

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](#).

