

Establishment Inspection Report	FEI:	3004335866
Hickman's Egg Ranch (Maricopa)	EI Start:	05/05/2011
Maricopa, AZ 85239-4164	EI End:	05/05/2011

SUMMARY

This was the initial inspection of a chicken farm. It was conducted under the LOS-DO FY-11 work plan. The assignment was issued from CFSAN as part of the new Shell Egg Regulations.

The inspection covered the required programs they must have in place: biosecurity, environmental testing, pest-control, refrigeration, pullet-certification, and cleaning-disinfection. Selected records were reviewed and copied for this report. No deficiencies were noted.

There were no refusals. No samples, labels, or photographs were collected. Please address correspondence to Mr. Billy Hickman, Vice-President, Hickman Egg Ranch, 6515 S. Jackrabbit Trail, Buckeye, AZ 85326.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Inspected firm:	Hickman's Egg Ranch (Maricopa)
Location:	12710 N. Murphy Rd., Maricopa, AZ 85239-4164
Phone:	520-568-4118
Mailing address:	6515 S. Jackrabbit Trail, Buckeye, AZ 85326
Dates of inspection:	5/5/2011
Days in the facility:	1
Participants:	John A. Daubenspeck, Investigator

HISTORY, INTERSTATE COMMERCE, JURISDICTION

Hickman's has been in the business of raising laying hens for shell-egg production since 1944. The facility in Maricopa, Arizona, however has only been here about 10 years. There are also farms in Arlington, Arizona. All buildings are registered under **(b) (3)** the Shell-Egg Regulations. There is also an egg-packing plant at this location, USDA # 1711. It was not covered during this inspection.

Approximately **(b) (4)** % of all products made here are sold within Arizona. The remaining are sold to **(b) (4)**, **(b) (4)**, and **(b) (4)**. Neither Ms. Yeatts nor Mr. Pineda knew the annual volume of sales in dollars, but said that daily, they produce about **(b) (4)** dozen eggs.

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The Maricopa facility has ^{(b) (4)} hen houses with approximately **(b) (4)** birds total (Exhibit 1). They are double-decker type houses with manure-belt systems. The Maricopa farm sells to **(b) (4)** and **(b) (4)**, sometimes using the brand **(b) (4)** **(b) (4)**.

Hickman's is certified by Safe Quality Food (SQF), United Egg Produces (UEP), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

I presented my FDA credentials and a Notice of Inspection (FDA-482) to Ms. Shari Yeatts, Quality Assurance Technician. She is the most responsible person for the Salmonella Enteritidis Program for all Hickman Farms.

I also presented my FDA credentials to Mr. Shane Jolicoeur, Production Manager. He is the most responsible person for managing the hen houses. They both answer to Mr. Billy Hickman, Vice President, who was not there at the time of the inspection. Other administrative personnel are listed on Exhibit 2. Management meets periodically to review the SE plan and other issues (Exhibit 3).

OPERATIONS & RECORDS

Ms. Yeatts provided me with their Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) plan when I inspected the farms in Arlington. It is the same for the Maricopa facility. Due to length, it is not copied for this report, but can be found under the Arlington North inspection. Hickman's is following the required elements in the shell-egg regulations. They obtain their pullets from SE-free flocks (Exhibit 4).

They have sanitation procedures in place and maintain documentation of those activities (Exhibit 5). This includes equipment disinfection logs, internal inspections, and foot-bath inspections.

Ms. Yeatts provided a copy of their refrigeration records. Temperatures are held below 45° F. (Exhibit 6). Final products (cleaned eggs in cartons) are shipped in refrigerated, cleaned trucks. Some trucks belong to Hickman's, and some belong to other firms, such as **(b) (4)**. Truck thermometers are tested for accuracy.

They also conduct environmental tests during the required ages of the birds, approximately 14 and 45 weeks of age (Exhibit 7). There were no SE positives. Ms. Yeatts said that they had never had an SE positive at any of their farms, including the Maricopa facility.

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Mr. Jolicoeur said that they had experienced problems with rodent control over the past few years, but they took corrective action and greatly reduced the rodents in the hen houses. He provided me with a report detailing this action (Exhibit 8).

Ms. Yeatts also provided an example of a fly-index record (Exhibit 9). They said that pesticides are locked in cages and only properly-trained personnel have access to them.

I did not observe any rodents or excessive quantities of live flies during the inspection. I looked at the hen's feeding troughs, cages, and manure-belts, but did not note any excessive filth.

Ms. Yeatts and Mr. Jolicoeur accompanied through the facilities. We walked through houses 1, 3, and 4. They wore dedicated clothing. I wore a disposable bio-hazard suit over my clothes, with a hairnet and shoe coverings. I changed these items before going into each house and threw the used ones in the trash.

WATER & FEED

Hickman's has its own water wells. The water is checked for coliforms and E. coli. These are sent to (b) (4), in (b) (4). Ms. Yeatts said that they use (b) (4) as a water treatment to help control for pathogens in the birds' drinking water. Feed comes from (b) (4), comprised mostly of (b) (4).

FDA ATTACHMENT A QUESTIONNAIRE

This firm does not have a history with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration. There are no known reports of disease outbreaks from this farm. They said that they have never had an order of diversion.

They are certified by USDA (NPIP, National Poultry Improvement Program), SQF (Safe Quality Food), and UEP (United Egg Producers).

Eggs produced at this plant are for shell-egg production. This farm has (b) (4) hen houses (belted) and about (b) (4) birds. They are registered with the FDA under the (b) (3) Egg Rule. This is a family-owned and family-run operation.

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Houses are tested for *Salmonella enteritidis* when birds are 14 to 16 weeks old, and again when 40 to 45 weeks of age. The firm's SE plan describes the testing procedures in more detail. Biosecurity measures, pest-control, record-keeping, and disinfection procedures are also described in the SE plan.

Birds are euthanized (b) (4). They are not used for meat in human food or pet food. The birds are placed in the manure piles and decompose rapidly.

They also pack the eggs at this facility (attached to the egg-conveyor belt), plant # 1711. Eggs are washed, rinsed, and sanitized using (b) (4) (b) (4) to help destroy Coliforms and *Salmonella*.

The USDA inspects the firm's egg-packing plant. Hickman's follows the FDA's Shell-Egg Regulations, which include biosecurity, pullet-rearing, pest-control, cleaning and disinfection, sampling of environmental conditions, and refrigeration requirements.

GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH MANAGEMENT

No FDA-483 (Inspectional Observations) was issued. There have been no complaints of sickness or injury from these eggs. There have been no recalls, but the firm has a recall plan in place (Exhibit 10). No samples, photographs, or labels were collected. There were no refusals.

ATTACHMENTS

FDA-482, Notice of Inspection

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EXHIBITS COLLECTED

1. Maricopa facility fact sheet
2. Organizational structure of Hickman's
3. Management review log for March, 2011
4. NPIP records certifying SE pullets
5. Sanitation records, March, 2011
6. Refrigeration log, April, 2011
7. SE test results 14 & 45 week-old hens, September, 2010
8. Corrective action report for rodent-control, March, 2011
9. Fly index report, March, 2011
10. Recall plan for Maricopa farm



John A. Daubenspeck, Investigator