

UNDERSTANDING NEW ZEALAND CONVENTIONAL CAGE EGG FARMING

GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

A cage egg is laid by a hen in a conventional cage environment. Conventional cages will not be in use after December 31, 2022.

All cage egg farms must continue to comply with Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2018, which is administered by MPI in New Zealand, and was developed by the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC).

The Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2018 (“the Code”) is available in full on the Ministry of Primary Industry’s website: www.mpi.govt.nz.

What is “conventional cage” egg farming in New Zealand?

Hens living in a conventional cage environment must:

- ✓ Have access to food and water each day
- ✓ Have eight hours of darkness every 24-hours
- ✓ Be housed in compliance with the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2018.

On the following page there is further information about each of these requirements.

Access to food and water each day

All layer hens in New Zealand must have adequate access to food and water each day to maintain good health.

Eight hours of darkness every 24-hours

It is important that all hens are provided with an 8-hour period of darkness every 24-hours to help them to rest and sleep properly.

Compliance with the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2018

The Code of Welfare is devised by the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) – a panel of leading, independent New Zealand-based experts in animal welfare. There are a significant number of detailed requirements that must be met for a conventional cage egg farm to comply with the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2018. Some of the most important factors include the needs explained, above.

Some other important needs that our outlined in the code include: good pest control to keep any unwanted pests away from hens, providing adequate ventilation and protection from injury and disease, use of medication only in accordance with registration conditions and under veterinary supervision, and, importantly, every farm must have a health and welfare plan that includes daily checks of the hens, removal of any hens that have passed away, and the humane treatment of sick hens.

A copy of the full Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2018 is available at: www.mpi.co.nz.