

**Submission
No 405**

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

Name: Chris Burton

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Parliament of New South Wales

To: The Legislative Council Select Committee on the Use of Battery Cages
for Hens in the Egg Production Industry.

Dear Select Committee,

As stated, your job as the select committee is “to inquire into and report on the use of battery cages for hens in the egg production industry”.

There is a plethora of research around the world, and in Australia, as to why caged hens should be banned.

In most of Europe caged hens egg production has been banned.

The most compelling obvious reason for me, is it’s barbaric and cruel to pack hens (sentient beings) caged packed into tiny confined spaces - Forever - until they are of no use.

Dr Malcolm Caulfield’s research, enlightens us that hens may have a “range of complex cognitive abilities”, such as time, memory, deductive reasoning in social interactions, complex communication, recognizes, discriminates and learns; and have emotions. Further, caged hens cannot do basic things, for example, flap wings, preen, perch, scratch, explore, forage with others and nest. Due to restricted movement and perching results in weak bone, which, causes about 40% of caged hens to have broken bones. Also, caged hens have increased fear.

Dr Malcolm Caulfield, *Animals in Australia Use and Abuse*, 2018,
Pub. Vivid Publishing, WA, Australia.

Here is more information to ban caged hens from Australian ‘The Animal Protection Institute Voiceless’.

The following information is a direct quote from Voiceless page – includes heading, Battery Cages, Debeaking and Growing consumer support for Free range:

“WHY BAN BATTERY CAGES AND DEBEAKING OF CHICKENS?”

Battery cages

Battery cages are used on factory farms to confine egg-laying hens. In these cages, hens are packed together¹ giving them little opportunity to exhibit natural behaviours like preening, foraging and nesting.² Battery cages cause severe physical and psychological distress to hens, including chronic pain from constantly standing on sloped wire floors.³

Debeaking

When confined to a cage, hens may become so frustrated that they resort to pecking or bullying their cage mates.⁴ Debeaking is therefore routinely used by egg producers to limit the damage that hens can cause to one another. The procedure involves severing a portion of the beak with an electrically heated blade. Despite the procedure resulting in acute pain and nerve injury,⁵ pain relief is not a requirement in NSW, or any other state that practices debeaking. It is important to note that debeaking may be practiced in certain “free range” certification systems.

More details about the animal welfare issues associated with battery hens and debeaking can be found on our Issues Page.

GROWING CONSUMER SUPPORT FOR FREE RANGE

There is widespread public opposition to the cruelty of battery cages and debeaking. A national survey indicated that 86% of Australians believe that battery cages are cruel,⁶ and public preference

for cage-free eggs is increasing, with consumption of cage-free eggs now estimated to represent 38% of the retail market,⁷ a jump from 14.5% in 2005.⁸”
For further valuable information see Voiceless facebook.

In my humble opinion, I think the above clearly provides the evidence that caged hens egg production should be banned.

No more should hens live in barbaric cruel caged conditions.

Regards

Chris Burton