

Support what hens do naturally, free range egg farmers tell chefs and bakers.

Mary Berry, Jamie Oliver, Rick Stein and Raymond Blanc are among 50 celebrity chefs and high-profile bakers being asked by free range egg farmers to help end Britain's obsession with large eggs.

The British Free Range Egg Producers Association (BFREPA) says hens naturally lay a range of sizes and wants more shoppers to try a box of medium or mixed weight eggs rather than large.

The organisation's chairman, James Baxter, has written to high-profile chefs and bakers to ask them to throw their weight behind the campaign.

In the letter he asks them to publicly support BFREPA's message that bigger isn't always better.

He also asks for references to the size of eggs used in recipes to be removed wherever possible.

"We are a nation of food lovers and that is driven on by the fantastic chefs and bakers we have in this country," Mr Baxter said.

"Free range eggs are a staple of British diets but shoppers have become obsessed with getting the biggest egg they can.

"Egg size can be affected by a number of variables such as the weather, diet and light levels – as farmers bird welfare is our number one priority and we want to allow hens to lay what comes naturally.

"We hope that these letters will resonate with chefs and bakers who are in positions of influence but, more importantly, care deeply about how food is produced."

Retailer promotions and a perceived sense of added value from consumers continues to drive demand for large eggs, but BFREPA says there is often very little difference between the sizes.

"As the size of an egg increases it contains a greater proportion of white, rather than yolk where the bulk of the nutritional value is contained," Mr Baxter added.

BFREPA commissioned an explanatory video last year featuring free range egg producer Susie Macmillan of The Mac's Farm in Sussex which has been watched 100,000 times by consumers.

[Watch the video here.](#)

ENDS

- Read the letter to chefs below.
- A free range hen will typically lay 55% large or very large eggs and 45% medium, smalls and second quality eggs (source: ADAS / The Ranger magazine)
- BFREPA is the voice of the British free range egg industry representing the interests of over 500 producers
- Over the past three years the free range egg industry has been growing at 10% a year
- 60% of eggs purchased by consumers through retailers are free range
- The average UK consumer eats 196 eggs every year meaning the UK consumes nearly 13 billion eggs every year
- For interviews and images contact ben@evecommunications.co.uk or call 01327 438 617

The chefs and bakers written to include:

Gordon Ramsay, Jamie Oliver, Gino D'Acampo, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Paul Hollywood, Marcus Wareing, Antony Worrall Thompson, Ainsley Harriott, Mary Berry, Tom Kerridge, Nigella Lawson, Heston Blumenthal, Michael Caines, Jason Atherton, Michel Roux Jr., Richard Corrigan, Brian Turner, James Martin, Tom Aikens, Monica Galetti, Michael O'Hare, Claude Bosi, Sat Bains, Daniel Clifford, Rick Stein, Simon Rimmer, Joe Wicks, Nigel Slater, Delia Smith, Nadiya Hussain, Gary Rhodes, Levi Roots, Candice Brown, Sophie Faldo, Raymond Blanc, Rachel Allen, Lorraine Pascale, Andy Oliver, Chris Bavin and Aiden Byrne.

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear (celebrity chef),

I am writing on behalf of the British free range egg industry to ask for your support in changing the way shoppers think about eggs.

Since last summer the British Free Range Egg Producers Association has been asking consumers to end their obsession with large eggs.

There are a number of reasons why we think so many people automatically reach for a box of large eggs – a perception of greater value, force of habit or simply a lack of choice from retailers.

While this might seem like a benign topic, this obsession is having a major impact on farmers.

Hens lay a variety of sizes throughout their lives – typically 55% large or very large eggs and 45% medium, smalls and second quality eggs.

Egg size can be affected by a number of variables such as the weather, diet and light levels – as farmers bird welfare is our number one priority and we want to allow them to lay what comes naturally.

With so much demand for large eggs, smaller eggs are being hugely devalued despite the fact they are just as tasty and nutritious.

In fact, as the size increases it leads to a greater proportion of white, rather than a big increase in yolk where the all-important nutrition is contained.

So what does this have to do with you?

I am writing to ask you to support what hens do naturally by advocating the use of medium or mixed weight eggs wherever possible.

This could be:

- In the recipes you publish – does the dish demand a large egg, or is any egg sufficient?
- In media appearances – please explain to your fans why bigger isn't always better
- On social media – can you advocate medium and mixed weight eggs to your followers?
- Be part of our campaign – by offering a supportive quote we can use to help influence the public

We are a small organisation with a handful of part-time staff and farmers as officeholders so unfortunately we don't have the marketing budgets to pay you for your support.

It is my hope that as professionals who value the way food is produced you will recognise the benefit of supporting the farmers who continue to produce high quality, safe food for the British public.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

James Baxter

Chairman

BFREPA