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Rising egg prices



Boiled, fried, over-easy, poached, scrambled or sunny-side-up, people should be prepared to pay a premium for eggs considering that prices have recently risen sharply. Consumers are coping with unrealistic though humorously entertaining comments. Some people are even dramatically exaggerating that the rising cost of eggs at their present pace might soon rival the price of gold.



But why exactly are egg prices rising at an unprecedented rate? Is it greed?

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Is it the high cost of chicken feed? Or is it something else that is not obvious.



Some believe it could be the failing health of infected hens laying the eggs. Could these egg shortages have stemmed from one of the worst outbreaks of the avian flu in history? Maybe! The H5N1 virus, passed by wild birds usually through their feces, has actually devastated poultry flocks across the country. The epic drought resulted in virus-carrying geese to shift their migration east and these geese flew over some of the most dense livestock

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production areas in North America. But certain U.S. livestock production areas weren't affected.



Though it is entirely unclear whether livestock production areas in neighboring countries were affected by this outbreak. Nevertheless, egg suppliers in Mexico are not unlikely to capitalize on the egg shortage. But are the eggs in Mexico safe? There have been reports about egg smuggling at the U.S.-Mexico border, since egg prices in Mexico aren't as expensive. Actually, during the last quarter of 2022, egg seizures at this border were up over 100 percent. Is it possible that these egg seizures at this border is safety-related?



As a safety precaution, almost 58 million chickens were culled for the purpose of preventing further spread of infection. In 2023, poultry farmers are hopeful that the replenished stocks of egg layers will boost supply. While this would lower the price of eggs, the experts are cautioning consumers that these inflated egg prices are unlikely to drop anytime soon. If stocks of egg layers are replenished and the prices remain elevated, doesn't that give credence to the greed theory? Prices drop as supply rises unless there are other factors!

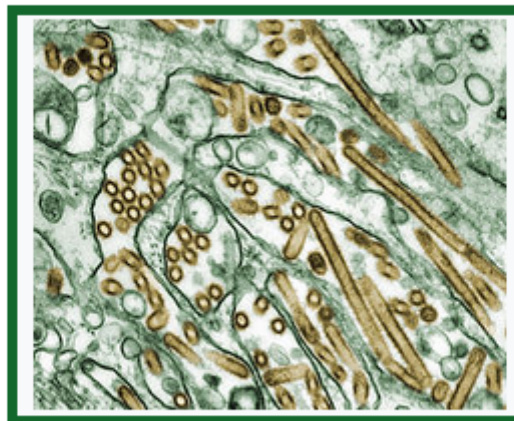
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The other factors are worth exploring after addressing the health concerns.

H5N1



For example, as the avian flu continues to spread, virologists are concerned that it could mutate and spread to humans. In the unlikely but plausible event it mutates to allow human-to-human transmission, what defense do we have against it? Not much (if any). The impact would be really bad. How bad? Catastrophic! Not much unlike the Spanish flu or even the Covid-19 outbreak.

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