

**Submission
No 198**

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

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Date Received: 3 July 2019

Dear Sir/Madam and Committee

I welcome the opportunity to be a voice for the voiceless and speak on behalf of more than 11 million hens that are confined to cages and torturous conditions just as I write.

Australians tend to pride themselves for their love of animals - all creatures, great and small - and yet when it comes to treatment of farm animals, among treatment of animals in many other industries, we Australian have little to be proud of.

With regard to the egg industry the treatment of hens - and chicks - is appalling. We have much to do and freeing hens from horrific caged short and miserable life is only a start but an essential start in the right direction it is!

More than 11 Millions hens are confined to a life in a cage size of no bigger than A4 paper.

Chickens/hens are intelligent and social beings - they have a social pecking order and they love and protect their young. These are denied to them in cages for there is no social contact and their young are shredded as 'discard products'. The crowding results with stress and aggression and more cruelty is inflicted on them to 'protect' them by the cruel practice of de-beaking.

Chicken/hens love to sun-bath, dust-bath, they love to scratch and flap their wings and perch. These are all denied to them in cages. They will never feel the sun, will never enjoy a dust-bath, they cannot even flap their wings or scratch... nothing but darkness and misery.

The natural life of chickens/hens amounts to 20years - but they barely live to the age of one in the farming industry, caged hens are do not survive for more than a few months before they are send to the slaughter with no gratitude to their service to us.

Chickens/hens are sentient,beings - they feel pain just as we do and these conditions and practices result with ongoing chronic pain through a very short life.

And all in the name of 'feeding us humans' and in the name of 'making a living'... This is incredibly cruel and morally wrong. It is time that we humans realize that we have no right to treat another living being in this manner.

As said, of course freeing hens from cages will not solve all the problem but it certainly will relieve much suffering and will begin the process of turning the wheels towards compassion and care and respect. There is no excuse for caged hens anymore! The European Union banned it already in 2012; In the US, California committed to the practice to be obsolete by 2015 and Michigan by 2019. It is time for Australia to show its love and care and morality and ban caged eggs not tomorrow, not in a few years time but now! Thank you and am praying for these beautiful beings that humans begins to be what they are meant to be - humane.

Rachel Sussman