stamped on the eggs (see table above)
- name of product, 'eggs' and number of eggs unless this can be easily determined from outside the package*.
- name and address of packager or seller*.

**These declarations are not required for eggs sold loose.*

Eggs can only be packed into boxes by a registered packing station. Unmarked boxes may be provided for customers' convenience for sales of loose eggs.

Mixed pre-packed eggs (not including EXTRA sized eggs), where packs contain eggs of different sizes, should additionally show:

- an indication as to the various sizes contained OR a declaration 'eggs of different sizes'
- total net weight of the eggs in that pack

All types of packed eggs

The pack may also be labelled with the following information:

- the selling price
- the packing and/or laying date
- providing the information is not misleading, a trader name, advertising or statements designed to improve egg sales
- information as to the origin of the eggs
- information as to how the hens were fed

For all eggs:

Sell by date:

There is no legal requirement to have a sell by date on eggs, but there is a legal obligation to ensure that eggs are sold within 21 days of laying, and a sell by date may help you to achieve this.

Method of farming and Special Marketing Terms (SMTs):

The method of farming relating to the stamped code can be indicated using the wording below, where applicable. These descriptions also apply if you wish to voluntarily describe your eggs selling from your premises or door-to-door:

- free range eggs
- barn eggs
- eggs from caged birds

If the eggs have not been produced in accordance with the methods set out for free range eggs or barn eggs, then they are automatically classed as eggs from caged hens.

Free range eggs:

Eggs described as 'free range' must be produced in poultry establishments in which the hens have:

- continuous daytime access to open air runs
- access to ground mainly covered with vegetation
- at least four square metres of ground available per bird

In addition, there are requirements in relation to the hens' housing and fittings.

Barn eggs:

Barn eggs must be produced in a poultry establishment where the hens:

- are provided with at least 15cm perch space per hen
- have floor space providing at least one square metre for every nine chickens
- comply with requirements relating to the hens' housing and fittings

If you need further advice about the other descriptions of methods of farming, or the hens housing requirements, please contact the Egg Marketing Inspectorate (<http://animalhealth.defra.gov.uk/about/contact-us/eggmarketinginspectors.html>).

Storage:

- eggs should be kept chilled, and protected from changes to, and extremes of, temperature - between 5°C and 17°C is suitable
- you should keep them out of direct sunlight and away from other goods which might flavour them, such as onions or washing powder
- you must rotate stock to ensure that it remains within the stated weight and quality grade
- visibly cracked eggs should not be sold

Weight grades of eggs:

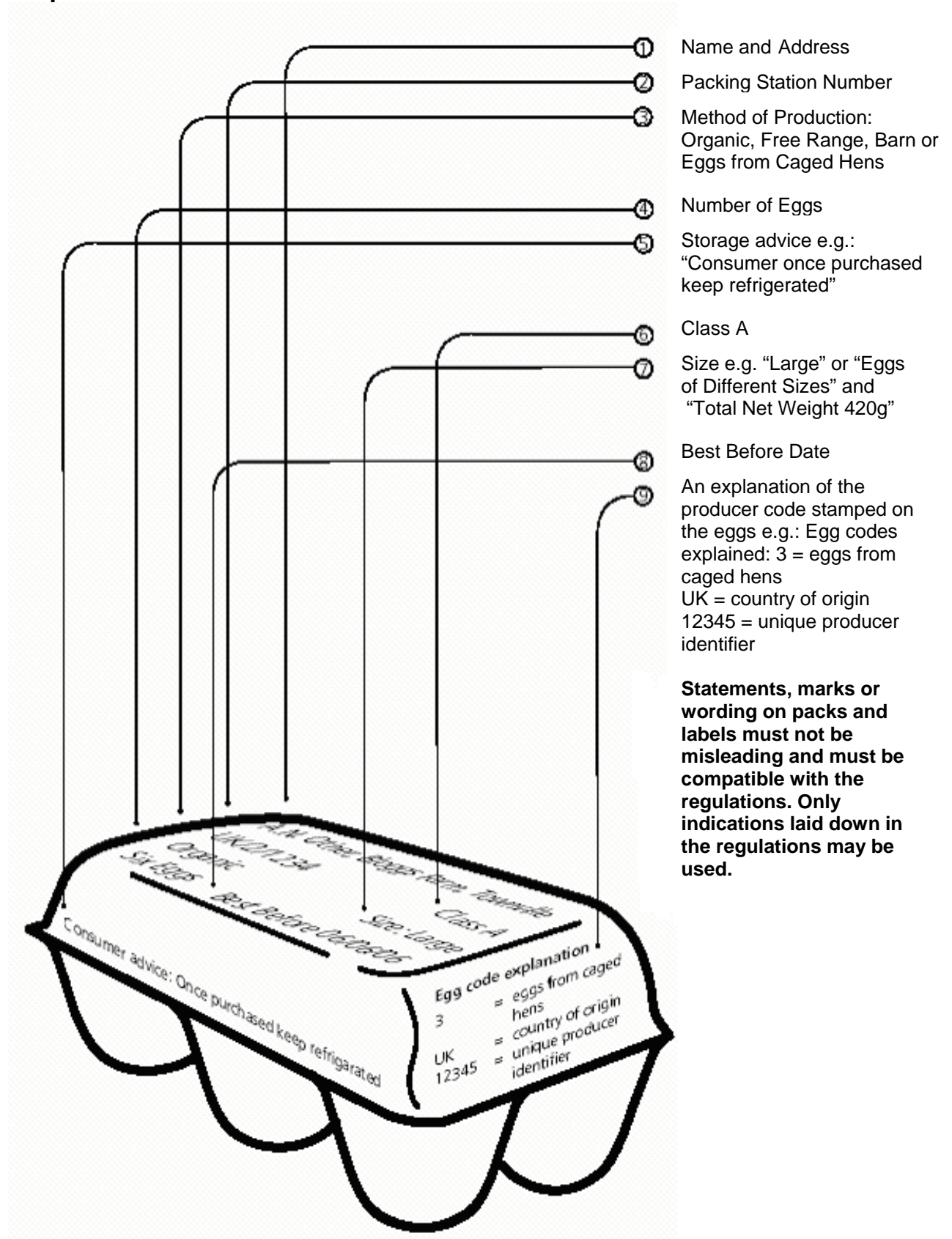
Only the following weight grades are permitted for eggs; no other terms may be used to describe the weights of eggs on retail sale:

- **XL or Very Large are eggs from 73g upwards**
- **L or Large are eggs from 63-73g**
- **M or Medium are eggs from 53-63g**
- **S or Small are eggs below 53g**

The Egg Marketing Inspectorate:

This Department is covered by Animal Health (previously the State Veterinary Service), an executive agency of Defra and operates through regional Egg Marketing Inspectorates. Further information relating to the above legislation and advice on registering as a packer can currently be found on the Defra Animal Health website (<http://animalhealth.defra.gov.uk/about/contact-us/eggmarketinginspectors.html>).

Basic Prepack Labelling Requirements



Individual eggs must be stamped with a code indicating the producers' unique distinguishing number.

Where can I get further help?

This leaflet is not an authoritative document on the law and is only intended for guidance. For further details or clarification contact Derbyshire Trading Standards at:

Chatsworth Hall
Chesterfield Road
Matlock
Derbyshire
DE4 3FW

Telephone:

Businesses: Call Derbyshire 08 456 058 058

Consumers: Citizens Advice consumer helpline 08454 040506

Fax: 01629 536197

Website: www.derbyshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards

We want everyone to be able to understand us. On request, we will arrange:

- Language interpreters, including for sign language
- Translation of written materials into other languages
- Materials in large print, on tape or in Braille.

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To ensure that you are looking at the most up-to-date version of this leaflet, please visit our website at

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/std11_tcm9-8371.pdf

or telephone us on 01629 536166.

