

# Tips for purchase of quality eggs

**UNIVERSITY PARK** - The average housewife buys 1,000 eggs a year or more. How does she tell a high quality egg in the carton while in the store.

First a person should look for the grade A USDA stamp

of quality. This is a start but only the first step. Next open the carton and look at the shell. Perfect shelled eggs usually have high interior quality. Egg shells should be smooth, glossy, perfectly shaped without any stain,

dirt or damage such as holes or cracks. Reject any eggs that are cracked, rough, ridged, wrinkled, or misshapen. A perfect shell is usually a high quality egg throughout. High quality eggs taste better.

Second, buy the smaller eggs for the best quality. Pewee, pullet or small and medium sized eggs usually have higher quality interiors than extra large or jumbo size eggs. The regular large egg is the dividing line, it may have higher quality or lower quality depending on the third item listed here.

Third, know the brand name and trust the egg producers, packer and retailer.

Three main areas are managed by your supplier. They include:

- The genetic potential of

the laying chicken. If the farmer buys a bird with a history or reputation for being able to lay high quality eggs, she will continue to do this all year as she moves from laying small eggs to medium then laying larger eggs as the year progresses.

- Secondly, there are environmental requirements

for a bird to lay high quality eggs. She must be kept in an environmentally controlled house held between 56 and 80 degrees all year long where eggs are gathered three times a day. Eggs should then be cooled to 55 degrees F. and kept at that temperature along with 75 per cent relative humidity until eaten.

- Finally, nutrition is a

very important item. Unless a bird is given her minimum daily requirements of all nutrients she will lay no egg at all. Between 20 and 40 different nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, energy, protein, fiber, as well as unidentified factors, are balanced in a hen's laying ration to allow her to lay a high quality egg nearly every day.

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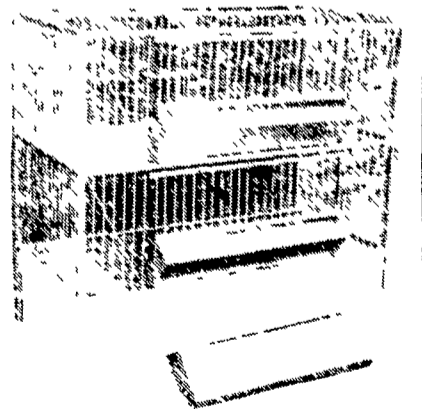
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