GUIDE TO BRITISH LION EGG PRODUCTS

British Lion
Egg Products

Processing standards – it's what sets the British Lion apart…

Across the world, food manufacturers want safe and reliable ingredients. Eggs can be difficult; standards vary dramatically; and there is very little legislation covering egg processing to give manufacturers the reassurance they need.

That's why the UK operates the only recognised, comprehensive processing standard for eggs anywhere in the world. The Lion Code of Practice for the Production of Lion Egg Products sets standards that work across all systems of production, protecting eggs from the moment they are laid to the time they are delivered to food manufacturers and foodservice operators. There is no equivalent Code of Practice anywhere in the world.

Wherever we are in the chain, be that in the hatcheries, on the farms or in the processing plants, our ISO17065-accredited independent auditors are constantly checking thousands of audit points, so that you don't have to.

On-farm standards

The British Lion Code of Practice sets standards across all systems of production, with more than 700 auditable criteria – designed to ensure that the eggs and egg products that reach customers meet the strict quality and safety that we require and they expect.

As part of that, we require that anyone who works with poultry to be properly trained – good stockmanship is vital for a well-run farm and the BEIC has a mandatory training requirement, with a passport that follows farm workers throughout their career.

The raw materials that create Lion egg products

The British Lion mark covers all systems of production, starting with the hatcheries and continuing right through to the processing plant. We guarantee that all British Lion egg products use only eggs that support British farming, and have been laid on registered British Lion farms.

When they arrive at the processing plant, all British Lion eggs must be inspected to ensure that they meet the scheme's exacting processing quality standards, something which is unique to Lion egg products.

We only want the best eggs to create Lion egg products and therefore, under the Lion scheme, we have some very clear rules on the eggs that we will accept within the processing plant. We do not accept any eggs that are dirty, cracked with ruptured membrane, mouldy, insect or vermin contaminated or washed (except at the processor). In addition, any eggs that exceed Lion age or storage requirements will be rejected.
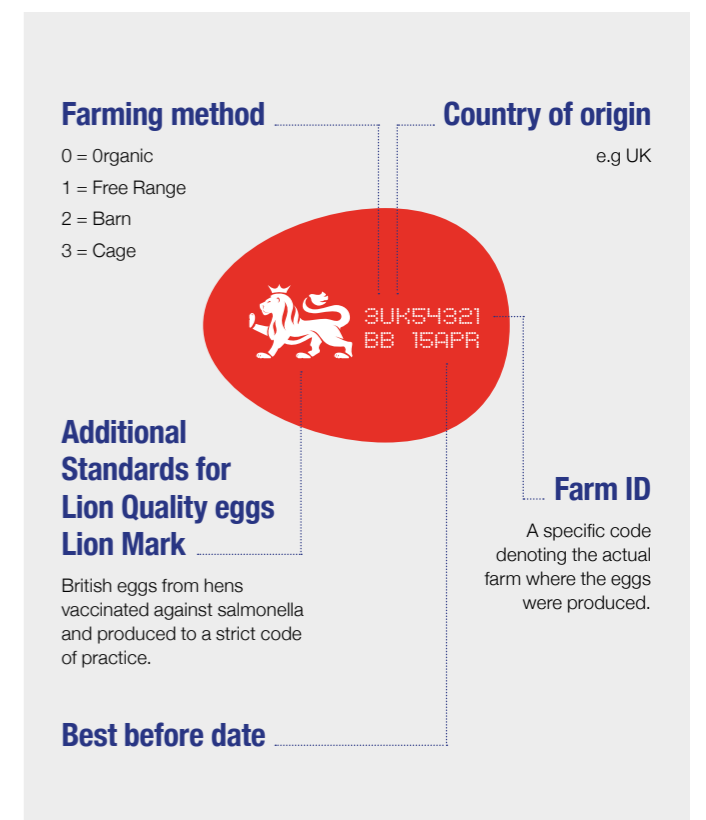
While plants across the UK and Europe are allowed to use eggs from salmonella positive flocks infected with a regulated serovar (SE, ST, mST), these are completely banned from Lion registered processors.

The Lion scheme is the only processing standard that has specific rules governing eggs that are used for processing, so that our processors are clear on what they can and cannot use. And, as well as inspecting eggs when they arrive, we also insist on a second check when the eggs are broken to remove any further faults.

Egg identification

We believe that if you specify the high processing standards of the British Lion scheme, that's what you should receive and we have a number of track and trace measures in the Lion scheme. The Lion requires full traceability, with each batch identifiable by site registration number, producer number, system of production, date laid (oldest eggs), quantity, and Lion logo.

A mandatory, unannounced Lion audit will check that the robust segregation and vigorous procedures are in place to ensure that only approved Lion eggs can be processed into Lion Quality Egg Products. At every audit, a mass balance check is undertaken to check the path from farm to customer.

Farming method
0 = Organic
1 = Free Range
2 = Barn
3 = Cage

Country of origin
e.g UK

3UK54321
BB 15APR

Additional Standards for Lion Quality eggs Lion Mark
British eggs from hens vaccinated against salmonella and produced to a strict code of practice.

Farm ID
A specific code denoting the actual farm where the eggs were produced.

Best before date

Ensuring quality storage standards prior to processing

The Lion is the only processing code to set standards for storage, which ensures optimal product quality and food safety standards. This means that all eggs must be processed within 28 days if stored below 20ºC or 13 weeks if stored at 2 to 4ºC, provided continuous monitoring is in place.

World-leading auditing standards

As the only recognised egg processing Code of Practice in the world, we recognise the importance of ensuring that our standards are second to none. The Lion Code for egg processing places huge emphasis on testing and checking that the British Lion systems are working, ensuring that across every stage of the supply chain, our EN17065-approved, independent auditors are undertaking the robust checks that mean you can rely on the Lion to deliver the egg products that meet your exacting standards.

Processing plants

We ensure that our British Lion processors can only produce at registered, approved and certificated sites that also meet BRC Global Food Safety approval requirements.

Testing

Testing is a vital part of the Lion egg processing scheme. Checks far in excess of those required by law are carried out at every stage of the production process and cover organoleptic, analytical and microbiological testing. This supplements the Veterinary Medicines Directorate checks for a variety of potential contaminants, including veterinary residues, pesticides, fipronil and dioxin.

As well as testing to ensure the egg products are safe, we supplement this with a range of other tests that monitor provenance, including isotope testing at every relevant stage of the process.

We use the most robust techniques in independently accredited laboratories to give you confidence that you are getting safe egg products that we've checked on your behalf.

Auditing

We believe that auditing is critical in reassuring customers that companies are adhering to our exacting standards every day, on every single batch of British Lion egg products. That's why we use an independent monitoring agency that meets ISO17065 standards.

There are more than 1,000 auditable criteria through the chain and auditors undertake regular audits, some of which are unannounced,to make sure everything is operating as it should be. Everything including feed controls; animal welfare standards, hygiene, pest control, egg storage temperature control and vaccination programmes and salmonella control procedures is checked and detailed records must be kept and are routinely monitored.

Processing site requirements

Any site producing Lion egg products must be fully registered, and the Code of Practice provides clear and comprehensive guidance on the layout of site, segregating high and low risk areas and ensuring that optimal procedures are in place to safeguard against cross-contamination.

The Lion Code of Practice requires mandatory training across each of the sites approved to produce Lion egg products to ensure awareness of appropriate food hygiene practices with refresher training every three years and appropriate records maintained including cleaning processes used. All equipment must be food grade and cleaned in accordance with laid down requirements.

Traceability

The Lion scheme has strict traceability rules which means that we can easily trace the eggs, hens and feed that are used in creating Lion egg products. It's reassuring to know that if there was ever a problem, then we can quickly and easily trace the eggs that you've used.

Our traceability claim is not something we take lightly and we insist that every processor tests their traceability system at least once a year. And to ensure complete compliance, our auditors will check this every single time they visit a site.

The British Egg Industry Council maintains an up-to-date record of all sites in the scheme. It also records all egg that is 'inter-traded' between Lion accredited companies so that customers know that when an egg or egg product says it is produced to Lion standards, they can be confident it is. Make sure that you look for the Lion on egg products containers or shell eggs. Only the following companies are registered, audited and guaranteed to be producing egg products to British Lion standards.

- ✓ Bumble Hole
- ✓ Chippindale Foods
- ✓ Framptons
- ✓ Freshpak Chilled Foods
- ✓ Fridays
- ✓ Just Egg
- ✓ Lowrie Eggs
- ✓ Oakland Farm Eggs
- ✓ Noble Foods
- ✓ Ready Egg
- ✓ Stonegate

Please check **egginfo.co.uk** for details of suppliers and the products they provide. Any new suppliers will be added to the website.

Liquid egg processing requirements and standards

The Lion Code for egg products provides clear requirements for liquid egg processing, laying out pasteurising Time/Temperature combinations to ensure that products are properly pasteurised. A heat treatment requirement for egg boiling is also included.

It's this type of detail that sets the Lion apart, with no other scheme providing such robust and specific requirements.

Waste egg disposal

The Lion has very clear guidance requiring any liquid egg designated by law as unfit for human consumption to be denatured with a time and temperature stable dye and that any such waste product must be kept in marked containers away from any Lion eggs or egg products.

Quality control

In order to remove any potential contaminants, Lion egg products must be filtered through a minimum 1,000 micron filter, with any added ingredients sieved over a mesh 2.5mm or less. For microbiological risks, the Lion requires enhanced testing, through an accredited laboratory.

Feed controls

Many of the issues surrounding egg products emanate from the feed that is fed to the hens. That is why all feed that is used within the Lion Code must meet UFAS (Universal Feed Assurance Scheme) standards.

Environmental responsibility

Lion certificated egg processors must operate an Environmental policy and be registered with the Environment Agency even if below the IPC threshold.

The Lion Code for egg products continues to provide retailers, caterers and food manufacturers with the reassurance of the most comprehensive Code of Practice anywhere in the world, ensuring the highest standards of product quality and food safety.

Why the experts choose British Lion egg products

Food Safety Expert, Dr Lisa Ackerley, CMCIEH FRSPH

"I constantly remind clients of the old adage – rubbish in, rubbish out! That is why the supply chain is so important to all food businesses – whether large or small. And that is also why I recommend British Lion eggs and egg products.

"Companies may specify pasteurised egg products thinking they are protected, but caterers, food manufacturers and retailers should, by now, be aware that not all pasteurised eggs are the same. We've seen that with the fipronil scandal, but before that too with Salmonella outbreaks, and dioxin in feed contaminations.

"The contamination of foreign eggs with fipronil led to mass product recalls at great cost to businesses. But, despite all of these incidents, how many companies have publicly or even privately committed to long-term change?

"And it's not just about due diligence and being a responsible operator; consumers are crying out for reassurance. There is a massive opportunity for a food business to gain an edge over competitors simply by specifying ingredients such as British Lion egg products, which meet higher standards of food safety, and including the Lion on the packaging. The integrity of the supply chain has been questioned time and again in recent years, and unless we see food businesses making a solid commitment to change I feel that we are once again simply counting down to the next crisis.

"When it comes to egg products the solution is simple, manufacturers and retailers can reassure consumers by specifying British Lion eggs and egg products and using the 'Made with British Lion eggs' logo on packaging."

Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food

What the ACMSF says

The Government's Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food published a report which included concerns about non-UK egg products, highlighting three separate cases involving Salmonella in imported egg products, and noting that pasteurised egg can carry a food safety risk:

'Robust, evidence-based methods for the validation of the performance of heat-processing treatments are probably required because current methods may overestimate the microbial load reduction achieved, with industrial procedures for heat treatment of egg products.' But the report's authors put this risk towards imported egg products: 'Although egg products are pasteurised, it is possible for treatment failures and recontamination to occur, but the risk applies primarily to imported eggs products.'

Choosing British Lion egg products

The Lion scheme sets the standard across the world and there is no other comprehensive Code for egg products.

Whether you're just looking for consistently high quality, safe egg products, a dark or light yolk, or even just supply guarantees, the UK industry has a wide range of British Lion egg product suppliers to meet your needs.

For more information and to source British Lion egg products:

www.egginfo.co.uk