Bulletin No. 326 - Marketing Poultry and Eggs in Torrington and Laramie, Wyoming

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Marketing Poultry and Eggs

in Torrington and Laramie, Wyoming

By E. D. Vaughan and G. P. Roehrkasse
SUMMARY

This bulletin reports a descriptive study of the marketing practices and the consumption of eggs and chickens in Wyoming. Two geographic areas were chosen. One was an area of relatively heavy production and of light consumption, the other of relatively light production and heavy consumption. The two areas, Torrington and Goshen County in contrast to the City of Laramie, were considered typical of the production and consumption patterns of the state.

Practically all Wyoming farms and ranches had some chickens. Flocks were predominantly small, few farms having what might be called a commercial flock. Producers believed that from 300 to 500 birds were necessary to make the chicken flock a paying enterprise.

In keeping with seasonal production and price patterns for both eggs and chickens it was discovered that producers generally sold their hens in the late summer or fall and their fryers between June and August, while the high egg months obtained from April through June and the low months during November and December. Most chickens were sold either to wholesalers or directly to consumers, while more than one-half of the eggs were sold directly. The producers averaged, in their egg sales, about 30 dozens per week. It was their feeling that, under the existing system of purchase of ungraded eggs, there was little incentive to improve the quality of the product marketed by farmers.

In Torrington most of the retailers received their eggs directly from farmers, while in Laramie most received them from wholesalers. In both towns retailers did very little processing other than cutting up the meat for customers. Retail preparation of eggs was confined largely to packaging, but most of the retailers sold eggs that at one time or another had been cleaned, candled, and graded. All retailers in both Torrington and Laramie kept chicken under refrigeration. According to poultry marketing studies made elsewhere in the United States, this practice, however desirable, was unusual.

On the other hand eggs, which probably deteriorate just as fast as chicken, were kept under refrigeration by only about one-third of the retailers.

A smaller retail mark-up was taken on eggs by Torrington retailers than by Laramie retailers, primarily because the Torrington stores bought eggs directly from farmers at nearly retail prices in order to attract farmer customers. Differences in mark-ups on chicken between the two towns were found to be insignificant. Retail egg prices were higher in Laramie because of more processing and higher shipping costs and because more of the eggs went through the hands of wholesalers before being sold at retail.
Little color preference in eggs was expressed by the consumers in both towns; families consumed about 2 dozen eggs per week. There was greater consumption during the winter than during summer. In meat preferences chicken ranked second to beef in both Laramie and Torrington; about 30 to 40 percent of the consumers indicated that, depending on the price differentials, they substituted eggs for meats or vice versa. Half of the consumers said that they now eat more chicken than they did five years ago; another one-third ate approximately the same amount; and the remaining one-sixth said that they now consume less.

Recent changes made in the Wyoming Egg Law require that use be made of Federal grades and standards if the eggs are to be graded at all. However, the law still permits eggs to be sold at retail on an ungraded basis so long as the seller guarantees that the eggs sold are fit for human consumption.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors wish to express appreciation to all the producers, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers whose cooperation made this study possible, and especially to George Davis, associate poultry husbandman of the Agricultural Experiment Station, and Boyd Ellis, poultry specialist of the Agricultural Extension Service.
Marketing Poultry and Eggs
In Torrington and Laramie, Wyoming
by E. Dean Vaughan and Glenn P. Roehrkasse*

Dissatisfaction with the marketing system for poultry and eggs in Wyoming has appeared to stem, in essence, from uncertainty of market outlets for producers and from unreliable quantity and quality from the consumer’s viewpoint.

To examine the circumstances surrounding the types of dissatisfaction with poultry and egg marketing, the authors sought to examine the practices of producers in marketing poultry products, retail and wholesale marketing practices, and consumer preferences for poultry products. Attention was also centered on the Wyoming Egg law and its recent amendment.

Two areas thought to be typical of production and marketing patterns in Wyoming were selected. These were: (1) Torrington and Goshen County—one of the areas of highest production of poultry in Wyoming with a relatively small urban consuming population; and (2) the City of Laramie in Albany County, one of the larger consuming areas in the state with very slight production of poultry products in the surrounding agricultural area. In Torrington and Goshen County, information was received from producers, middlemen, and consumers. In Laramie only middlemen (wholesalers and retailers) and consumers were contacted. Selection of these two areas permitted simultaneous examination of surplus and deficit areas of production and consumption.

Review of Literature

Practices followed by producers in handling and marketing their products have direct bearing on the incomes received from such enterprises and on the quantity and quality of poultry products received by consumers. The number of times per day that eggs are gathered from the nests is a definite quality determinant. Also it is known that if eggs are gathered frequently there are smaller percentages of stained, dirty, checked, and leaker eggs. Further, it has been determined that eggs placed in cool, humid storage immediately after gathering result in a higher percentage of quality.

Poultrymen who sell eggs on grade have been found to be those who sell more of the better eggs than do those who sell without grading. This may be due to the fact that in selling on a grade basis there is greater

* Assistant Agricultural Economist and Research Assistant in Agricultural Economics, respectively, of the Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station.
financial incentive to market high-quality products.

Apparently the larger the poultry enterprise the greater the care which producers may be expected to give in handling eggs. A general consensus as to size of flock is that it takes from 300 to 500 birds to maintain a profitable laying flock.

In order to market high-quality eggs the U. S. Department of Agriculture recommends that producers follow seven practices:* (a) confine the laying flock; (b) keep the floor litter clean and dry; (c) gather eggs at least twice a day; (d) gather eggs in wire baskets that permit rapid cooling; (e) cool the eggs and keep them cool; (f) keep the humidity high in the egg-storage room.

A review of studies made throughout the United States concerning wholesale and retail egg marketing reveals great variation in practices and indicates possibilities for improvement in these phases of marketing. From the lack of proper refrigeration, candling, grading, packaging, and display, it is apparent that in some cases wholesalers and retailers make little or no attempt to maintain the quality of eggs which are finally sold to consumers.

As might be expected, consumer-preference studies indicate that consumers would like to buy large, attractive appearing eggs of high quality at low price. To do so, however, is not always possible or practical. Many consumers consider that quality in eggs is more important than price and often will sacrifice convenience in shopping in order to be assured of high quality. Also, even though quality and appearance may not be directly related, consumers have been found to discriminate against stained or dirty eggs. With some exceptions it has been found that eggs may be considered as somewhat of a luxury food in so far as decreasing incomes usually result in decreased consumption of eggs as well as of chicken. Eggs are used for many cooking purposes, but most consumers consider them as being essentially a breakfast food.

PRODUCER OPERATIONS

Nearly every farm and ranch in Wyoming produces some chicken and eggs. In 1950 there was an average of 43 chickens per farm or ranch. There are few specialized chicken farms in Wyoming, yet poultry provides an important, year-round supplemental source of income, as evidenced by the fact that in 1950 Wyoming poultry was valued at $1,055,000 and the gross income from chicken and eggs was estimated at $4,321,000. Together, these amount approximately to 3 percent of Wyoming farm and ranch income.†

† Based on information contained in Agricultural Statistics, 1951, U. S. Department of Agriculture.
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From Table 1 it may be noted that the greatest concentration of poultry in Wyoming was in Goshen, Fremont, Laramie, Park, and Big Horn Counties; these include some of the better irrigated farming areas of the state. Counties having the smallest numbers of poultry were Teton, Sublette, Sweetwater, and Albany.

Information received from producers of poultry products was obtained from a sampling of producers in Goshen County, situated in Southeastern Wyoming. Much of Goshen County lies within the boundaries of what is topographically known as the North Platte Valley and is primarily an agricultural area having irrigation farming, dryland farming, range livestock production, and some fattening of livestock.*

Most of the producers agreed that it was necessary to maintain a flock of from 300 to 500 birds for a profitable enterprise. There are few specialized poultry farms in the state; as evidence it was found that only about 10 percent of the producers included in this study considered chickens and eggs as being an important part of their cash farm income. The remainder kept poultry for home consumption and for "pin money". Producers having fewer than 80 chickens did not keep detailed records of their poultry enterprise and could provide only general information.

Very few of the producers hatched their own chickens, having found that purchases from commercial hatcheries are the most satisfactory means of replenishing their flocks. For the most part hens were sold in the late summer or early fall; during 1951 the producers received an average of 20c per pound.

Fryers averaged 38c per pound and were sold during June to August. Of the chickens sold 55 percent went to wholesalers, 44 percent to consumers directly, and 1 percent to retail stores.

As an indication of the importance of direct marketing of eggs it was found that 60 percent of the eggs were sold directly to consumers, 24 percent to retail grocers, and 16 percent to wholesalers. Consistent with seasonal production patterns in Wyoming, producers had their highest production of eggs during April, May, and June and the least during November and December.

Very few producers gathered their eggs more than once a day and usually marketed eggs once a week, averaging 30 dozens per marketing and ranging from 3 to 60 dozens. Between marketings, eggs were kept in cellars or basements lacking devices for temperature controls. Most producers confined their preparations for market to the cleaning of eggs. Some reported also crating and sorting the eggs for size and quality, although none of the producers made any attempt to candle them.

Although few of the producers had made any recent attempts at improving the quality of their poultry and egg marketings, they were nearly unanimous in their opinions that eggs should be candled and graded at sale time in order that producers might be paid on a quality basis. Such opinions were indicative of the general feeling that, under the existing system, producers have had little incentive to spend much time or money in an effort to improve the quality of their products.

RETAIL AND WHOLESALE OPERATIONS

Between Torrington (high-production area) and Laramie (low-production area) great differences were found in the retail sources of chicken and eggs. In Torrington most of the eggs handled by retailers came directly from farmers, few retailers being supplied by wholesalers. In Laramie the reverse was true, wholesalers being the most important source of supply, and farmers a relatively unimportant source.

Tables 2 and 3 present the percentages of retailers in Torrington and Laramie who obtained their eggs and chickens from various sources. In the tables “produce houses” refers to firms engaged primarily in the handling of poultry and dairy products. “Own wholesalers” refers to those firms connected with retailers by ownership or on a contractual buying-agreement basis. “Other wholesalers” refers to other than specialized produce houses and those having no direct ownership or agreement interest with the retailer.

**TABLE 2—Sources of Supply of Chickens and Eggs for Retail Grocery Stores in Torrington, Wyoming, 1951**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Eggs (percentage of retailers)</th>
<th>Chicken (percentage of retailers)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>28.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Produce houses</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Own wholesalers</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>Other wholesalers</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</table>

*Based on 6 retail grocery stores in Torrington.

There were less marked differences in the sources of supply of chicken between the two towns than in eggs. In both Torrington and Laramie other wholesalers were the larger supply sources, but in Torrington more retailers were supplied by farmers and produce houses than was true in Laramie.

Comparison of Tables 2 and 3 indicates that the Torrington area may have a high or adequate supply of eggs but may be low in the supply of chickens for meat.

Retailers were asked to indicate the types of market preparation performed in handling chicken. The practices considered were: (1) dressed,
which refers to poultry having the feathers, heads, shanks, and feet removed; (2) dressed and drawn, which means that the poultry has been dressed and has the viscera removed when received; (3) cut up, which refers to poultry which has been dressed, drawn, and cut into pieces ready for the pan (frequently performed for the customer on request); (4) cut up and packaged poultry, which means that the poultry has been dressed, drawn, cut up, and is displayed in packages; (5) frozen, which means poultry that has been prepared by the above four practices and frozen.

TABLE 3—Sources of Supply of Chickens and Eggs for Retail Grocery Stores in Laramie, Wyoming, 1951

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Eggs* (percentage of retailers)</th>
<th>Chicken† (percentage of retailers)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Produce houses</td>
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<td>Own wholesalers</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</table>

*Based on 20 retail grocery stores in Laramie.  †Based on 19 retail grocery stores in Laramie.

Tables 4 and 5, summarizing the types of market preparation for chickens both when bought and sold by retailers in Torrington and Laramie, revealed that the only preparation actually carried out by retailers in both towns was that of cutting up the chicken for customers. It may be of interest to note that no retailer interviewed in Torrington handled frozen chicken, which may be due to the fact that Torrington lies in an area of relatively high poultry production and thus has access to greater supply of fresh chicken, with consequent lessening of demand for frozen poultry.

The types of preparation considered in the retail marketing of eggs were cleaning, packaging, grading, and candling. Cleaned eggs were eggs washed or eggs cleaned by some other method. Eggs were considered packaged when they were placed in containers before time of sale to consumers. Graded eggs were those which had been sorted for size and quality and so marked. When light has been passed through an egg in order to determine the condition of shell, yolk, and white, the egg is considered candled. “Current receipts” refers to eggs bought just as they were gathered without preparation of any kind.

Tables 6 and 7, concerned with the preparation of eggs when bought and sold by retail grocers in Torrington and Laramie, shows that 83.3 percent of the Torrington retailers bought their eggs cleaned and that the eggs were packaged before being sold. The remainder bought and sold eggs cleaned, candled, graded, and packaged without further preparation. In
### TABLE 4—Preparation of Chickens by Retail Grocery Stores in Torrington, Wyoming, 1951*

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<th>Type of preparation</th>
<th>When bought (percentage of retailers)</th>
<th>When sold (percentage of retailers)</th>
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<td>Dressed and drawn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cut up</td>
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<td>Cut up and packaged</td>
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<td>Frozen</td>
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</table>

*Based on 6 retail grocery stores in Torrington.

Laramie the retailers bought eggs in practically all degrees of preparation, the majority (81.9 percent) purchasing cleaned, graded, and candled eggs. When sold, 90.0 percent of the Laramie retailers had packaged the eggs. Of the remainder, 5 percent sold graded and packaged eggs and only 5 percent sold eggs that had been cleaned, graded, candled, and packaged.

All of the retailers in both Torrington and Laramie kept their poultry under refrigeration in the form, for the most part, of meat cases of either the self-service or the closed type. However, in both towns only about one-third of the retailers kept eggs under refrigeration. All retailers with one exception in Laramie said that the eggs they sold were all "fresh" eggs. The one exception said that approximately 10 percent of his egg sales were cold-storage eggs.

In Laramie 5 of 16 retail grocery stores averaged 8.8¢ per dozen mark-up on eggs; the other 11 operated on a percentage-margin basis which averaged 16.7 percent per dozen or 8.7¢ per dozen. In Torrington 3 of 5 grocers averaged 4¢ per dozen mark-up on eggs while the other two averaged 13.5 percent mark-up or about 4.6¢ per dozen. The lesser mark-up on eggs in Torrington than in Laramie in all probability was due to the fact that Torrington retailers paid the producer an amount nearly equal to the re-

### TABLE 5—Preparation of Chickens by Retail Grocery Stores in Laramie, Wyoming, 1951*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of preparation</th>
<th>When bought (percentage of retailers)</th>
<th>When sold (percentage of retailers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dressed</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressed and drawn</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut up</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut up and packaged</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frozen</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on 19 retail grocery stores in Laramie.
 TABLE 6—Preparation of Eggs by Retail Grocery Stores in Torrington, Wyoming, 1951*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of preparation</th>
<th>When bought (percentage of retailers)</th>
<th>When sold (percentage of retailers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cleaned</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaged</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaned, candled, graded, and packaged</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on 6 retail grocery stores in Torrington.

tail price for eggs in order to bargain for the rural trade. Where this was done the retailer usually took a mark-up large enough only to cover the costs of packaging and loss.

Laramie merchants employed the percentage mark-up method in pricing chicken, 13 of 15 stores averaging 21.5 percent or about 12c per pound. The remaining two stores averaged 13c per pound dollar margin. In Torrington the mark-up on chickens also was largely on a percentage basis with four of five stores averaging 13.7 percent or about 8c per pound, while one store on a dollar-margin basis took about 9c per pound.

The difference between Torrington and Laramie retail prices of chicken over a 12-month period (1951) was found to average 2.85c per pound higher in Laramie. That difference, both from the viewpoints of subjective valuation and statistical test, was found to be slight enough to be on the borderline of significance. Such was not the case with differences in retail prices of eggs between the two towns. The data collected revealed a monthly average price difference of 21.66c per dozen between Torrington and Lara-

TABLE 7—Preparation of Eggs by Retail Grocery Stores in Laramie, Wyoming, 1951*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of preparation</th>
<th>When bought (percentage of retailers)</th>
<th>When sold (percentage of retailers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current receipts</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaned</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candled</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graded and packaged</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaged</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaned, graded, and candled</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaned, graded, candled, and packaged</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on 20 retail grocery stores in Laramie.
FIG. 1—Average Monthly Retail Price of Eggs in Laramie* and Torrington†, Wyoming, 1951

*Based on 9 retail grocery stores in Laramie.
†Based on 4 retail grocery stores in Torrington.
Figure 1 is a graphic presentation of average monthly retail egg prices in Torrington and Laramie which were found to be of significant difference. A glance at the figure shows that the price differences were uniform throughout the year.

In an attempt to explain the price differential several assumptions were made: It was known from the survey that more of the eggs which were sold in Laramie were cleaned, candled, and graded than was true of Torrington. That in itself would have caused a higher price in Laramie. Since it was impractical to include detailed costs of wholesale operations in this study, it was necessary to estimate wholesale costs. From a study made in Wisconsin* it was found that the total cost of grading, plant cost, tolerance, and deterioration might be expected to be about 7c per dozen. Such a cost figure would explain 32.3 percent of the difference in Laramie and Torrington retail egg prices. The average case of eggs weighs about 53 pounds;† if eggs were shipped to Laramie from Torrington at a rate of $1.00 per 100 pounds plus a 3 percent transporation tax,‡ it would cost 1.8c per dozen for shipping. That would explain 8.3 percent more of the difference in the retail price of eggs between Laramie and Torrington. From the records taken it was found that Laramie retailers had a greater mark-up on their eggs than did the Torrington retailers. That difference apparently was due to the very good reason that Torrington grocers were bargaining for the rural retail trade and therefore paid producers close to the retail price. As a consequence Torrington retailers had to take a smaller mark-up on their eggs in order to resell at prevailing retail prices in the area. These differences were found to be about 4c per dozen, which accounted for 18.5 percent of the Torrington-Laramie price differential, leaving about 8.36c, or 40.9 percent of the 21.66c difference, still unaccounted for.

The remaining 8.36c may be divided among several other factors. Since there is very little local production of eggs in the Laramie area, most of the eggs have to be shipped or trucked in, and, since the wholesalers must buy their eggs from a source other than local producers, they must have a source of supply which is reliable and adequate the year around. Thus, when eggs are purchased they may be bought in an area farther from Laramie than is Torrington, indicating that transportation costs may be greater than those calculated above. Also to be taken from the unaccounted-for 8.36c would be wholesale marketing margins as well as possible margins and profits of other middlemen who may purchase eggs for local

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‡Based on estimates received from a Laramie, Wyoming, trucking firm.

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wholesalers. Furthermore, in order to be assured of a continuous supply
the producer in some cases may be paid a premium price. Thus it seemed
reasonable to assume that it would take the full 8.86c to pay for: (1)
wholesaler margins and profits, (2) additional transportation costs, (3)
other middlemen's costs and profits, and (4) a possible premium price to
producers.

In response to requests for suggested means of improving the market-
ing of poultry and eggs, the following recommendations were made by the
retailers interviewed: (1) All eggs should be graded and candled. (2)
Producers who do clean and sort their eggs should be paid more for that
service; this in turn should create an incentive for the better care of eggs.
(3) More information should be made available to producers concerning the
care and marketing of eggs. (4) Producers should gather their eggs often
and cool them properly. (5) Local production should be increased. (6)
An improved Wyoming grading system should be employed. (7) Use
of refrigeration should be encouraged throughout the marketing processes.
(8) Improved systems of labeling of both chicken and eggs should be
employed.

CONSUMER REACTIONS

In order to expand or maintain markets, producers and distributors
of all products must ultimately conform to the desires of consumers in so
far as is possible. For that reason a study was made of the reaction of con-
sumers of poultry products in both deficit and surplus production and con-
sumption areas of Wyoming. The preferences, buying habits, etc. of con-
sumers in the towns of Torrington and Laramie are summarized in the
following paragraphs. Limitations of the data collected made it necessary
to record the judgments and opinions of the consumers on a qualitative rather
than a quantitative basis.

Of the housewives interviewed in Laramie, 69 percent said they had no
shell-color preference in eggs, while in Torrington 81 percent were of the
same opinion. It was of interest to note, however, that in both towns the
remainder preferred white-shelled to brown-shelled eggs at a ratio of more
than 3 to 1. There was no great difference in the amounts of eggs con-
sumed in the two areas, the average consumption per family being about
2 dozen eggs per week. Also, in both towns the greatest consumption of
eggs occurred in winter and the least during the summer. The primary
reason was that housewives apparently did more home baking in winter
and thus used more eggs. Such consumption habits contribute to seasonal
price fluctuations in that periods of greatest consumption coincide with
periods of least production, and vice versa.* About one-fourth of the

*For a discussion of seasonal fluctuations in Wyoming egg prices and production see:
E. Dean Vaughan, "Marketing Wyoming Poultry Products." Wyoming Agr. Exp. Sta-
Mimeograph Cir. 18. May 1952.
consumers in Torrington and about one-third in Laramie indicated that they consumed nearly the same amount of eggs the year around.

In both areas it was found that between 30 and 40 percent of the families substituted meat for eggs or eggs for meat, depending upon the relative prices of each. In response to inquiry as to possible means of increasing the consumption of eggs, consumers in Laramie indicated that they would buy more eggs—if prices were lower, if the eggs were delivered by farmers, or if the eggs were guaranteed fresh. As may be seen in Table 8, the same factors were of about the same relative importance to Torrington consumers except that apparently more Torrington people were using all the eggs they wanted. Apparently also a minority of Torrington consumers were distrustful of farm eggs, judging from the fact that 5 percent of the families contacted there said that they would purchase fewer eggs if they were delivered to the home by the producer.

In both towns, beef was found to be the most frequently purchased meat, with chicken most often rated as a second or third choice. The same ranking held true even under the assumption that all meats were of the same price, value for value. However, consumers in both areas said that they would buy more chicken if its price were lower in relation to the prices of other types of meat. Other reasons stated for not buying more chicken were: (1) tired of chicken, (2) don't like chicken, (3) can't always buy chicken in the stores, and (4) poor quality. Chicken also ranked second to beef as the type of meat served to guests, but the reverse was true when purchasing meats for picnics or similar outings. When people dined out, beef retained its position as first choice, but chicken was eased out of second place by seafoods. Purchases of chicken were most frequently made on either Friday or Saturday and served most frequently on Sunday. In Laramie 95 percent of the housewives contacted preferred fresh to frozen chicken, while in Torrington 80 percent preferred fresh chicken. The reasons given for that preference were that the quality and flavor of fresh chicken were superior to that of frozen chicken, but at the same time those few consumers who preferred frozen chicken said that frozen chicken had a more uniform high quality and was easier and faster to prepare for cooking.

As an indication of possible future trends in the purchases of chicken it was learned that, compared to five years ago (1947-1951), one-half of the housewives purchased about the same amount of chicken, about one-third purchased more, and the remaining one-sixth purchased lesser amounts.

The consumers' suggestions for improving the marketing of poultry products may be summarized into two points, namely—producers should have more information concerning proper handling, and all eggs sold should be candled, graded, and labeled.

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### TABLE 8—Possible Methods of Increasing Consumption of Eggs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The factors considered</th>
<th>Would buy more eggs (percentage of families)</th>
<th>Would buy less eggs (percentage of families)</th>
<th>Would buy the same amount of eggs (percentage of families)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laramie</td>
<td>Torrington</td>
<td>Laramie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If egg prices were lower</td>
<td>41.46</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If egg cartons were marked with their grade</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>20.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If egg cartons were marked with their size</td>
<td>17.95</td>
<td>20.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If egg cartons were marked with their color</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If eggs were delivered to the family household</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>26.32</td>
<td>5.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If eggs were guaranteed fresh</td>
<td>52.38</td>
<td>35.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the following responses: Laramie—42, Torrington—40.
THE WYOMING EGG LAW

For many years the Wyoming Egg Law has been unsatisfactory from the viewpoint of producers, middlemen, and consumers alike. Producers have not generally been paid for quality production, middlemen have had little incentive for proper grading, and consumers have had no assurance of receiving a quality product for quality prices paid. The law as contained in the 1945 Wyoming Compiled Statutes was so loaded with escape clauses and ambiguous definitions as to make it, for all practical purposes, unenforceable and meaningless. In 1953 a step in the right direction was taken by the Thirty-second State Legislature in amending the existing law and in repealing certain sections. The following paragraphs present a summary of the Wyoming Egg Law as amended February 19, 1953.

Section 46-901 prohibits the sale of eggs unfit for human consumption and describes the conditions under which eggs are to be considered as being unfit for consumption.

Section 46-902, dealing with the classification of graded eggs as to quality and size, was repealed by the 1953 Legislature and replaced with the statement that "Federal Grades and Standards for eggs shall be adopted as official grades and standards for eggs in Wyoming and shall otherwise conform with the Wyoming Food and Drug Laws." Hereafter, graded eggs sold in Wyoming shall conform to the following grade specifications:

**GRADED EGGS—QUALITY**

AA—The shell must be clean, unbroken, and practically normal. The air cell must not exceed 1/8 inch in depth and be practically regular. The white must be clear and firm so that the yolk appears well-centered and its outline only slightly defined when the egg is twirled before the candling light. The yolk must be free from apparent defects.

A — The shell must be clean, unbroken, and practically normal. The air cell must not exceed 2/8 inch in depth and must be practically regular. The white must be clear and at least reasonably firm so that the yolk appears at least fairly well centered and its outline only fairly well defined when the egg is twirled before the candling light. The yolk must be practically free from apparent defects.

B — The shell must be clean, unbroken, and may be slightly abnormal. The air cell must not exceed 3/8 inch in depth and may show total movement not in excess of 3/8 inch. However, an air cell not over 2/8 inch in depth may be free. The white must be clear but may be slightly weak so that the yolk may appear off center with its outline well defined when the egg is twirled before the candling light. The yolk may appear slightly enlarged and slightly flattened and may show other definite but not serious defects.
The shell must be clean, unbroken, and may be abnormal. The air cell may be over 3/8 inch in depth and may be bubbly or free. The white may be weak and watery so that the yolk may appear off center and its outline plainly visible when the egg is twirled before the candling light. The yolk may appear dark, enlarged, and flattened and may show clearly visible germ development but no blood due to such development. It may show other serious defects that do not render the egg inedible. Small blood clots or spots may be present.

**GRADED EGGS—SIZE**

- **Jumbo**—Not less than 30 ounces per dozen and 56 pounds per 30 dozen.
- **Extra Large**—Not less than 27 ounces per dozen and 50 1/2 pounds per 30 dozen.
- **Large**—Not less than 24 ounces per dozen and 45 pounds per 30 dozen.
- **Medium**—Not less than 21 ounces per dozen and 39 1/2 pounds per 30 dozen.
- **Small**—Not less than 18 ounces per dozen and 34 pounds per 30 dozen.
- **Peewee**—Not less than 15 ounces per dozen and 28 pounds per 30 dozen.

Section 46-903, containing definitions of retailers, wholesalers, and ungraded eggs—REPEALED.

Section 46-904, requiring that storage and out-of-state eggs be so labeled—REPEALED.

Section 46-905 requires that all egg advertising shall clearly state the classification as to quality and size of all eggs so offered for sale.

Section 46-906 provides that, for an annual fee of $1.00, all resident and non-resident wholesale dealers of eggs operating in Wyoming shall be licensed.

Section 46-907 states that ungraded eggs may be sold, offered, or exposed for sale by any resident producer or resident retailer provided the seller personally guarantees to the customer that the eggs are fit for human consumption.

Section 46-908 makes the State Department of Agriculture and all Wyoming law-enforcement officers responsible for enforcement of the Act.

Section 46-909 provides for revocation of licenses and for fines up to $100 and imprisonment up to 30 days for violations of the Act.

Section 46-910 requires that all monies collected under this Act, after 1941, shall be turned over to the State Treasurer and placed in the General Fund.
At the time of passage of the 1953 amendments the Wyoming Poultry Association had proposed a more complete revision of the Law including an increase in the license fees to $15.00 and a provision that producers could sell eggs on an ungraded basis to anyone but that all eggs sold at retail must be graded. It is the opinion of the authors and others that the present Section 46-907 practically nullifies other provisions for the grading of eggs.

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