

EGGS



Nearly 3 millions hens are confined to battery cages



Free range and barn raised eggs are still factory farmed



All hens are killed before they are 2 years old



In New Zealand there are an estimated 3.2 million layer hens who produce around 968 million eggs a year. Nearly 90 percent of these eggs are produced in battery hen cage systems, with the remainder being produced in barn raised and free range systems.

All egg producers source their hens from commercial breeders. They are laid by factory farmed parent birds (both male and female) who live in overcrowded sheds where they are free to move about but there is little room. Fertilised eggs are collected and placed in incubators until they are ready to be hatched. At this time the eggs are placed into heated drawers until they hatch. At one day old the chicks are sexed.

Virtually all female chicks are de-beaked; a process where chicks have their beaks cut back with a hot blade, causing instant and chronic pain. Other procedures also include toe amputation and the killing of day-old male chicks. These male chicks do not produce anything profitable for the egg industry and are either gassed, suffocated or ground alive (sometimes called maceration or instantaneous fragmentation). This practice is not confined to battery farming but extends throughout the entire egg industry, including barnlaid and free range systems.

Battery Hen Farming

On battery hen farms, hens are confined to sloping wire cages in dark sheds, with little or no natural light. Virtually all of a battery hens natural behaviours are suppressed - they cannot perch, preen, or spread their wings; they will never see the sun, scratch the earth or forage for food. They are denied the opportunity to make nests, dustbathe, and engage in normal social interaction.

Many battery hens suffer extreme feather loss due to the constant rubbing of cage wire against their bodies, and pecking from other distressed hens. The sloping wire of the cage floor, combined with inability to move around, results in lame feet and deformed claws.

Not surprisingly, many battery hens exhibit signs of extreme psychological distress. These include the repeated and continued pecking of other hens, cannibalism and hens attempting to make nests out of thin air.

Barnraised Farming

Barnlaid eggs are factory farmed eggs. While there are no cages in a barn system,

there is also no sunlight, no fresh air, and no room to move around. The thousands of birds per shed mean cannibalism, bullying, de-feathering and aggression are still big problems.

Free Range Farming

Free range eggs are factory farmed eggs. While hens on free range farms are usually able to access the outside they are still forced to live in flocks much larger than they naturally would. This prevents them from forming social hierarchies and displaying natural patterns of behaviour. This also results in cannibalism, bullying, de-feathering and aggression.

Chickens are highly maternal, inquisitive and social animals who in natural environments will live in small family flocks. They will spend long periods of time exploring, foraging and pecking for food. They will make nests, lie in the sun, dustbathe, fly short distances and even perch in trees. ALL egg production systems prevent this natural behaviour.

In ALL egg production systems the hens are treated as a machine; pumping out hundreds of eggs a year in conditions fit for no animal. By two years of age the hens in ALL egg production systems will be killed. In nature they would live for 10-15 years.

There is no room for compassion in the egg industry; it is unrelenting and brutal - and it must be stopped.

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