

Echo Valley Ranch – how independent farmers are being blatantly attacked leaving food security at risk.

Note from Brad:

Good evening,

I was enjoying a quiet winter afternoon in my downstairs office, getting my year end book work caught up, so my accountant can file my taxes. Suddenly there was a knock on the door. I heard Donna go open the door and a man's voice asked if Brad is in, so I pushed back my chair and went upstairs to see what he wants

When I got to the door, he pulled out a badge and flashed it at me. It was the EGG POLICE, or as he preferred to call himself, an Inspector for the Egg Farmers of Ontario

The reason for his visit? He wanted to make sure we do not have more than the measly 100 hens on the property allotted to non-quota holding egg producers.

Well that was going to be a problem. As you may remember last fall the neighbors dogs killed a bunch of our hens out on pasture. Being it was almost time to bring them in for the winter, we decided to get a new bunch of hens for the winter. Thinking that the survivors might have been traumatized by the attack and might quit laying

In the time lapse between ordering new hens and receiving them, the surviving hens recuperated from their scare and started laying again. So when the new hens arrived it seemed like a shame to get rid of them. Being we are always short on eggs, and bird flu is creating a North American wide egg shortage, we decided to keep them. This bumped our total of laying hens over 100

This, Inspector Mike Anderson, informed me is totally unacceptable, and I must get rid of all excess hens. What do you want me to do I asked, start wringing necks ? He nodded yes

Okay I replied, I will get rid of hens, but I am already short on eggs, so could I purchase eggs from the egg board for my customers. They will have to be fed locally grown organic feed (most organic poultry feed is made from organic corn imported from China or India) The feed may not contain any soy ,and the hens have to be on pasture for the summer.

His reply, we don't have those kind of eggs.

Me: so then why wouldn't I be allowed to produce them ?

Mike: because that is against the rules, and I enforce the rules

Me: Where is the logic in not allowing small farmers to produce the type of eggs you can't?

Mike: I don't make the rules I just enforce them (typically bureaucrat, just doing my job)
I'll be back, make sure you get those numbers down

So I emailed the good folks over at the Egg Board, and said their inspector was out and claims I need to get rid of productive hens in the middle of an egg shortage to protect the profits of the mega farms. If that is the case I want it in writing, and I warned I might go to the media with this

This afternoon I got this email:

February 4, 2025

Dear Mr. Martin,

RE: Egg Farmers of Ontario General Regulations; January 23, 2025 inspection findings
Egg Farmers of Ontario ("EFO") General Regulations define an exempt producer as a producer who has been exempt by the Board from the requirements to hold quota. Exempt producers may possess up to a maximum of 100 fowl without quota, provided that:

- (i) a person is either one or more of the beneficial owners or one or more of the tenants of the lands and premises on which said fowl are possessed;
- (ii) no other fowl are possessed by anyone on the same lands and premises; and
- (iii) the person is in Good Standing with the Board.

In addition, the General Regulations provided that no person other than a registered egg grading station or a licensed egg dealer may receive, assemble, grade, pack, ship for sale, transport, offer for sale or sell eggs purchased from a producer.

An inspection was conducted at your premises located at 7074 Sideroad 15, Moorefield, Ontario by EFO appointed inspector Mike Anderson on January 23, 2025.

At that time, Mr. Anderson advised you of the regulatory requirements, including the

amount of fowl that an exempt producer could possess and the requirements in relation to egg transportation.

Although no barn inspection or count of fowl occurred, you indicated to Mr. Anderson that you currently possess approximately 150 fowl. You also advised that as well as the eggs produced on your own premises, you currently pick up eggs from other premises and transport these eggs to a grading station, specifically, Local Egg in Wellesley, Ontario.

Based on the information that you have provided, the following actions are required:

- (i) you must adjust the number of fowl that you currently possess to the 100 fowl amount within 30 days of the initial inspection; and
- (ii) you must obtain a licence as a dealer of eggs in order to continue to transport ungraded eggs from other premises.

With respect to the number of fowl, EFO recommends that you first identify any fowl that should be culled and, if so, to cull these fowl in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens (“Code of Practice”); then, consider relocating any remaining excess fowl to properties in your area that would be able to house such fowl appropriately and in accordance with the General Regulations and, lastly, if excess fowl remain, then arrange for their disposal in accordance with the Code of Practice and provincial regulations.

With respect to the transportation of ungraded eggs, you are required to obtain a licence as a dealer of eggs before continuing this activity. An application form is therefore enclosed with this correspondence.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, I may be contacted at 905-858-9790 or mleal@getcracking.ca.

Sincerely,
Maria Leal
Director of Regulatory Compliance
and Farming Operations

7195 Millcreek Drive, Mississauga, ON L5N 4H1
PHONE 905-858-9790 FAX 905-858-1589
www.getcracking.ca

It's time to take action:

Maria provided both her phone number and email, it would probably be good for the Egg Board to hear what the consumers think of their cold hearted scheme to deprive you of the eggs you want for their personal profits.

It is rather unbelievable, but the board of Directors is totally comprised of industry insiders who can make policy to benefit themselves and there is no over sight at all.

Let's make some noise. Let your voice be heard. Call or email Maria Leal at 905-858-9790 or mleal@getcracking.ca and pushback on their handling of the situation. Enough with profits over people. We need to speak up.