Egg Farmers of Canada: Research Priorities

Egg Farmers of Canada is dedicated to supporting researchers and industry experts who conduct proactive research across a range of priorities. EFC’s 2019 Call for Letters of Intent has placed emphasis on end of flock management. EFC’s Research Priorities for 2019 include:

1. **End of flock management**
   - End of flock management research aims to improve the care of animals at the end of their production cycle.
   - Example research areas: handling, catching and loading of pullets and end-of-lay hens, improving the removal of end-of-lay hens from alternative housing systems, transportation, composting and disposal, and depopulation methods (emergency and planned).

2. **Animal care science**
   - Animal care science research aims to improve on-farm practices to better animal welfare.
   - Example research areas: feather pecking, air quality, euthanasia, and other production management practices that relate to hen care and welfare.

3. **Food safety**
   - Food safety research aims to ensure that eggs continue to be safe and produced according to the highest possible standards.
   - Example research areas: development of vaccinations, biosecurity practices, and pest control.

4. **Human nutrition and health**
   - Human nutrition and health research aims to explore the health benefits of egg consumption.
   - Example research areas: adding health-promoting nutrients to eggs to improve human health (i.e. omega 3 fatty acids), and the role of eggs in preventing or reducing the risk of obesity, diabetes and other chronic diseases.

5. **Non-food uses of eggs**
   - Non-food uses of eggs research aims to find alternative and innovative uses of eggs outside of the table and processing markets.
   - Example research areas: using eggs and/or egg components for the biomedical, functional food, nutraceutical, health, cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries.
6. **Sustainability and environment**
   - Environment and sustainability research aims to ensure the long-term viability of egg farm operations in Canada.
   - Example research areas: genetics, reducing the carbon footprint of egg farms, green technologies, efficiencies in egg production, and alternative uses for manure and other waste streams.

7. **Bird nutrition and health**
   - Bird nutrition research aims to understand the nutritional needs of laying hens, while bird health research aims to understand, prevent and treat illnesses and injuries in laying hens.
   - Example research areas: exploring diets, ingredients, supplements and different feeding methods and their impact on hen health, alternatives to antimicrobials, vaccinations, treatment options, biosecurity practices, gut health, and bone health.

8. **Public policy and economics**
   - Public policy and economics research aims to better understand agricultural policies such as supply management.
   - Example research areas: current opportunities and challenges for the Canadian egg industry, and the effect of agricultural policies on rural communities or Canada’s food systems.

9. **Research gaps identified by the Code of Practice**
   - Research gaps have been identified for laying hens and pullets by the 2017 *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens*. A list of these gaps can be found [here](#).