

ERS Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: Animal Welfare and Treatment Label Claims in U.S. Table eggs: Trends in Retail Premiums and Policy Impacts, 2008-2018

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB) ERR

Agency: Economic Research Service [X] Influential Scientific Information
USDA [] Highly Influential Scientific Assessment

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Subject of Review: U.S. consumers are devoting considerable attention to animal welfare and treatment in livestock and poultry production. In the U.S. table egg industry, a range of production practices are under scrutiny, from the housing or enclosures animals are kept in, to the use of exogenous substances like antibiotics and hormones, to the types of feed the animals receive. Generally, demand for specialty animal welfare or treatment practices that address these issues generates a premium for the resulting products. Market premiums are a common justification or incentive for producers shifting production away from the conventional standard. Increased costs of alternative production methods, however, mean the sustainability of a specialty operation depends on the consistency and magnitude of premiums. In addition to classical market drivers, shocks like passage of local policies and disease outbreaks may increase the uncertainty of premiums. In the 2008-18 period, the U.S. table egg industry experienced both types of shocks in the form of: (1) a highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak in 2014-2015, and (2) the passage of a series of State policies restricting the housing practices allowed in laying hen production or restrictions on the sales of eggs from hens housed under certain conditions. This report provides a full accounting of animal welfare and treatment claims in the U.S. retail table egg market from 2008 to 2018 and investigates premium dynamics for those claims.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: [] Panel Review [X] Individual Reviewers
[] Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 12/4/2023 Completed: ---

Number of Reviewers: [] 3 or fewer [X] 4 to 10 [] More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

