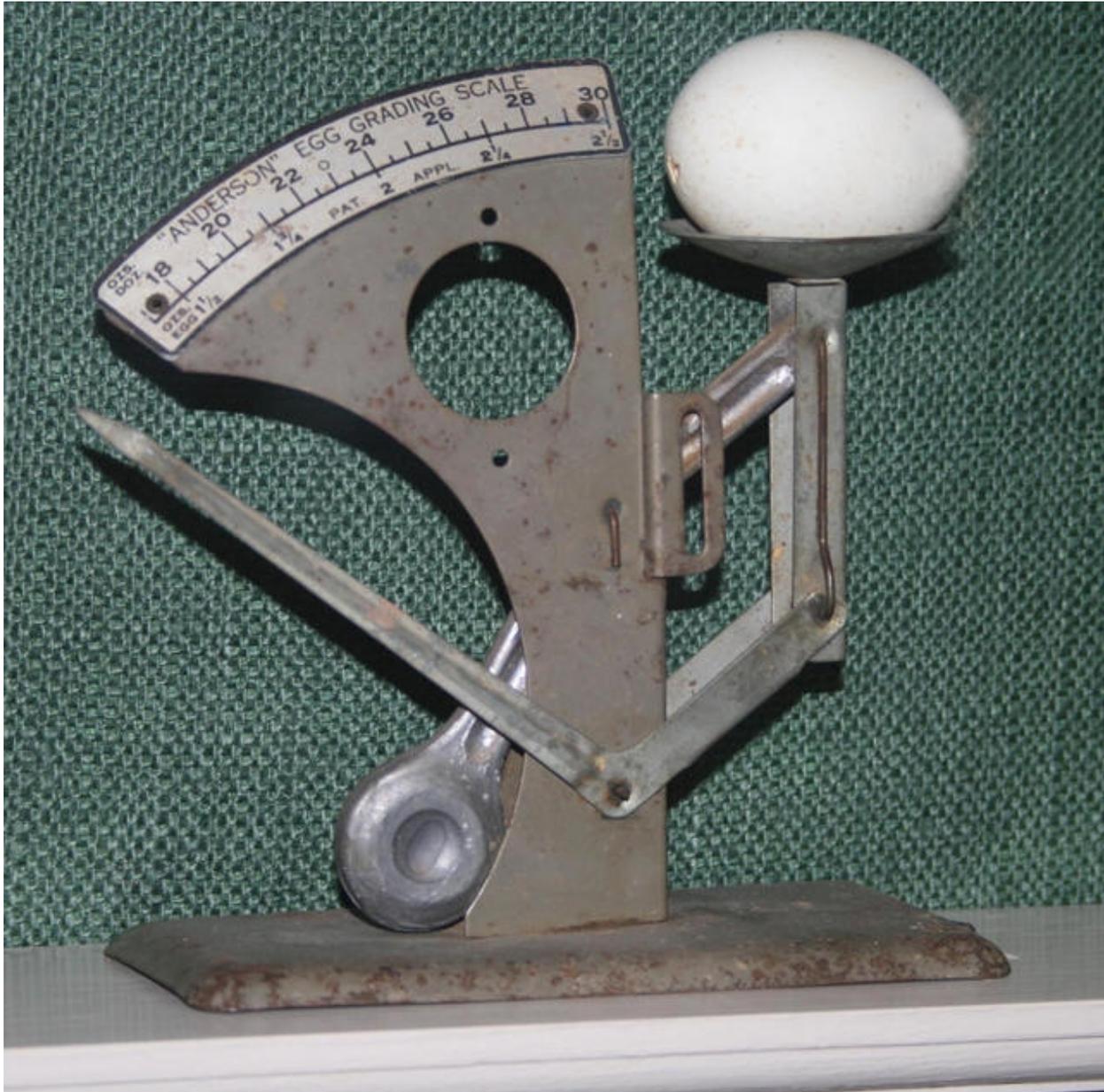


# Donation of the Month

Andersons Grade A Egg Scale

1988.71.1

Donor: **Martin Grayson**



Which came first, the chicken or the egg? While I don't know the answer any more than the next person, the egg is what I'm going to explore. Without the egg there would be no scrambled eggs, pancakes, biscuits or bread for breakfast. Large scale egg farms provide most of the eggs found in our supermarkets. On average a person consumes 244 eggs per year. Smaller farms as well as those who operate free-range farms provide a smaller percentage of eggs consumed yearly.

Eggs with the USDA's seal of approval are graded and weighted before hitting the supermarket shelves. Grade doesn't depend on weight or size, but the air cell size inside the egg. Candling, the process of placing a very strong light behind the egg, reveals the air cell, blood spots and egg white thickness. Top grade eggs are labeled "AA" or "A" and have the smallest air cells measuring no less than 1/8 inch deep; whereas grade B eggs are 3/16 inch deep.

Weight and size are only noted when the eggs are packaged for sale. Egg sizes range from jumbo to peewee. The most popular size and the one most recipes call for is large. When sizing an egg, the USDA bases the weight on a dozen of eggs. For example, a dozen large eggs should weigh no more than 24 ounces. This then means an individual egg within the carton should weight around 2 ounces, but no more than 2.25 ounces.

So what is the importance of a single egg scale? This egg scale is for home use and was most likely used by a family who sold their eggs to neighbors. There are two measuring scales with the top numbers being for a dozen and the bottom numbers being for individual eggs. Knowing the weight of the egg allowed the seller to grade the egg.

Having a dozen eggs similar in size helps make your cake recipe come out just right. And when using the eggs bought at the local supermarket you can be assured all twelve are the same size and weight. Individual sellers may still use small egg scales to ensure their eggs meet the purchaser's expectations. However, most egg scales have been relegated to a shelf for nostalgias sake.