

Getting eggs into boxes

Today I joined the MP call to the Cabinet office to provide feedback on virus related problems. One of the issues I raised was the continued empty shelf problem for a few products. I took the case of eggs as an example.

There are still the same number of eggs being produced as before the clampdown came into effect. Apparently there are plenty of eggs, but a large number are available in catering packs which are far too big to sell in supermarkets. According to the BBC Radio 4 Farming programme big caterers are more than happy to transfer their egg contracts temporarily to the supermarkets, but the eggs need to be packed in retail packs. There are few manufacturers of the egg boxes, with a main producer in Denmark said to be closed for virus reasons.

I suggested the Cabinet Office/DEFRA help the private sector come up with a solution to a shortage of retail egg packs. UK packaging firms may be able to respond to the need quickly. Retailers might be able to buy in the catering packs and let people buy loose eggs, as we buy loose vegetables, for those who keep their last egg box and take it back to refill. That would take some pressure off.

There are a few other lines in common short supply where there can be fixes.

I am also sending these thoughts to DEFRA, as filling all the shelves again would reassure the public and remind people who are thinking of hoarding they have no need to hoard.