

FARMER INPUT

#	Question	Farmer's Comments
1	<p>What do you consider to be the priority trade issues facing EFO for the next 3 years?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade negotiators sacrificing supply management in gradual cuts to tariffs for the sake of increased exports in other areas. • The analysis of the fine print in the TPP. (7 responses) • Meet with the new government. • Ensuring that we are producing enough eggs to supply the Ontario market and only allowing in what we are required to under trade agreements. • Determine what cage system we need to go to. Enriched cage free or free range. What impact does the McDonald statement have on the decision and how many other buyers will follow suit. • I feel the TPP is and will be a priority trade issue for the next 3 years. • Taking position on our cage or housing recommendations and guiding our egg buyers in that position, before we need to go free range like McDonalds decided to go. • Possibility of quota losses, or increased market access to Canada. • Keeping our supply management system. We know the US does not play fair - they are out for themselves. • WTO NAFTA • Keeping the quota as it is. • Eggs coming into Canada from the US. • How to get more eggs in to the system to supply our own domestic market. (2 responses) • Trade talks. • Maintain marketing boards. • Supply management and eggs coming in from the US. • Any international trade deal! The three pillars of supply management are going to be under the microscope anytime that Canada talks trade in any trade deal! • We need to keep costs that we can control down (red tape, administration, etc.) and do away with programs the promote inefficiencies! (358 program - egg production and egg quality are still excellent at 358; we need to utilize that expensive pullet better; the lease program encourages lots of new builds, but producers are splitting current flocks and building on two different sites to "farm" the program instead of having one bigger barn, single site, which would be better use of capital expenses.

How can we ensure that our policies and programs (HACCP, nutrient management, S.e. insurance) are firm enough to ensure integrity but flexible enough to respond to the consumers' perception of "farm fresh eggs"?

- By having policies that are easy to understand, not too complicated and ones that producers can live with. Don't overdo it.
- Are doing this well.
- Ongoing audits of the records and facilities are instrumental in ensuring that the programs/policies are followed.
- Be logical; not overkill. The more you ask that is unrealistic, the more lies you will get.
- Tell consumers how well our chickens are treated, how rigorous our HACCP program is to ensure good quality eggs by well-cared for hens.
- To ensure integrity, regular inspection visits, even surprise ones, are necessary. To give the proof that the policies are followed is a satisfying and reassuring thing for consumers. They need to know that the environment the chickens live in is safe and clean.
- Keep on with what you are doing.
- Social media needs to educate the public more. University studies on housing need to be published in other forms than farm papers to give the policies more teeth. There should be consequences if policies not met (after a warning).
- Realize we're doing all we can to make everything safe and fresh for the consumer.
- I believe they are already; third party audits will increase credibility.
- Keep telling our story; what we are doing for our hens, why we care for them and why we like the quota system.
- We are going to get top heavy with bureaucratic people and paperwork.
- Talk about what we do.
- The records producers keep currently should be streamlined and uniform (all the same). There is too much duplication at the moment.
- Perhaps we should have signs at the road indicating that we are egg producers. People (consumers) can see that most of us take great pride in our farms.
- You have gone too far.
- These are really two separate questions in my book. Public perception is brain washing the consumer to their point of view. Give the consumers the truth, make it public knowledge about antibiotics; I haven't used them on my farm for well over a decade, yet some advertisers promote their product as antibiotic free. Same for hormones/ steroids - are these not almost the same thing.
- Consumers want cheap, safe food.
- Years ago we had Jim Johnstone on TV – this worked great to show a farmer at work.
- Everyone needs to adhere to the policies – 3rd party audits with consequences for non-conforming.
- Make it as easy and user-friendly for farmers as possible. When new parts come out/ additional documentation is added, first make sure it is 100 percent approved by the board and meets the new standards before making farmers fill out forms. It creates confusion as to which sheets/forms we should be completing when things change all the time.

How should EFO communicate with consumers on the continuing care of laying hens regardless of production type?

- I am too removed from it to comment. I would take people's advice who are wiser than I in this area.
- By doing what we do best - tell the consumer that producers are responsible people that really care for their animals.
- Through campaign and grader labelling, egg code stamps.
- Again, show them the studies. How we care for them but also point out the fact that we are sacrificing price and human health for the alternative. There was a reason that we have chickens off the floor. I can still remember picking eggs up from birds on the floor and I don't like the idea of going back there. Changes have made it better, but it is still labour intensive and capital cost intensive also.
- Communication, through advertising, the quality of the eggs being produced. Quality is only produced when the hens are given the utmost care in any production type.
- Videos from actual farms.
- Advertise on TV, radio, newspaper, social media...get the word out that our local product is worth shopping for!!
- Media, internet, blog, information sheets... and maybe for people who really want to know, the pros and cons and challenges of the different production types. Maybe even specify that chickens are omnivores - a lot of people don't know that.
- Consumers trust farmers; we must explain the pros and cons of all production types. (3 responses)
- Social media is the way of the future.
- To help the consumer realize there were using science to make things better for all those regardless of their production type. Keep it low on the radar. Perhaps on the EFO website give more information if someone is looking for it.
- Have egg farmers bring the messages to consumers.
- Have egg farmers tell why we have these kinds of production systems.
- Television ads, grocery stores, fair displays.
- Educational videos with some kind of computerized question and answer feature, with correct answers given after each question to correct misconceptions.
- More producer profiling on TV, radio, newspaper, etc.
- Virtual farm tours on websites. Bio security makes it tough to let people in barns, but I think most people's perception on what goes on in our barns is worse then what really does! Educating consumers on what we do and why we do it is the key - no matter what type of housing.
- Education – we have to stop letting the consumer make the decisions on what production type is best. We need to educate that their opinion is emotional. (2 responses)
- Keeping prices high for higher cost housing methods.
- Mass media, university reports, TV advertising, videos.
- On farm visits.
- Trade shows.

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What kinds of projects do you believe that EFO should be involved in to develop the egg and pullet industry in Ontario?

- I am too removed from it to comment. I would take people's advice who are wiser than I in this area.
- Research.
- Keep doing *Who Made Your Eggs Today?* and stress local shopping.
- Health studies for workers/farmers who work in the different systems.
- Costing of the different cage systems and ensuring farmers get a fair COP for each; not leave it to Graders.
- The food bank should be a project that should continue.
- We all need to pull in the same direction. We are a team as Canadians; however, we are the biggest province and we should be a leader and decision maker not a follower, looking at the parade going by and not getting in to it.
- Research to improve our working environment.
- Research to learn more about the best production type.
- Continue to work with foodbanks and to sponsor good causes.
- A new New Entrant Program that would work to bring in young farmers. Have a closer look at other province's programs.
- We need to find a way of making the public aware that the animal activists are not always presenting the accurate facts. That there view is slanted.
- We need to find a way of getting more farmers, especially young ones. Our numbers are getting too low. We need to count the actual farmers not the amount of quota numbers out there.
- Stop having big mega farms and have more family farms (ten to forty thousand birds).
- If EFO is going to continue down the path of more forms and deadlines (such as lease pools, lease pools reloaded, home week, quota credits, etc.), I think that there should be a board employee that travels the roads and visits each farmer at least once a year (or more if they need it) to make sure that the paper work is being done correctly and on time. Some of us are not sure which programs we may or may not qualify for.
- Control hen numbers.
- Farmer education.

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What relationships should EFO improve upon in order to facilitate meeting our strategic goals as an organization? (*i.e. IEC, UEP, EFC, provincial egg boards, supervisory agency, elected officials, egg grading stations, egg processors, staff*)

- I am too removed from it to comment. I would take people's advice who are wiser than I in this area.
- We should try to work with EFC - that is the most important. Without EFC there is no possible supply management. We need to work with the provinces - we need them in order to make the system work. The rest of the industry is also very important. IEC, UEP, also important but everything starts at home.
- Our relationships with the grading stations, processors and provincial boards needs to be maintained and improved upon in order to sound as one voice when addressing any elected official.
- As new faces may replace elected positions, we need to keep those relationships fresh and up-to-date so that complacency does not take over.
- We need to try not to dictate what the industry should do - look, listen and take the best decision after consulting with our partners.
- Keep in contact with elected officials and stress the importance of local farming and supply management.

EFO does this very well. Continue!

- Work together and talk more to see what would help improve the relationships between all parties involved in the process of eggs.
- All groups mentioned.
- I'd like to think that the board works hard in all these areas. While I sometimes wish that EFC and the provincial boards would listen more to Ontario's lead, I don't think it is for lack of effort by the Ontario board.
- Trade negotiations by our elected officials do scare me.
- EFC and Farm Products. We need to start working together more so that we can implement quota increases in a much more timely fashion. We are in a growing market, but always seem to be behind on production and every time I ask why we are so behind I get answers like "it's complicated". That sounds like somebody is being difficult. It is imperative that we keep up with demand, and those in positions to grant the needed increase need to figure out their differences without shorting production.
- Keep it simple and listen.
- I am not well educated on your current relationships to comment.
- All these groups need to have same goals and work as one. (2 responses)

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How can we encourage experienced farmers as well as new producers to participate in EFO activities and ensure succession in Board leadership from year to year?

- Keep is simple, keep it local.
- What the board is doing at the present time is very good.
- The session with young producers is excellent.
- Doing this well already with constant communication, stipends and travel costs covered, round table initiatives, new farmer forums, etc.
- Big province - long ways to travel for me to most things.
- Leadership interest could start with being a member (assigned by the board) of an outside committee to research, complete a task or discuss a particular issue. Once completed, those findings would be brought to the board. The task or issue would have a start date and end date, therefore defining how much time needs to be committed. This may give someone insight of what would be expected without the long-term commitment.
- Continue sending early invitations and via email.
- Change locations, activities and dates each year to make it different and give a chance for more people to attend.
- Continue keeping farmers informed.
- Not sure you can. Pissing people off will get them to show up for a short period of time. Old timers adjust to change poorly; work on the young ones for future involvement.
- It's our livelihood so get involved!
- I put up with someone on the board for 25 years - I just gather eggs and haul shit.
- Get them when they are young (or too old) and have a bunch of workers on farm that can work for nothing.

- Have specific terms a person can serve on the board. That way we can have continuity and new people involved.
- Start by being more receptive to producer input! Standing up in front of a full house of producers and telling them that "the board is going to do what every they want", is not a going to encourage producer participation!
- Director stand downs (i.e., 3 year term than stand down for 2 years).
- Junior Directors for job shadowing?
- I think you do better than many sectors.
- Hold open events, encourage feedback and open questions.
- Training sessions to foster farmers so they have the experience/confidence. Specifically debate training, conflict management, public speaking etc.

7

Are there any specific concerns that you believe EFO needs to address in the next planning cycle?

- Keep egg levies low to competitively price eggs.
- Salaries of top brass at EFO and EFC should not exceed what an average middle class Canadian tax payer earns.
- Need to have a clear direction on what type of equipment a producer should put in a new barn or when he has to retool.
- Work with the rest of the provinces on national policies.
- TPP changes.
- LLP projections.
- Animal rights vs animal welfare – ‘sentient beings’ clause.
- Costing for the different cage systems and farmers getting paid enough for eggs from alternative cage systems and not leave it to the graders. (B.C. is trying this.)
- A farmer might get a 5-year contract from a grader to produce free run eggs and builds the barn. What happens after 5 years and the farmer is stuck with whatever price the grader wants to provide. EFO is supposed to ensure that the farmers are getting their COP. This seems to be the direction the consumers want us to go, so we should try to get ahead of the game. How many specialty eggs are imported right now? The imports are only going to increase till we make changes to ensure COP for farmers who decide to go that route.
- Animal care and the new code of practice – we should be part of the planning. We know some things need to change, so why not be part of the ones building it so our needs are being met, rather than just having to live with someone else’s decision.
- Make certain consumers realize how good we are at producing quality eggs.
- A bigger desire from big companies to buy free run eggs only.
- The new entrant program - make it work or scrap it. It is embarrassing to our industry right now. The word is out at how hard it is to bid on quota just right. Why would I want to go through the process of becoming a new entrant?
- Need a new New Entrant Program.

- If we are forced to move back into the 1950s way of housing chickens I do not want to be in the industry. We need to simplify things! Less programs and rules. Go back to letting producers know how much quota that they are allowed to produce without any leases and have all quota increases go back to a percentage. Trying to plan hatch numbers and pullet placements is extremely difficult at times when producers don't know what they can place.
- Lease in quota... The way it is being done at the moment is good. Everyone is treated equal which is good for the family farm.
- Handling the demand for eggs and how this demand is distributed to all size of farms.

8

What are the top three obstacles or barriers that might prevent EFO from achieving its goals over the next year? Of these, what are the obstacles or barriers that EFO can control or influence and what do you think we should do?

- Fair price for farmers + fair price for grading stations + fair egg levy + fair EFO employee salaries + fair margins for stores and processors = eggs priced at value that are safe. Under or over paid people will compromise either safe or value priced eggs.
- COP for farmers on regular and specialty eggs.
- Stubborn to status quo.
- Greed to always make more.
- Politicians making uninformed decisions on agriculture issues.
- Avian flu outbreaks. (2 responses)
- TPP trade deal (depending on the final result).
- Activism and growing media concerns.
- When out at events I hear old timers say "the new entrant should not get special treatment". My question is why not? I am sure many of them are second-generation farmers, which to me means someone helped them get started. I do hope the board is not listening to them.
- Make decisions based on what is good for the future of our industry.
- Not sure what the goals you are trying to achieve to really answer this question.
- Let the USA put all the eggs in here, then get out of the way. See what the consumer says then - no smelly barns, no damn farmer spreading shit on a bare wheat field on a nice summer day.
- Free trade
- Animal rights
- Disease (i.e., Avian Influenza)
- Not sure what EFO goals are over the next year?
- Marketing board changes.
- Excess demand for eggs and the distribution of the quota to all farmers.

Yes 12 No 5

Do you believe you have adequate biosecurity plans in place on your farm to protect against the threat of Avian Influenza?

- Yes/No – I believe I have protection but I don't believe that it is humanly possible to completely protect against such viruses.
- To the best of my knowledge, based on an understanding of how it enters a facility. However, if airborne then becomes somewhat difficult.
- We can only do so much reasonably. There are always trucks and vehicles coming and going and they can't be properly disinfected each time. Even inspectors are possible carriers, because they don't always have showers between flocks. There are too many gaps.
- What about the air that comes in through the inlets? I always find dust, dirt and debris on my inlets which have to be cleaned regularly at least once or twice a year. I have even had bronchitis get through my barns this spring even with extra care taken with biosecurity.
- Egg pick-up and egg supplies a major risk. They can't do proper biosecurity with the trucks, drivers or supplies - this is probably the highest risk area for farm-to-farm transmission. I am sure they don't have an unload and loading area at graders so they have cross contamination big time at the grading station along with the interior of the trucks. The biosecurity issue is so huge.
- Haven't even discussed the possibility of contaminated feed - right from the corn in the feed or other grains, from the field to our birds.
- Presently, we have implemented and practice every regulation that the board has called for. The 2016 flock will be in a new facility which will make following the biosecurity protocol more efficient.
- Foot bath and limited access.
- We have doors separating areas; we provide clothes, footwear and gloves and use them; we have a washing station for hands and provide a shower; we change clothes every time we work at the farm; -we don't exchange equipment; we keep a visitor logbook; and we provide disinfections for footwear and use it.
- We are doing the best we can, using the information that we have from industry.
- We try to keep current with ways to protect our flock. The only outsiders into our barn are board staff and egg trucker. Both suit up.
- I shoot all wild birds in immediate area; spread diesel fuel on entrance area; strip down outside door and gather eggs in the nude. THERE...
- The foot wear of service crews scares me. Should we buy boot cleaners or footwear for the whole crew? What sizes do we buy if we buy footwear? Does it need safety approval, steel toes etc.? This is especially needed for vaccination crews and pullet placement crews after the barn is disinfected.
- I think we do a good job on our farm. I believe that when we suck as much fresh air from outside that we do, which can carry particles of dust or feathers from migrating birds in our barns, that even the best biosecurity can break with AI.
- Ask questions and use proper biosecurity before you let someone in.
- Not sure you can 100% protect against the flu.

What additional Avian Influenza information or resources do you think would be useful for Egg Farmers of Ontario to provide?

- I think you are doing your best.
- We have all the information we need.
- Migration timing and locations for heightened alert.
- Continue research on how it enters a facility.
- You already sent and gave a lot. Thank you.
- Doing well.
- You seem to be very good at sending out updated information. Not sure you can improve.
- Put more layer barns north of Kapaskasing.
- Can the board supply recommendations for footwear numbers and sizes, and/or help secure wholesale prices by forming a buying group for foot wear?
- Examples of biosecurity methods.