CALIFORNIA
EGG
QUALITY
ASSURANCE
PLAN

AN ANIMAL PRODUCTION
FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM

Developed by the
California Egg Industry in Cooperation with:

California Department of Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.C. Cooperative Extension Service
California Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory System
California Department of Health Services
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
CALIFORNIA EGG QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN

The California Egg Quality Assurance Plan is a voluntary Preharvest Food Safety program designed to ensure product quality and food safety associated with salmonella and chemical residues in eggs. The program contains twenty core components which form the basis of a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan. Training, record-keeping, and research are integral components in documenting the success of the plan.

Each participant will design an appropriate monitoring plan applicable to their specific operation. Farm and processing facilities will be periodically reviewed by California Department of Food and Agriculture veterinarians to ensure compliance with the program components.

CORE COMPONENTS

Administrative
1. Develop a farm/premises flock egg quality assurance plan.

2. Designate an employee or employees as the official quality control supervisor(s) for in-house operations and for follow-up training.

Production
3. Purchase chicks and pullets from hatcheries participating in the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) "U.S. Salmonella Enteritidis Monitored Program" or equivalent state plan. Chicks should be delivered with a certifying letter. Started pullets must be obtained from sources with an acceptable salmonella prevention and control program.

4. Chicks and pullets should always be transported in coops and trucks decontaminated between flocks.


6. Use animal protein ingredients originating from rendering plants participating in the Animal Protein Producers Industry (APPI) Salmonella Reduction Education Program or equivalent.

7. If used, medications, feed additives and pesticides must be administered adhering to approved label directions.

8. Maintain a flock health program to include vaccinations, monitoring and periodic necropsy of mortality or cull birds.

9. Maintain a farm rodent monitoring and reduction program.

10. Pullet and layer buildings will be cleaned and disinfected before restocking. Third-party visual inspection of cleaning and disinfection is required. This must be done by a certified quality control employee designated by the owner, or by a certified independent professional.

11. The farm will utilize a biosecurity plan and train employees on proper procedures to execute the program. Document employee training and comprehension annually.

12. Implement a Salmonella Enteritidis environmental monitoring program at least once during the life of each lay flock while on the lay farm.
**Processing**

13. Follow plant operating guidelines:

   a) Facilities and equipment must be kept clean and in good repair and shall be completely washed at the end of each day's operation.
   b) Lighting should be adequate to properly identify egg defects in the candling booth and the processing area.
   c) Potable water with less than 2 ppm of iron shall be used.
   d) Wash water shall be maintained at 90 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and at least 20 degrees Fahrenheit higher than the temperature of the eggs to be washed.
   e) A USDA approved cleaning compound shall be used in the wash water.
   f) Wash water shall be added continuously and replaced every four hours.
   g) Washed eggs shall be spray rinsed with warm water and a USDA approved sanitizer.
   h) If eggs are to be oiled, follow USDA guidelines.

14. Refrigerate eggs according to applicable federal, state or local laws.

15. Label egg cartons and cases with a "Keep Refrigerated" descriptor to educate consumers about perishability.

16. Label egg cartons and loose pack eggs with a Julian pack date to assist with product rotation. An optional "sell by" date may be used at the discretion of the packer as long as it does not exceed 30 days from date of pack.

17. Label cartons and cases with plant of origin number, and if possible, with a flock identification number.

18. Plastic egg flats should be washed and sanitized after each use or returned to the originating farm to avoid cross contamination. Fiber egg flats cannot be sanitized, they must be returned to the farm of origin.

19. Egg cartons and soiled fiber flats should not be reused.

20. Retail returns should not be reprocessed for retail shell egg sales.