

Eggs with expiry date yet to hit Dhaka markets

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Although a Jessore-based farm has recently started marketing eggs with expiry dates for the first time in the country, the consumers of Dhaka have not yet seen such eggs in any shops.

The city residents consume about 15 lakh eggs each day. Around 80 percent of the eggs produced all over the country are sold in Dhaka and other big cities.

Some shopkeepers said they have heard that a farm named Afil Agro Ltd has started marketing eggs with expiry date but its supply is not available in Dhaka. "After newspapers reported it, many customers started asking for such eggs," said a shopkeeper in the city.

Montu Miah, a shopkeeper from Gulshan, however, said: "I have never heard of eggs with expiry dates. I was surprised when a customer asked for it."

A customer Sharif Ahmed while buying poultry products from that shop said: "When I was abroad I saw eggs with expiry dates. In most countries in North America and Europe, eggs are sold with expiry dates ranging from two to four weeks."

Contacted, Deputy Director of Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) Shariful Alam said eggs are categorised as agro-based products and there is no law on

Bangladesh Poultry Industries Association sources said about 600 crore of eggs are produced annually in the country with a per capita consumption of 19 to 20 eggs....Most shopkeepers from the city said about three to five percent of the total eggs brought to the city are rotten due to improper maintenance of temperature. These eggs are bought by roadside restaurants and bakeries to make food items.

expiry date of these products. The farm has introduced such dates according to its own idea.

Bangladesh Poultry Industries Association sources said about 600 crore of eggs are produced annually in the country with a per capita consumption of 19 to 20 eggs. The eggs are usually consumed within 2/3 days of production and they do not need to be preserved for long time.

However, eggs can be preserved in cold storage for a maximum period of three months maintaining the right temperature, the sources added.

Association's Secretary General Syed Abu Siddique said: "The eggs coming from the farms do not even take two days to be consumed. So they

do not need to be marked with expiry date."

Dr Mohammed Manzur Murshid Khan, treasurer of the association, said fixing expiry dates depends on factors like storage condition, fertile or non-fertile eggs, transportation facility and temperature control, the place where eggs are kept, washing and cleaning of the outer shells.

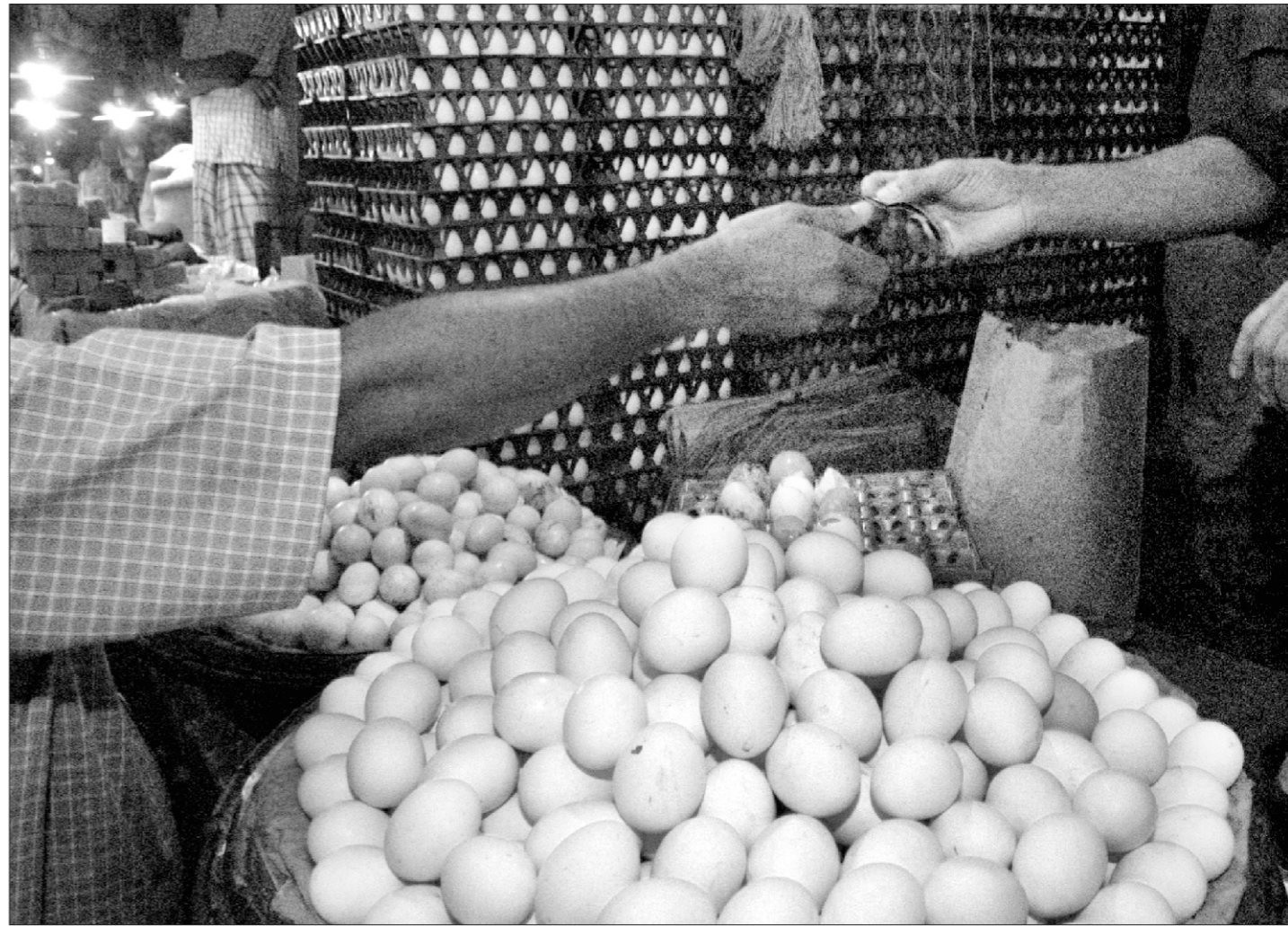
"To my knowledge, there are no regulations on expiry date," he said.

Asked how they fix expiry dates of eggs, Director of Afil Agro Nazmul Alam Lavlu said: "We follow the modern method practised in Singapore, do all the testing in our labs and put the expiry date of three weeks from the production."

"All sheds of our farm are equipped with hi-tech German equipment and environmentally controlled where bio-security is strictly maintained. Bio-security means protecting poultry flocks from any type of infectious agent -- viral, bacterial, fungal, or parasitic."

He also said: "The supply of water, feed and collection of eggs are totally automated. Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) and International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) tested water are given to the chickens".

"Foreign consultants make regular visit and experienced doctors manage the farm 24 hours a day to maintain quality," Nazmul Alam said.



Eggs are sold in the city markets without any expiry dates.

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maintenance of temperature. These eggs are bought by roadside restaurants and bakeries to make food items.

Dr Ahmedul Kabir, registrar of medicine, Sir Salimullah Medical College, said due to use of rotten eggs in food

products the consumers suffer from stomach upset and other diseases.

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