

Submission  
No 429

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

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## Submission to the Legislative Council Select Committee on the Use of Battery Cages for Hens in the Egg Production Industry: Inquiry into the Use of Battery Cages for Hens in the Egg Production Industry.

In Australia each year, over 600 million chickens are slaughtered for human and domestic animal consumption. Many of these hens are kept in unacceptable conditions, living permanently in battery cages and never seeing daylight. They live under artificial lighting and often undergo beak trimming (due to overcrowded stressful conditions where hens may attack one another). They are deprived of normal conditions for hens including having room to flap their wings, groom themselves, dust bathe and lay their eggs in nests. These hens suffer from foot problems, osteoporosis and pain from bone fractures and multiple other health conditions.

A survey conducted by Choice found that the majority of shoppers would prefer free range eggs over battery or barn laid eggs. Most were prepared to pay more for free range eggs (although there is confusion about what free range meant) and thought that hens enjoyed a more ideal life than most actually do.

According to The CSIRO's voluntary Model Code of Practice, the maximum number of hens in free ranging conditions should be no more than 1500 per hectare. However, in 2018 the Federal Government introduced a free range egg standard of up to 10,000 hens per hectare. According to Choice Magazine, this is far from ideal and flies in the face of the recommendations of organisations such as the CSIRO, Organic certification standards, the RSPCA and Humane Society International.

I am totally opposed to the use of battery hens in the farming industry. Battery hens live under atrocious conditions in Australia and the recent change to the standard of 10,000 hens per hectare needs to be reviewed. There clearly needs to be an overhaul of the conditions of the agriculture of hens for commercial purposes.