

Egg Pricing & Supply Q&A



What is happening with the bird flu?

Bird flu is a disease that is almost always fatal to chickens, and it is devastating to the egg farmers who care for these birds and depend on them for their livelihoods. America's egg farmers work around the clock to protect their hens from bird flu, enforcing strict biosecurity measures to ensure the safety of the nation's egg supply.

Why do eggs cost more right now?

Affordable food matters to everyone. And although egg farmers usually can't set the price of eggs, they are doing everything they can to keep costs down and make sure eggs are plentiful, which should help ease prices.

Several things are temporarily affecting the price of eggs right now:

- The United States has been experiencing an ongoing outbreak of avian influenza, a virus commonly known as bird flu or H5N1. Avian influenza may have a disruptive effect on the availability of eggs, resulting in pricing changes. The good news is egg farms impacted by the more recent bird flu cases are recovering and getting back to egg production much faster than those affected in 2015.

When will prices come back down?

It is difficult to predict how or when egg prices may change. The egg pricing market continues to be very volatile as it adjusts to variables like reduced supply from HPAI outbreaks, fluctuating costs for producing eggs and changing consumer demand.

Although egg farmers don't control the price of eggs, they are doing everything they can to keep their costs down and supply as many eggs as they can, which should help ease prices.

My local store didn't have enough eggs or the egg brand I like to buy. What is going on?

On occasion, depending on where you live, where you shop, what day you shop and even the time of day you're shopping, you may run into a temporary shelf shortage at the store, but don't worry. These situations are isolated and they are being resolved. We appreciate your patience as egg farmers work hard to get shelves restocked.

There are about 300 million egg-laying chickens on egg farms in this country—nearly one bird for every American. Farmers are doing everything they can to ensure the egg supply is secure and eggs are plentiful. If you're not seeing the eggs you need, they are coming.

Are eggs still an affordable source of protein?

A dozen large eggs weigh about 1.5 pounds and each egg has six grams of high-quality protein all for only 70 calories. Eggs remain as a great value at the grocery store as one of the most affordable highest-quality proteins per serving. In a recent analysis done by the USDA, for the majority of the period from 2021 to now, eggs remained near or at the top of selected livestock, poultry and egg products in affordability per gram of protein.

Can I catch bird flu from the eggs or meat I eat?

The USDA³ and the FDA⁴ say consumers can be confident in the safety of eggs, and the CDC reinforces the current risk to the public remains low.⁵ The likelihood that eggs from infected poultry are in the retail market is low, due to safeguards in place, which include testing of flocks and federal inspection programs. The CDC also confirms that avian influenza cannot be transmitted through safely handled and thoroughly cooked eggs or poultry.

Sources

1. 2024 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1) – Michigan Dairy Herd and Poultry Flock Summary (usda.gov)
2. <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/hpai-dairy-faqs.pdf>
3. <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/avian-influenza-food-safety-qa.pdf>
4. <https://www.fda.gov/food/egg-guidance-regulation-and-other-information/questions-and-answers-regarding-safety-eggs-during-highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza-outbreaks>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/spotlights/h5n1-low-risk-public.html>