

Submission
No 456

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 25 July 2019

Partially
Confidential

I am writing a submission to oppose the banning of caged egg production.

There are multiple reasons why I believe this from cost, bio security and impact on Australian families.

The cost of living is rising, from the cost of housing, electricity and food. The restrictions placed on farmers already in regards to how they grow our food have increased the prices in the supermarket. Australian's are struggling to make ends meet, personal debts are at an all time high. Intensive farming allows a reduced cost for produce such as eggs, eggs which are a staple for those who are at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder. I buy caged eggs because of the price. I can not afford the cost of free range or barn laid eggs. This type of farming is labour intensive and drastically increases the cost of an egg. I do not want my choices as a consumer limited because a minority of society are hypersensitive when it comes to animal welfare. If people are worried about this they are able to vote with their wallets and what they put in their shopping trolley. I would be disgusted if the government, representing me, took my economic choices away to soothe the voice of the minority.

Secondly, recently I have heard of three outbreaks of salmonella from certain egg producers. Researching these farms to ensure I do not buy their eggs I have found they are solely free-range farms. These are reputable farms that I assume have the proper bio-security in place to help avoid this type of outbreak. What I can surmise from this is that it is almost impossible to contain these outbreaks in a free range or barn laid setting. You can not control the outside ground from foreign contaminants. This is another reason why I choose to buy caged eggs. salmonella, untreated is life threatening, it scares me to think that the only eggs I would have a choice of buying can not guarantee that they are salmonella free.

Thirdly, I am worried about the impact this decision would have on Australian farming families. Australia is in the worst drought ever, farmers have faced militant protesters breaking into their farms and suicide, depression and isolation are real concerns for these families. How can you consider this when these people have been struggling so much already. The attacks on farmers and their practices, not just in the egg industry, disgusts me. I urge you to consider the affects a decision would have on families who have invested hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars in this industry over the years if they were required to stop trading. Imagine the affect on the children.

I strongly oppose banning cages, animal welfare is the top most priority for farmers. If their animals were in distress they would not produce. If the people proposing this bill do not want to eat caged eggs then they should not buy them in the supermarket. Let me and the rest of Australia have this same option.