

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 14, 2025

Mr. Sherman Miller  
President and Chief Executive Officer, Cal-Maine Foods  
1052 Highland Colony Parkway, Suite 200  
Ridgeland, MS 39157

Dear Mr. Miller,

We write to you to request an explanation as to why Americans, living paycheck to paycheck, are paying record prices for eggs while Cal-Maine Foods reported that its gross profits jumped from \$45.433 million<sup>1</sup> to 186.436 million<sup>2</sup> from Q1 to Q4 of last year, a 310 percent increase. Cal-Maine's Q1 and Q2 of FY25 have continued a similar trajectory, reporting \$247.20 million<sup>3</sup> and \$356.042 million<sup>4</sup> in gross profits, respectively.

Just last week, Cal-Maine announced quarterly profits of \$509 million, more than three times what it made in the same period a year ago.<sup>5</sup>

While avian flu is cited as the primary driver of skyrocketing egg prices, the numbers show that it is clearly not the whole story.

As I know you are aware, in February, egg prices hit an all-time average high of \$5.90,<sup>6</sup> with many Americans paying over \$10 for a dozen eggs.<sup>7</sup> Recently, the United States Department of Agriculture reported egg prices could jump another 41 percent this year.<sup>8</sup> Though consumers have seen some relief, they deserve answers as to why record prices coincided with your record profits.

Cal-Maine Foods controls about a fifth of the egg market and is the largest producer and distributor of shell eggs in the United States. Cal-Maine has also increased its market power by acquiring more than two dozen companies since 1989; six companies in 2023 alone.<sup>9</sup> In July of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://calmainefoods.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/cal-maine-foods-reports-results-first-quarter-fiscal-2024>

<sup>2</sup> <https://calmainefoods.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/cal-maine-foods-reports-results-fourth-quarter-and-fiscal-2024#:~:text=%E2%80%9CNet%20income%20attributable%20to%20Cal,fourth%20quarter%20of%20fiscal%202023.>

<sup>3</sup> <https://calmainefoods.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/cal-maine-foods-reports-results-first-quarter-fiscal-2025>

<sup>4</sup> <https://calmainefoods.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/cal-maine-foods-reports-results-second-quarter-fiscal-2025>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2025/04/08/egg-prices-profit-increase-cal-maine/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/eggs-inflation-easter-passover-bird-flu-734a38ec59dcd3f630bddb4a28327121>

<sup>7</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/egg-prices-record-bird-flu-a2394bdefc7bd0514d4f003cc5e8a908>

<sup>8</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/record-egg-prices-usda-bird-flu-virus-92e9f5fbc4e0a792be484a4aee5b9c16>

last year, Cal-Maine acquired ISE America, one of the top 25 egg producers in the United States for just \$110 million, adding nearly five million egg-laying hens to its flock.<sup>10</sup>

The current avian flu outbreak in the United States started in 2022. However, Cal-Maine has kept its sales stable at approximately 1.1 billion dozen eggs a year from 2021 to 2024 – so while your profits have dramatically increased, your sales have remained consistent.

During that same time, your company's gross profits increased 237 percent overall, including a 646 percent increase from 2021 to 2023.<sup>11</sup> While bird flu has infected over 168 million poultry thus far<sup>12</sup>, Cal-Maine has reported outbreaks at only two of its farms in the last two years, which resulted in the loss of over 2 million chickens and young hens. Cal-Maine has also been able to recoup millions of dollars from these losses through United States Department of Agriculture indemnity programs.

During the 2015 avian flu outbreak, the national flock numbers and egg prices largely recovered within eight months, yet this time around, flock and price recovery are still delayed.

Crucially, Cal-Maine has two hatcheries in the United States<sup>13</sup> where your company controls eggs hatched for commercial purposes, making Cal-Maine one of the only companies in the United States with major capacity to produce eggs, and the supply chain capability to distribute them. It seems as though you could immediately act to replace lost birds without relying on external supply chains.

Americans are suffering, and your company has the market power to make a difference.

There has been one clear winner in all of this: Cal-Maine. The reality is your company is making more money while not producing more. From an outside observer, it seems that Cal-Maine has refused to ramp up egg production despite capacity to do so while being able to take advantage of elevated prices and increasing their profits. The concern felt by many hardworking Americans is that Cal-Maine is price gouging those struggling to afford staple foods. This is likely the reason that the Department of Justice is currently investigating your company for violating antitrust laws.

On behalf of the American people, we request answers to the two below questions:

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<sup>9</sup> <https://nypost.com/2025/02/12/business/us-biggest-egg-producer-is-raking-in-profits-as-supermarket-prices-surge-farm-advocacy-group/#:~:text=Cal%2DMaine%20Foods%20acquired%20six%20companies%20in%202023%20alone.&text=The%20other%20companies%20colluding%20with,Farm%20Action%20told%20The%20Post.>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.fooddive.com/news/cal-maine-purchase-acquisition-egg-producer-ise-america-110-million-eggs-production-bird-flu/720291/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://farmaction.us/farm-action-calls-for-an-investigation-into-skyrocketing-egg-prices-and-restricted-supply/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/situation-summary/index.html>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.calmainefoods.com/locations>

- 1.) Can you justify how Cal-Maine, a company with immense market power, continues to cite avian flu as the primary reason for record high egg prices despite reaping massive profits while not significantly increasing production, all while Americans are struggling to make ends meet?
- 2.) With the means to increase production and lower costs for American consumers, why has Cal-Maine refused to increase their own egg production, as highlighted by your consistent unit sales, from its hatcheries since the start of avian flu outbreak? Do you believe an increase in egg production would help to combat poultry losses and lower prices, as it did in 2015?

We look forward your timely response. The American people deserve answers.

Sincerely,



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Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress



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Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



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Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



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Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



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Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



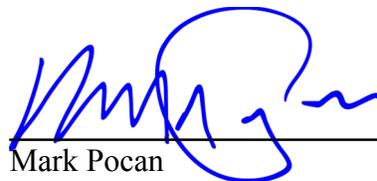
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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



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Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



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Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



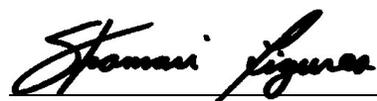
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Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



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Shomari Figures  
Member of Congress



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Chris Deluzio  
Member of Congress



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Lauren Underwood  
Member of Congress



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Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



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Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



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Nanette Diaz Barragan  
Member of Congress



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Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



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Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



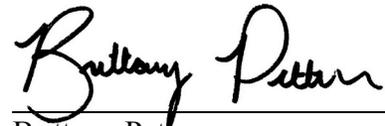
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Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



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Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



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Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



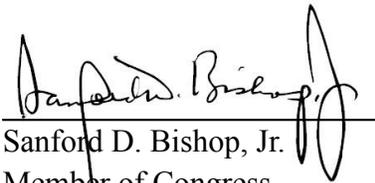
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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



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Maggie Goodlander  
Member of Congress



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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

*Bradley Scott Schneider*

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Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress