

**Submission
No 168**

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

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Date Received: 1 July 2019

Please consider the complete phase out of battery cages for hens and enact strict rules around egg labeling.

Battery cages should not exist in 2019. Many countries have phased them out as they are inherently cruel and the majority of the public don't buy them. However foods that contain eggs as an ingredient and fast food vendors still buy cage eggs because they are cheap and profit is more important. This is fooling shoppers who consciously don't buy cage eggs but inadvertently consume them when they are contained in other products.

The science is clear on chickens, they have instinctual needs that cages do not allow them to express. It is cruel to subject a sentient being to this. Cage egg farms have a greater likelihood of disease break outs due to the close proximity the chickens live in coupled with the filthy conditions of cramming thousands of chickens together. This is cruel and unhealthy to both the chickens and potentially to humans. Chickens are being bred to be much bigger than their bodies can handle, leading to a high mortality rate, more disease and filth that the living chickens have to endure as their kin drop down dead around them. This is unnatural. Chickens have to undergo a painful procedure of debeaking due to being packed so closely together to avoid them injuring each other. There is no anesthetic or pain relief. Would we ask a vet to carry out a procedure on a pet parrot without anesthetic or pain relief? No we wouldn't. Why is a chicken any different to any other bird?

Battery cage hens should not still be an issue as we move into the year 2020.

Once battery cages are banned, labeling still needs addressing to inform consumers of the conditions the hens are in to produce their eggs. How many hens per hectare, how much outside time, natural light, ability to perform natural behaviours like dust bathing, debeaked or not. These are all questions that should be made clear on the egg packaging. Stop producers from blatantly lying to consumers.