

Guide to Exhibiting Carton Eggs

Carton eggs are exhibited in groups of one dozen (12) eggs and should be placed in a standard egg carton. All eggs should be placed pointed end down. This allows the air cell which is in the larger end of the egg to remain at the top and helps to minimize excess evaporation of moisture in the egg.

When selecting your eggs to make up your dozen, there are several items that should be considered. Most chicken eggs are either white or brown and all eggs should be as close to the same color as possible. Additionally, all eggs need to be fresh, and uniform in their shape, and color, and size.

At the Delaware State Fair, classes are for white eggs and for brown eggs. Additionally, eggs are exhibited as being medium sized, large sized or extra large sized. Sizes refer to the weight of the eggs. Weight is important because it impacts price and recipes as when a standard recipe calls for an egg, it is referring to a large egg. It is important that when selecting your eggs for exhibition that they each be weighed on a proper scale and selected in the appropriate weight range. In general, medium eggs weigh 21 ounces per dozen, large eggs weigh 24 ounces per dozen and extra large eggs weigh 27 ounces per dozen.

If you do the math, a medium egg should weigh 1.75 ounces, a large egg, 2 ounces and an extra large egg, 2.25 ounces each. Obviously there are some ranges in here but once an individual egg reaches 2.25 ounces, it is classed as an extra large egg, and since eggs are sold by size, there are legal ramifications for not having the proper weight. The Delaware Department of Agriculture does inspect eggs and fines can be levied if eggs are not properly classed. Another thing to review in selecting your eggs for your dozen is the interior quality of the egg. Eggs are graded based on their interior quality and the size of the air cell which is located in the large end of the egg. Eggs can be graded as AA, A or B based on these factors. You want to make sure that your eggs are free from any defects such as blood spots or meat spots inside of the egg. These can be identified by candling (shining a bright light through the egg). You can also view the size of the air cell. An air cell about the size of a dime is indicative of a grade AA egg. An air cell the size of a nickle would indicate an A grade egg and air cell the size of a quarter would be indicative of a B grade egg. Ideally, eggs should be AA or A to be placed in the carton with AA grade eggs being better than A grade eggs.

Finally, eggs should be clean, showing no signs of staining, cracks (checks), or adhering dirt or debris. They should be similar in shape and color.

When judging, I generally look to see that the eggs are properly placed into the carton (pointy end down). I also look over the carton for signs of staining or dirt. I weigh each egg individually to make sure they are properly sized for the class that they are in. I candle each egg individually to make sure it is a grade A or AA. After completing this, I sort those cartons that are properly presented, with all grade A or better and without stains and from those cartons, I

select the most uniform carton as the top place exhibit. White eggs should be white, clean and free from stains. Brown eggs should be clean and free from stains and uniform in color. I hope this helps you in preparing next years carton egg exhibits. You should only be exhibiting eggs that have been produced from you own flocks or from your school flocks. Exhibiting store purchased eggs is unethical and should never be done.

Dr. Barczewski