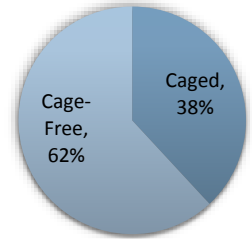
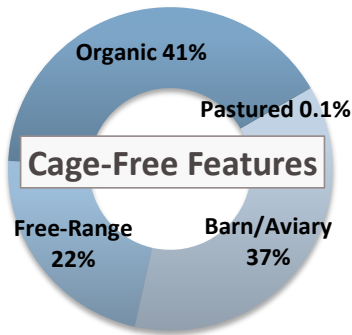


Retail Marketing of Shell Eggs– Labor Day

In the two-week period leading up to Labor Day, U.S. supermarkets featured a range of shell egg varieties to consumers for end-of-summer outings and for the start of the new school year. Retailers typically alternate shell egg featuring for each 7-day ad cycle between conventional and specialty shell egg types, often interspersed with a cycle with no shell egg features, more commonly seen in advertising by smaller regional and state-wide chains. During the two-week lead-up to Labor Day 2017, supermarkets focused on conventional caged and cage-free offerings two weeks out and shifted focus to organic and nutritionally-enhanced varieties during the week before the holiday. This activity is captured in the [USDA Feature Advertising by U.S. Supermarkets for Meat, Poultry, and Shell Eggs – Labor Day](#) report. The share of offerings of cage-free shell eggs outpaced the share of caged varieties.



Cage-free shell eggs accounted for 62 percent of all retail shell egg features in the two weeks leading up to Labor Day, dominated by brown-shelled offerings at 98 percent. Cage-free eggs from barn/aviary systems, as defined by the [United Egg Producers](#), represented 37 percent of cage-free offers. Those from free-range production systems, where hens are physically outdoors for a minimum amount of time, accounted for 22 percent of cage-free features. Of these, 8 percent were eggs from hens fed a vegetarian diet (not fed animal by-products). Cage-free eggs from hens raised on pasture were minimally represented in store ads at Labor Day.



Shell eggs from organic operations accounted for the largest share of cage-free shell egg features at 41 percent. Of these, 51 percent were from organic systems that allow, at a minimum, outdoor access. Another 38 percent were from organic systems with free-range access (*see above*) while 4 percent were from organic pastured systems. The remaining 8 percent had been fed a diet that boosted the nutritional profile of the eggs, usually

increased omega-3 fatty acids.

Average Advertised Prices at Labor Day 2017

	White	Brown
	<i>(cents per dozen)</i>	
CAGED Production		
conventional	1.01	1.28
nutritionally-enhanced	2.32	2.74
vegetarian-fed	--	2.43
CAGE-FREE Production		
Barn/Aviary	3.48	2.83
nutritionally-enhanced	2.99	2.79
vegetarian-fed	2.49	2.87
Free-Range	3.50	3.11
vegetarian-fed	--	3.69
Pastured	--	3.49
Organic	--	3.55
nutritionally-enhanced	--	3.92
free-range	--	4.02
pastured	--	4.90

Features of caged eggs, 38 percent of egg ads at Labor Day, were primarily comprised of white-shelled varieties (83 percent). Of these, 56 percent were of the conventional variety and the remainder were nutritionally-enhanced, most commonly with omega-3 fatty acids. Offerings of brown-shelled caged eggs were primarily (71 percent) of the vegetarian-fed variety. Nutritionally-enhanced brown caged eggs accounted for 17 percent with the remainder (12 percent) from conventional systems.

Ad pricing followed typical patterns with conventional caged eggs advertised at the lowest levels and organic pastured eggs at the highest. Cage-free brown eggs from barn/aviary systems were advertised, on average, \$1.82/dozen higher than their caged white counterparts. Consumers were more likely to find incentives to buy additional quantities of caged eggs with 34 percent of features of those types offering a number of dozens at a set price such as 2 for \$3.00, etc. Only 17 percent of cage-free features offered similar incentives.

Information for this report is derived from data collected during the holiday marketing period and reported in the [Feature Advertising by U.S. Supermarkets Meat and Poultry](#) reports, available in open data format at no cost upon request to: Michael.sheats@ams.usda.gov. Similar data for chicken, turkey, pork, and lamb is also available upon request.

