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Please attribute to Melinda Hashimoto – CEO Egg Farmers of Australia

REASONS FOR CURRENT EGG SHORTAGES

You might have noticed a lower supply of eggs in your local supermarket, recently.

Some supermarkets have even rationed the number of cartons that you can buy in one purchase.

So, why is there a seemingly lower supply than usual?

There are several factors:

1. Avian Influenza: The impact of Avian Influenza (AI) outbreaks last year impacted on egg production on some sites in Victoria, NSW and the ACT. The disease required laying flocks on infected farms to be destroyed. The good news is that the majority of farms impacted by AI have now restocked with new layer hens and egg production on these properties is expected to gradually return to normal over the next six months.

2. Seasonal demand: High seasonal demand for eggs used in cooking during the festive season, long summer holidays and back to school and post-holiday work lunches continues to place an increased demand for fresh Aussie eggs. Eggs are among the most nutritious sources of affordable protein and egg production has one of the lowest carbon footprints of any agricultural protein produced in Australia.

3. S&G changes: The egg industry is facing a transitional period as some egg farms transition from cage egg production to barn laid or free-range production systems. This is in anticipation of a phase out of conventional caged eggs in many states as a result of changes to Australia's Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry (S&G). It takes time and capital expenditure to establish new farming infrastructure.

Major supermarkets have put up signs apologising for fewer eggs being on their shelves. This is because Woolworths and Coles have a policy to mostly stock barn laid or free-range eggs.

However, you will find plenty of eggs (both cage and other production methods) at your independent grocery stores or local fruit and vegetable outlets, that stock eggs.

Egg Farmers of Australia (EFA) expects that egg production will increase throughout the course of this year and a greater supply will become available.

Meanwhile, it is good to see that Aussie families are embracing their eggs. On average each Australian eats about 266 eggs a year. While, Aussie egg farmers produce about 17.6 million a day, mostly on family-run farms.

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