



Nottinghamshire  
County Council

# Business Information

## Private sales of Hens Eggs

This leaflet covers the retail sale and labelling of Hens eggs produced by you and sold only from either:

1. Your own property, where the eggs were produced.
2. Door to door selling
3. A stall run by you at a car boot sale or local public market.

### Are there any restrictions on how I can sell my own Hens eggs?

Yes. If you wish to sell your eggs from a stall at a car boot sale or local public market, i.e. other than from the place where you keep the hens or by hawking them), from 1 July 2005 each egg must be individually stamped with a code. This will comprise of your producer identity number, identification of the farming production method and the country of origin. (This includes sale at Farmers Markets and Car Boot Sales).

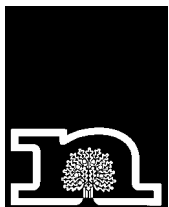
If you wish to sell your eggs in any way, other than those stated above, they will need to be graded and packed at a registered packing station. It is possible to be a small packing station.

**More information is available from the Egg Marketing Inspectorate on 0115 9291191.**

Only Registered Packing Stations may grade and pre-pack eggs. You may choose to store your eggs on keyes trays but you should not pre-pack eggs into boxes in advance of a sale. You may provide egg boxes in which to serve eggs to your customers.

You must sell your eggs within 21 days of the laying date, this will be 7 days **before** the best before date.

*Please turn over...*



### Contacting us

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## What labelling information do I need to give to customers?

- The Best Before date (a maximum of 28 days from when the egg was laid)
- Appropriate storage instructions (e.g. keep refrigerated after purchase)
- From 1 July 2005 eggs sold at local markets will also need to be individually stamped with a code identifying the producer, the farming method and country of origin (i.e. UK).

## How do I get a producers identifying number?

You will need to contact the DEFRA Egg Marketing Inspectorate for an application form. The local inspectorate can be contacted on 0115 9291191.

## What is a Farming Method Code?

This is a prescribed abbreviation as follows: 'F/range and '1' for Free Range eggs, 'Barn' and/or '2' for Barn eggs and 'Caged' and/or '3' for Eggs from Caged Hens.

These numbers are compulsory.

## Can I tell my customers how my hens are raised?

If you raise your hens in accordance with the relevant production methods and welfare standards you may describe your eggs as 'Free Range' or 'Barn' Eggs. All other methods are deemed eggs from caged Hens.

**Note:** Since 1 January 2002 the descriptions 'Perchery', 'Semi-Intensive' and 'Deep Litter' are no longer recognised and may not be used.

## How do I know if I meet the relevant production methods?

Some of the essential requirements are listed below. The Egg Marketing Inspectorate can provide full details of the requirements:

- **Free Range** eggs are produced in poultry enterprises in which, amongst other requirements, the hens:
  - a) have continuous access to open air runs, which
  - b) must be covered with vegetation, such as pasture; and
  - c) provide 4m<sup>2</sup> for each hen, (i.e. a maximum of 2500 per hectare); and

d) have sheds which comply with EC Welfare of Laying Hens Requirements.

- **Barn** Eggs come from poultry enterprises in which the hens:
  - a) are stocked at a density of no more than 9 birds per square metre on the floor, and
  - b) where the perches provided have a minimum of 15cm of perching for every bird.

Barn hens have the same requirements as free range hens except for access to the outside.

## How should I store and handle eggs?

- You should keep them cool (but not chilled), and protect them 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 taint the flavour of them such as onions or washing powders.
- You must rotate your eggs to ensure that they are sold within 21 days from when they were laid.
- You should not sell any eggs for human consumption if you are in any doubt that they are fit to eat.

## Can I describe my eggs as 'Organic'?

The description Organic can only be applied if additional production and welfare criteria are met and you are registered with and audited by an accreditation body. Such eggs will need to be stamped with the relevant organic approval code and 'O'.

*This leaflet is a brief summary of the law affecting your business. It is not an authoritative document on the law and is only intended for guidance. For further details or clarification please contact the Trading Standards Service.*