



## **Free range eggs - factsheet**

All free range egg production is governed by EU legislation and there are additional standards for British Lion eggs which ensure that free range hens in the UK are kept under the highest animal welfare conditions.

The EU Egg Marketing Regulations stipulate that for eggs to be termed 'free range', hens must have continuous daytime access to open-air runs which are mainly covered with vegetation and with a maximum stocking density of 2,500 birds per hectare.

The hen house conditions for free range hens are set by the EU Welfare of Laying Hens legislation and stipulate a maximum stocking density of 9 hens per square metre of useable area. Hens must be provided with nest boxes. Adequate perches, providing 15 centimetres of perch per hen, must also be provided. Litter must be provided, accounting for one-third of the ground surface - this is used for scratching and dust bathing.

The higher standards governing flocks producing British Lion free range eggs include the provision of outdoor shading, additional pop-hole space, open for 8 hours daily to allow access to the outside; maximum flock size of 16,000 birds; maximum colony size of 4,000 hens; and a maximum range area stocking density of 2,000 birds per hectare.

In addition, all British Lion eggs are produced to the highest standards of food safety.

**December 2010**