

Don Bell’s Table Egg Layer Flock Projections and Economic Commentary - 2003

(This report was written by Don Bell, University of California Poultry Specialist, emeritus, under the sponsorship of United Egg Producers)

On the following pages, we have a new presentation format for important flock statistics. The intent is to show the most recently available data with comparisons with the previous month(s) and for the two previous years. This will make “trends” more readily apparent to the reader.

1. **MONTHLY HATCH** (straight-run) (000's): Monthly hatches for the first 5 months of 2003 were below year-earlier levels. After that, monthly hatches were at or above previous levels in 5 of the 7 months. Totals for the year were down 1.3%.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (%)
November	31,649	31,146	30,129	-3.3
December	31,504	31,973	33,856	+5.9
Yearly Total	450,467	421,320	415,827	-1.3

2. **24-MONTH ACCUMULATED HATCH** (females) (millions): The 24-month previous hatch is one of the most highly correlated statistic associated with “next year’s” egg prices. During the 1996-2002 period, each additional one million female chicks hatched decreased annual Urner-Barry Midwest Large egg prices by 0.38¢/dozen. Recent 24-month totals appear to have “bottomed out” at about 418 million pullets. As a result, egg price projections based upon the hatch will start to decrease.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (%)
November	N/a	438,355	417,581	-4.7
December	N/a	436,997	418,574	-4.2

PULLET PLACEMENT INTO LAYER HOUSES (millions): Pullets placed equal pullet

chicks hatched minus a mortality factor projected ahead 5 months for placement in layer houses. Currently available hatch data can be projected into May 2004. Through May, pullet placements for 2004 are just slightly higher than for the same period in 2003.

Period	2002	2003	2004	'04/'03 (%)
Jan	15.87	16.19	14.97	-7.5
Feb	16.51	15.97	16.14	+1.1
Mar	16.47	14.46	15.79	+9.2
Apr	14.28	14.02	13.60	-3.0
May	14.22	14.51	15.28	+5.3
June	16.03	15.12		
July	14.82	13.53		
Aug	16.57	16.57		
Sept	17.24	16.94		
Oct	17.57	17.24		
Nov	15.93	16.40		
Dec	15.89	16.06		
Yearly Total	191.40	187.01		

4. **TABLE EGG LAYERS** (millions): During the years 2001 to 2002, layer numbers increased a total of 1.7 million. It is estimated that increases in the human population require approximately 3 million per year to provide the same per capita consumption. Layer numbers were below year-earlier numbers for all but two months in 2003. Average counts were 1.9 million less than last year.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (%)
November	279.4	280.8	278.7	-0.75
December	280.2	282.7	281.0	-0.60
Yearly Average	276.5	278.2	276.3	-0.68

5. **TABLE EGGS PRODUCED** (millions): Egg production for 2003 was up almost 1% over 2002 even though the flock size 0.7% smaller. Egg production per hen increased 4.4

eggs – from 265.2 to 269.6.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (%)
November	6,159	6,204	6,301	+1.6
December	6,329	6,325	6,476	+2.4
Yearly Total	72,789	73,768	74,486	+0.97

6. INDUCED MOLTING (% in plus after a molt): Molting appears to be up slightly in 2003 compared to 2002 figures. US percentages are becoming closer to California averages (about 65% of the CA rate), but this also reflects more double molting in California. (absolute change)

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (%)
November	26.4	27.3	27.5	+0.2
December	26.6	26.4	25.1	-1.3
Yearly Average	27.0	26.8	27.4	+0.6

7. SLAUGHTER (millions): This number represents birds slaughtered in USDA inspected plants - about 45-50% of the total bird disappearance. The counts for 2003 represent a marked 20.8% reduction below year 2002 figures. Increases in on-farm disposal and off-site rendering account for the majority of this reduction.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (%)
November	6.97	6.01	4.36	-27.5
December	7.77	7.15	5.93	-17.1
Yearly Total	90.25	96.48	76.38	-20.8

8. BREAKER EGGS PRODUCED (million cases): Year 2003 figures represent about 29.2% of the total U.S. production – down from 30.6% in 2002. Total eggs for breaking was down more than 2 million cases in 2003.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (%)
November	5.056	4.997	4.238	-15.2
December	5.097	5.071	5.273	+4.0
Yearly Total	61.169	62.775	60.463	-3.7

9. URNER-BARRY MID-WEST LARGE EGG PRICES (¢/dozen): Egg prices during 2003 averaged 21.2 cents per dozen higher than in 2002. Prices during the Fall were at all-time high levels.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02 (¢)
October	68.6	69.3	105.0	+35.7
November	72.8	88.0	126.4	+38.4
December	68.6	79.7	112.5	+32.8
Yearly Average	69.3	71.2	92.4	+21.2

* Courtesy Urner Barry Publications.

10. COST OF EGG PRODUCTION (FEEDSTUFFS FORMULA) - ALL REGIONS:

Egg production costs for January - December 2003 are 1.9¢/dozen higher than for the same period in 2002. This is a result of higher feed prices since all other factors are standardized.

Period	2001	2002	2003	'03 vs. '02 (¢)
October	40.0	43.2	43.7	+0.5
November	40.4	43.1	46.2	+3.1
December	40.5	42.9	45.9	+3.0
Yearly Average	40.7	42.0	43.9	+1.9

11. LEADING TABLE EGG STATES (LAYERS IN 30,000+ FLOCKS)(millions)

Iowa continues to lead the nation in total egg production and rate of growth. California is now the 5th largest egg producing state as a result of farm depopulations due to Exotic Newcastle Disease earlier in the year. (December)

State	2001	2002	Rank (2003)	2003	'03/'02 (%)
IOWA	34.409	36.830	1	40.250	+4.1
OHIO	29.514	30.150	2	27.837	-4.8
CALIFORNIA	23.307	21.670	5	20.370	-17.1
PENNSYLVANIA	22.448	23.240	4	21.743	+1.2
INDIANA	21.760	22.380	3	22.686	-5.1
TEXAS	14.930	14.390	6	14.185	-0.4
U.S.	273.934	274.150		275.032	-1.6

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