

A guide for producers of eggs selling directly to consumers

This leaflet sets out European Community requirements relating to the production and marketing standards for eggs. This information applies to eggs sold directly to the consumer for their own use from:

- your own farm
- door-to-door deliveries, or
- at your own stall at a market or car boot sale

This applies only if the eggs are ungraded (without weight or class descriptions), and you do not knowingly sell a cracked egg.

If eggs are sold in any other manner, for example to other retail premises, you must be registered with the Egg Marketing Inspectorate. Further labelling requirements will also apply - please see our guidance leaflet **'Retail sale and labelling of eggs'** (http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/std11_tcm44-8371.pdf).

Labelling requirements:

A best before date must be given with 'Best Before' followed by a date, which must be a maximum of twenty-eight days after the date of lay. When applying the 'Best Before' date, consideration should be given to any thin shelled eggs and the storage of eggs in high ambient temperatures. The best before date does not have to be stamped on to the egg, but it must be at least supplied with it.

Appropriate storage information (such as, 'keep refrigerated after purchase').

For local public markets or car boot sales, eggs must be individually stamped with a code which gives the production site and farming method. An exemption to the requirement to stamp applies for producers with a flock of less than 50 birds.

This notice should explain the meaning of the letters and numbers stamped on the egg. 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

Eggs sold in one of the three ways described above cannot be marked or advertised with a weight grade or class.

Method of farming:

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, 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:

In order to keep the eggs you sell in good condition, you must store them:

- at a cool, constant temperature
- dry and out of direct sunlight

You should also consider:

- handling them as little as possible, as small cracks will cause the eggs to deteriorate and lose weight
- taking care when storing trays on top of each other, as this may cause the eggs to crack

What are the consequences of non-compliance?

Failure to comply with these labelling requirements is a criminal offence. The maximum penalty on conviction in a magistrate's court is an unlimited fine and/or imprisonment for up to 2 years.

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>).

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:

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| 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/std25_tcm9-8373.pdf

or telephone us on 01629 536166.

