

**Submission  
No 161**

**INQUIRY INTO USE OF BATTERY CAGES FOR HENS IN  
THE EGG PRODUCTION INDUSTRY**

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**Date Received:** 29 June 2019

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Although I am busy like so many people, I must take some time to write this submission about the Egg Industry and the way we treat hens and baby chicks.

We don't need to intellectualize it and it cannot be defended. It is simply horrific treatment of yet another animal species that has fallen prey to human greed and neglect on a massive scale.

Like so many people, I never really thought about how our animals were being treated for the production of meat, milk and eggs. When I became fully aware, I had no choice but to become vegan. What am I missing out on? Nothing, absolutely nothing yet my own contribution to a better world, a kinder world, reducing green house emissions and so much more is greater than ever, all without effort.

I always considered myself lucky to live in Australia, a country I thought was progressive in so many ways, embracing all religions, nationalities, caring, a pet loving, animal loving country. What has gone wrong???

How is it that we have regressed and lost our compassion and concern for the most innocent of animals and allowed such a level of neglect and cruelty to escalate to unprecedented levels instead of reducing and improving animal welfare across all species in this day and age.

There is not a day I don't wonder about this as visions of animal cruelty such as hens in battery cages, male chicks being killed, disposed of, like a defective piece of plastic, simply put through a grinder and torn to shreds - these and so many other visions of cruelty that should not exist in this day. It should not exist. I imagine this happening to human babies. The thought is horrific isn't it?

We will never truly be a prosperous nation and one to be proud of, while we continue to measure our success by financial gain obtained by increasing the torture, neglect and killing of the most vulnerable. That is not a measure of success, but one of the greatest failure. This failure is evident in egg farmers keeping hens in battery cages, in male chicks being ground alive, in that this is even legal. I cannot believe this is allowed in Australia and that as I write this little baby chicks are being thrown around, broken beak here, torn off limb there, suffocated, crushed and on and on it goes - endless cruelty and suffering in our so called successful egg industry that operates according to the highest ethical standards. This is what the Government, our Prime Minister and the Agriculture Department try to tell us at every opportunity. I have observed that they neglect to acknowledge the extreme suffering and inhumane treatment of animals, totally ignore it. They have the intelligence I am sure, to know that these animals mimic human behavior in that they feel, perceive, suffer, pine, mourn, make friends, show empathy, in other words they are so much like us, so their suffering in any situation

would be no different to ours, so again our leaders, our politicians are smart enough to know this. They know this, but what they don't have is empathy, heart and compassion. This is greatly missing in parliament and this needs to change.

Most days and nights I think about the plight of animals like so many. I feel frustrated because I want to rescue them from the endless pain and torture and I want to stop their pain now. I wonder what is wrong with our leaders? Why can't they see that greater success can be achieved by ending the torture and protecting our animals, thereby protecting our planet and us, while at the same time creating innovative new and ethical businesses. In the least, if we are going to eat animals, their eggs, their milk, in the least, surely every farm, every abattoir, every business profiting from exploiting and killing animals should have the spotlight on them with cctv cameras and the strictest of regulatory oversight to ensure there is no suffering, no suffering at all for our animals. But of-course that will never happen while we speak of them in these kind of terms you see below from our Government websites or RSPCA websites and the likes. They don't even recognize these beautiful animals as living feeling sentient beings, but speak of them as though they are inanimate objects and nothing else. They speak of "efficient use of resources" encouraging their confinement and ill treatment. It's disgraceful.

For example:

"Cage systems provide efficient use of resources per unit of production" Free range production requires more land and hens to produce equivalent egg numbers compared to cage systems, and increases environmental risks.

Cage production is the most efficient. Eggs from these systems are cheaper than non-cage. Grain consumption per egg produced is lowest in cage systems."

I do hold out some hope that greater strides will be made towards reducing animal suffering now that I see representatives of the Animal Justice Party in Parliament.

There is so much to be done, so much unnecessary suffering that must end.

Our hens must be released from battery cages and be free to roam, peck and be kept safe and healthy. The horrific killing of male chicks must end. Yes it can be done, and so easily. This deserves nothing less than our urgent attention to release these innocent wonderful animals from endless pain and suffering.

Rhonda Ivanisevic