



# HOW QUEENSLAND'S EGG INDUSTRY WAS HATCHED



## HISTORY OF THE SUNSHINE STATES SUNNY YOLKS!

The Sunshine state is synonymous with terms like 'Sunny Queen' and sunny-yellow egg yolks.

It's warm climate, record sunshine and strong agricultural industries, pave the way for reliable feed grain supplies and the production of high-quality eggs.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Queensland supplies about 25% of eggs in Australia with egg farming generating more than \$244 million at the farm gate in Queensland annually.

The Queensland Department of Agriculture states that "approximately 85% of Queensland's egg production occurs in the Darling Downs region."

Eggs are also farmed in:

- South East Queensland, including the Sunshine Coast hinterland area



Image: Queensland Egg Board

where most production is small scale, pasture based free range farms

- North Queensland, from Townsville to the Atherton Tableland
- Central Queensland, including Mackay, Whitsundays, Mt Morgan, Yeppoon, Rockhampton and Gladstone
- And the Fraser Coast and Mary Valley.

Formal regulated commercial egg farming in Queensland dates back to the early 1900's.

One the earliest poultry farmers in the state's north was the Hecht family at Bambaroo, who had the state's first registered hatchery in 1915.

Historically, there were two egg boards in Queensland: the Southern Queensland Egg Marketing Board (SQEMB) and the Central Queensland Egg Marketing Board (CQEMB).

Far North Queensland did not have a board. Up until the late 70's farmers in North Qld marketed their own produce, but in 1980 a co-operative was formed in Townsville and in 1981 another in Cairns. The Fresha Eggs group was born in conjunction with another Fresha Eggs group in Darwin. Branches were established in Mackay and Mt Isa.

# *" From 2015 Qld farmers exported to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea"*

After the egg boards in the southern and central parts of the state were disbanded, the whole Qld industry was united in a public company " Sunny Queen".

In 1972, all of Queensland faced egg production quotas. This abolished in 2000, but unlike NSW, the state government failed to provide Queensland egg farmers with any form of compensation.

Some of the pioneers in the Queensland industry include the Small, Inwood Family, Hall, McLean Families and many more.

Sadly, the number of egg producers has steadily reduced over the last 50 years, from many hundreds of farms in the 1970s' to just a handful in Queensland today.

## **Queensland Egg Timeline:**

### **1920's**

- The year 1927 shows the earliest record of the Queensland Egg Board. In 1928 the Queensland Egg Board discusses distribution of eggs in cartons

### **QUEENSLAND EGG BOARD.**

The regular monthly meeting of the Queensland Egg Board was held at Brisbane on Wednesday, March 28. All the members were present. A report was submitted relative to the advertising campaign recently inaugurated by the board, and which is still in progress. The distribution of eggs in cartons is an innovation which it is hoped will prove beneficial to growers and consumers alike. The handy package, it is thought, will make for convenience in handling, and the guaranteed quality of the contents is calculated to inspire the confidence of the buying public. The board is hopeful that egg sales will be considerably stimulated, and that results will ultimately prove the wisdom of the new departure.

### **1960's**

- Free range eggs were sold in Queensland

### **1970's**

- From 1972 all of Queensland had hen quotas.

### **1990's**

- In 1994 the Queensland egg industry was deregulated

- In 1997 the Queensland Egg Farmers Association commenced (known as Queensland United Egg Producers)



### **2000's**

- In 2002 the Egg Industry Service Provision Bill 2002 was introduced to the Queensland Parliament in August of 2002 allowing for the establishment of AECL (now Australian Eggs) and introduction of a compulsory levy.
- In 2005 the Queensland Egg Food Safety Scheme was introduced. From 2010 all egg producers with over 100 birds must be registered with Biosecurity Queensland.
- Between 2015 – 2017 Queensland egg producers commenced exports to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea.