

# Poultry Quick Tips

## Egg Color & Consistency

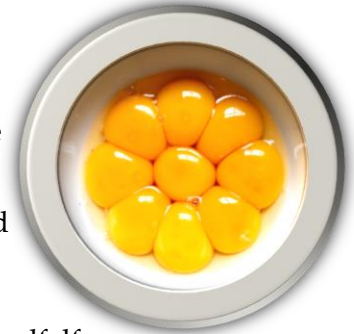
Famo Flier

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Chicken enthusiasts look forward to that perfect farm fresh egg – the deep golden yolk, the egg white that stands up to support the yolk creating the perfect sunny-side up egg. We can control some aspects of egg appearance by nutrition, but not all of it. Here are some ways to help you get the best eggs possible.

### Yolk Color

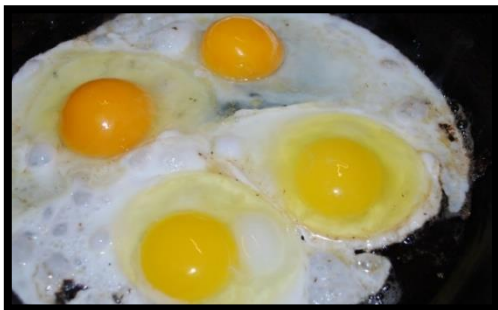
Though yolk color does not impact taste or nutritional value, it does affect visual appeal. The yellow color in yolks is derived from xanthophylls which are found in grasses and plants. When specific plant types are increased in the layer hens' diet, we can see deeper yellow color in the egg yolks. We can also create this deeper color by adding certain ingredients to their ration at the feed mill.



Options to affect yolk color include yolk coloring powders, marigold petals, or alfalfa meal. The first two options are quite expensive, though very effective. Alfalfa meal included at 50 – 100 lb/ton of the final ration can achieve similar and more economical results. Again, a deeper yellow yolk does not equate to a healthier egg, it simply provides greater visual interest to the consumer.

### Egg White Consistency

Unlike yolk color, egg white consistency is NOT related to nutrition. Instead, some of the main contributors to this issue are: hen age, old eggs, egg storage (temperature and humidity), and disease. Older hens tend to produce waterier eggs in general. Egg quality also deteriorates the longer they sit



around and when stored at higher temperatures and/or low humidity. Hens suffering from infectious bronchitis will lay eggs with a less viscous texture. This can persist even after recovery.

The good news is this is another case where there is no real cause for concern. The eggs are still completely safe to eat, they just might spread in the pan more than regular eggs. The bad news is we are limited on what can be done to correct the problem.

Replacing older hens with new birds, ensuring proper storage, and maintaining health are the only actions that can be taken.

## Take Home Message:

Overall, eggs are delicious and good for you no matter how yellow the yolks or watery the whites.