



**British Egg
Industry Council**

British Lion Code of Practice Summary

Going to extraordinary lengths to protect your eggs



The Code of Practice for British Lion eggs is managed by the British Egg Industry Council (BEIC) and independently audited to the ISO 17065 standard. The Code of Practice includes more than 700 auditable criteria and sets stringent requirements throughout the production chain to ensure that British Lion eggs are produced to the highest standards of quality, freshness and food safety. All British Lion Quality eggs are guaranteed British.

British Lion eggs are approved by the Food Standards Agency to be served runny, or even raw, to vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, babies and elderly people.

The British Lion Code of Practice sets requirements through the whole supply chain, from breeding farms and feed mills through to egg packing centres.

Breeding flock controls

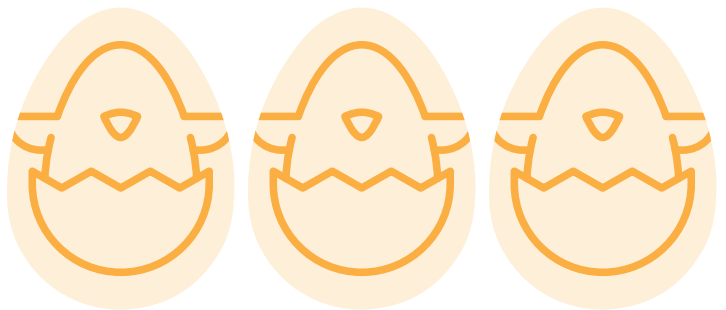
Hygiene controls for British Lion breeding flocks and hatcheries are more stringent than required by UK and EU legislation and include hygiene swabbing of hen houses; regular microbiological monitoring of parent flocks and hatcheries, with slaughter of any flocks positive for Salmonella Enteritidis or Typhimurium; and heat and/or acid treatment of feed.

Only hatching eggs from British Lion registered breeding farms can enter the British Lion Code of Practice supply chain. Hatching eggs will be incubated and hatched at a British Lion approved GB hatchery.

Pullet rearing farms / Salmonella vaccination

All birds destined for British Lion egg-producing flocks must be reared on registered British Lion rearing sites and must be vaccinated against Salmonella Enteritidis and Salmonella Typhimurium* using licensed vaccines.

A full hygiene monitoring programme including hygiene swabbing must be completed by pullet rearers before birds are taken onto the farm. Rearing flocks are tested for Salmonella and all equipment and vehicles used for transporting pullets to the laying unit must be disinfected. Records of bird movement and Salmonella vaccination and testing must be kept on a unique passport. There are also controls on wild birds and rodents and strict hygiene/biosecurity requirements.



Feed

Feed for British Lion hens must be produced to the Agricultural Industries Confederation's UFAS (Universal Feed Assurance Scheme) Code of Practice. Feed samples and records of deliveries and usage must be kept and measures taken to prevent on farm contamination of feed. In addition to the UK legislative ban on ingredients derived from mammalian sources, avian ingredients are also prohibited from feed for British Lion flocks. A number of other ingredients are also banned such as growth promoters and any raw materials likely to produce taint.

LAYING FARMS

Hygiene / Salmonella control

The Code sets out detailed hygiene and biosecurity requirements additional to those required by UK and EU law, including increased frequency of sampling of the farm environment and housing. The Code requires detailed disinfection of farms between flocks, using approved products and environmental sampling prior to rehousing. In addition, there is regular sampling of eggs from each flock (see Packing Centre). There are specific protocols for farms if Salmonella is detected in the hygiene testing programme.

Veterinary Health and Welfare Plan

All British Lion laying farms have to be registered with a vet and each flock must have an annual Veterinary Health and Welfare Plan. The Code prohibits the use of Critically Important Antimicrobials which are associated with resistance and monitors the use of all antibiotics.

Traceability and on farm marking

All British Lion flocks are traced from hatchery to laying farms by a unique flock passport that records all salmonella vaccination, feed source and any medical interventions. The passport ensures there can be no overstocking or introduction of eggs from non-British Lion sources. Each farm is identified by a unique code and all eggs are marked on farm with the producer establishment number (the PEN code) which shows the system of production, country of origin and the farm where the eggs were laid. A website – www.lioneggfarms.co.uk – is also available, which confirms whether the egg is from a British Lion-registered farm.

Animal welfare

The Code includes a number of animal welfare requirements which exceed those required by law. These include lower stocking densities on the range area for free range hens; maximum flock sizes; the banning of induced moulting; monitoring of conditions such as litter quality, light intensity and atmosphere. Staff training in bird welfare, biosecurity and hygiene are mandatory and the Code supports procedures for the handling of end-of-lay hens.

Time and temperature controls

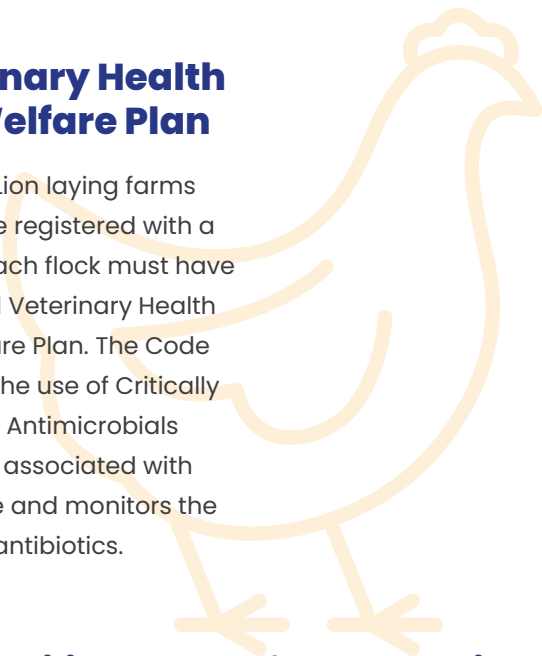
British Lion eggs are subject to tighter controls on time and temperature than required by law. British Lion eggs must be stored below 20°C, in hygienic conditions on the farm; transported to the packing centre a minimum of twice a week; and kept at a constant temperature below 20°C.

Biosecurity

The British Lion Code sets out clear and stringent biosecurity zones around sites and the requirements for PPE and foot dipping, visitor records, restricted access and vehicle disinfection to help protect against the spread of diseases such as avian influenza. The Code requires sites to implement measures that minimise contact between wild birds and poultry and avoid access by the birds to any standing water on the range.

Rodent and pest control

British Lion farms are required to demonstrate effective, documented rodent and pest control systems. Minimum qualifications for pest controllers and site-specific risk assessments and records of control measures are a critical area of attention.



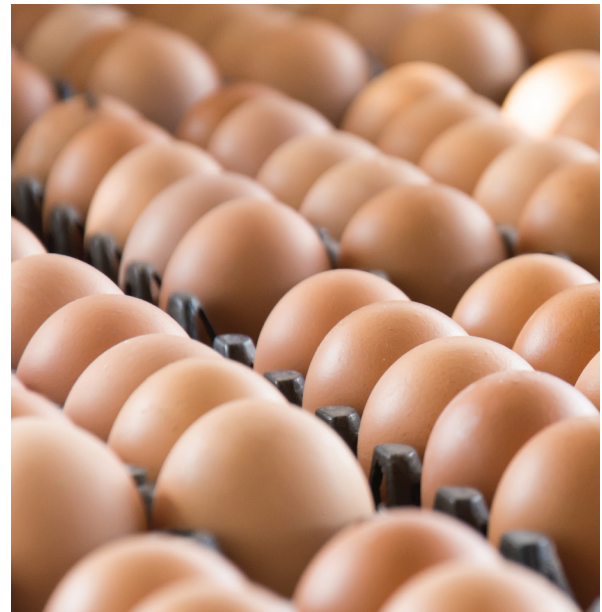
PACKING CENTRES

Controls on egg movement

All eggs graded as British Lion must be accompanied by written documentation for proof of identity including date of lay, type of production and farm of origin and also the Flock passport.

The keyes trays used to transfer eggs from farm to packing centre must either be appropriately colour coded according to their type of production or in the case of single colour plastic trays, the accompanying documents must be appropriately colour coded.

All plastic keyes trays must be washed before returning to farm and Packing Centres operate a closed loop system. Only new fibre keyes trays can be used to transport eggs from farm to packing centre.



Packing centre hygiene

Written HACCP controls must be in place at Lion egg packing centres and traceability records must be kept at all times. Written cleaning schedules and rodent control procedures must be in place and strict hygiene and biosecurity observed. Effective crack and blood detection must be used in the grading of British Lion eggs.

Egg testing

Packing Centres must only handle eggs from approved British Lion egg farms and cannot accept eggs from farms that are not British Lion-approved. Egg testing is not a legal requirement. However, at least 20 eggs per quarter must be tested from each British Lion farm supplying a British Lion Packing Centre. The BEIC also uses Isotope testing on a random selection of eggs every month to verify origin.

'Best before' date and British Lion Quality mark on shell

All British Lion code eggs packed in British Lion registered packing centres will be identified by a Lion logo alongside the best before date and all egg packs containing British Lion eggs will include the British Lion logo on the pack.

In addition, all British Lion eggs carry a 'best before' date on the egg shell as well as the pack as a guarantee of freshness.

Cool chain

British Lion eggs must be kept between 5°C and 20°C. Retail customers must be advised that British Lion eggs should be stored at a constant temperature below 20°C, away from heat sources and sunlight, and sold in strict rotation.

Ban on 'farm' descriptions on cage-produced egg packs

Printing on British Lion egg boxes containing cage-produced eggs must not describe the eggs as 'farm eggs' or depict hens roaming free or farmyard / countryside scenes.

REGISTRATION AND TRACEABILITY

To guarantee traceability, all breeding farms, hatcheries, rearing and laying farms, feed mills and packing centres involved in the production of British Lion eggs must be approved and registered by BEIC, which maintains a 'live' database of all Lion premises. All British Lion pullet rearing and laying flocks must be accompanied by a unique passport certificate and all British Lion egg movement has to be fully traceable. All Lion sites have to keep full records for two years of all monitoring and testing procedures, including audits.



Independent auditing

The British Lion Code of Practice is the only UK egg-specific scheme accredited to the ISO 17065 international auditing standard. In order to ensure compliance every Breeder Rearer site, Breeder Layer site, Hatchery, Pullet Rearer site, Laying site, Egg Packing Centre and Feed Mill will undergo an internal audit every 6 months with official audits carried out at least every 18 months.

Each British Lion site audit must be accompanied by the BEIC subscriber.

In addition, random unannounced audits are conducted on all sites, on an ad hoc basis. Packing stations receive an additional unannounced audit every 12 months.

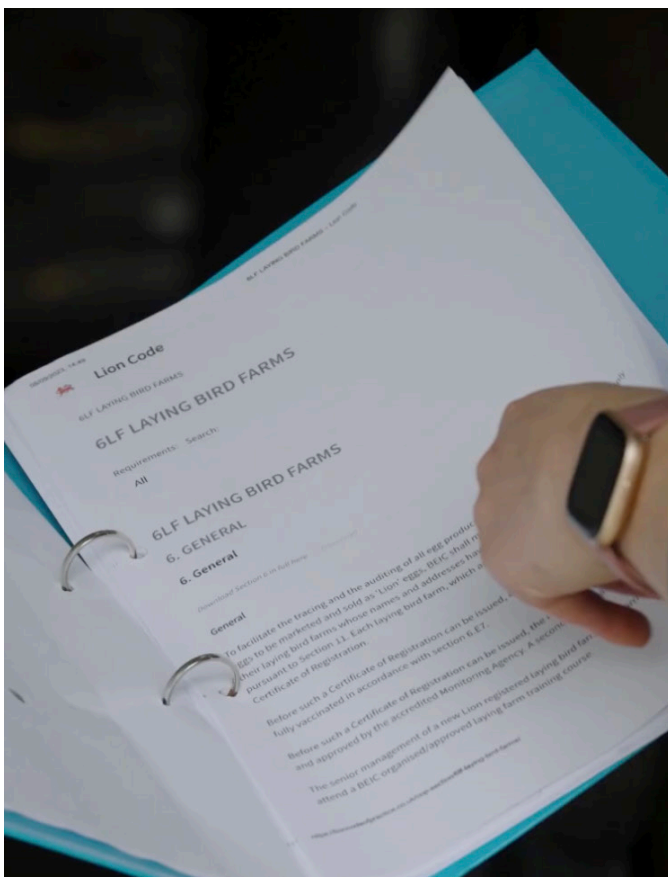
Any critical non-conformance results in immediate suspension from the British Lion scheme, pending appropriate remedial action. Lesser non-conformances have to be corrected within 28 days.

Business operation

All British Lion premises must develop their own environmental policy, especially in regard to waste disposal, manure disposal, disposal of dead birds, and environmental impact on the community.

All British Lion scheme members are required to demonstrate contingency planning in the event of a crisis. Staff, including those employed by contractors, must be given additional training in hygiene, bird welfare and vaccination.

The BEIC requires all operators to inform them of any enforcement notices or restrictions.



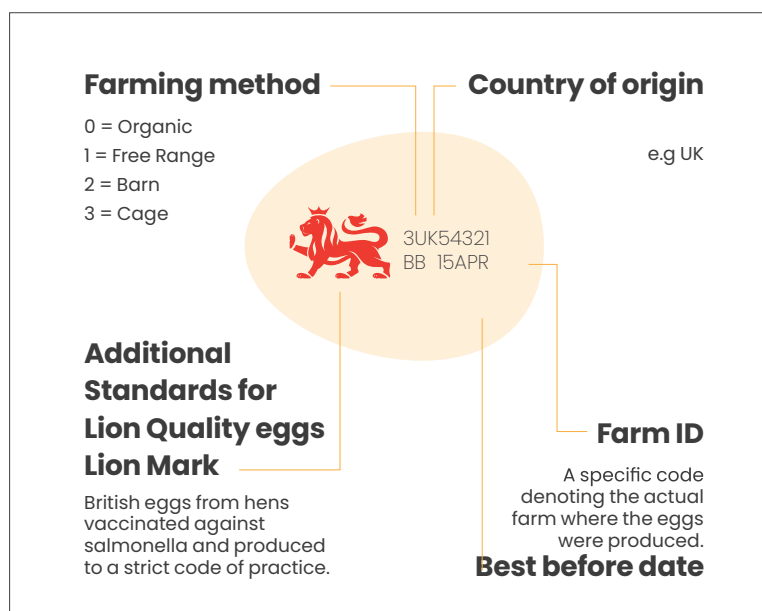
EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS

The British Lion Code of Practice standards are higher than current UK and EU legislation, including:

- Guaranteed British hens and eggs
- Unique passport system
- Eggs marked on farm with producer code
- Additional hygiene testing requirements for breeding, pullet rearing, laying flocks and packing centres
- Strict controls on feed
- Salmonella vaccination of laying flocks
- Regular egg testing
- Time and temperature controls throughout production chain
- Controls on egg packs
- Best-before date and British Lion mark on egg shell
- Higher animal welfare standards including additional ranging space for free range birds
- Independent auditing to ISO 17065 standard

British Lion Trade Mark

The British Lion Quality mark is a registered Trademark and can only be used by BEIC Subscribers who have signed a Licence Agreement with British Egg Industry Council and who comply with the British Lion Code of Practice. Guidelines controlling the use of the British Lion Trademark on egg packs and other materials are available from the British Egg Industry Council. A complementary Code of Practice for the Production of Lion Egg Products for egg processors wishing to produce British Lion egg products requires registration and approval of Lion egg processing sites; the exclusive use of British Lion shell eggs in British Lion egg products; higher standards of egg processing; improved hygiene controls; traceability of finished product; and independent auditing.



Food Standards Agency Approved

British Lion eggs are approved by the Food Standards Agency to be served runny, or even raw, to vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, babies and elderly people.

For British Lion Code enquiries:

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