Engagement through online discussion: perceptions of laying hen welfare in furnished cages

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*animal* journal

**Supplementary material**

**Pre-forum survey**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this online discussion forum. Before we allocate you to a group we’d first like to gather a little bit of information about you.

Please answer the following questions.

**Section 1: Demographics**

1. Are you?

* Male
* Female

1. What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ YYYY
2. Please indicate which of the groups listed below you would primarily identify yourself as (tick one only)

€ Animal welfare/animal rights member

If selected please write the animal welfare or animal rights group \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

€ Member of the general public

€ Laying hen industry member

If selected please describe your role \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2 Knowledge**

1. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Very low | Low | Moderate | High | Very high |
| 4.1 | The Australian egg industry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4.2 | Chicken husbandry and welfare | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

1. The following questions ask you about your knowledge of chicken farming practices. Please answer the following questions as best as you can.

What do the following practices involve? For each item, select the option that you believe to be the correct answer.

5.1. Free range chickens…..

1. Chickens that are free to roam around in a large shed
2. Chickens that have access to an outdoor area at least during the day as they please (correct)
3. Chickens that have access to an outdoor area for their entire lives from hatch
4. Chickens that have access to the outdoors and are bred and reared without the use of chemicals and hormones
   1. Beak trimming…
5. Involves the removal of a chicken’s beak to prevent disease
6. Involves the removal of the chicken’s beak to prevent feather pecking and cannibalism
7. Involves the removal of the tip of the chicken’s beak to prevent feather pecking and cannibalism (correct)
8. Involves the removal of the tip of the chicken’s beak to prevent disease
   1. Furnished cages…
9. Furnished cages house laying hens in groups and do not allow hens the opportunity to nest, dust bathe and perch.
10. Furnished cages house laying hens in groups and allow them the opportunity to nest, dust bathe and perch (correct)
11. Furnished cages house laying hens individually and allow them the opportunity to nest, dust bath, perch and access the outdoors.
12. Furnished cages house laying hens individually and allow them the opportunity to nest, dust bathe and perch.
    1. Antibiotics …
13. Are administered to chickens to prevent and treat infections and disease (correct)
14. Are administered to individual chickens to treat infections and disease
15. Are not administered to chickens in Australia
16. Are administered to increase the rate of growth in chickens
    1. Intensive meat chicken farming involves
17. Keeping meat chickens indoors in high densities (correct)

b) Feeding growth hormones to chickens to increase their rate of growth and size

c) Housing meat chickens in cages

d) All of the above

**Section 3 Laying hen welfare and housing systems**

1. How important do you think the following factors for chicken welfare?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Not important | Slightly important | Moderately important | Important | Very important |
| * 1. Outdoor access | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| * 1. Protection from extreme weather | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| * 1. Social contact with other chickens | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| * 1. Ability to engage in natural behaviour | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| * 1. Protection from predators | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| * 1. Preventative medicine | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| * 1. Medicine to treat disease | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| * 1. Protection from aggression from other chickens | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

1. How would you rate the welfare of chickens in the following housing systems?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Very poor | Poor | Moderate | Good | Very good | Don’t know |
| * 1. Free range | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| * 1. Conventional cages | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| * 1. Furnished cages | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

1. Would you support the introduction of furnished cages in Australia?

€ Yes

€ No

€ Don’t know

* 1. If yes why…

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* 1. If no, why not…

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. Did you access any external sources of animal welfare information to help you complete this survey?

€Yes

€No

* 1. If yes, please list up to three of the sources that you used the most. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire. We will be in touch with you shortly.**

**Post-forum survey**

Thank you for participating in this forum discussion. We’re now going to ask some questions about your knowledge and opinions towards chickens and their welfare as well as some questions about your experiences with participating in this project. Some of the questions you answer in this survey will be the same as those presented pre-forum survey. While questions may seem repetitive but they are important because they help us to determine whether any changes have taken place over the course of the forum discussion.

**Section 1 – A bit about you…..**

1. In what state or territory do you live?
2. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with participating in this online forum?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very unsatisfied | Unsatisfied | Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied | Satisfied | Very satisfied |

1. How likely would you be to participate in another online forum like this one?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very unlikely | Unlikely | Neither likely nor unlikely | Likely | Very likely |

1. How would you rate your level of knowledge about the following:

The Australian egg industry?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very low | Low | Moderate | High | Very high |

Chicken husbandry and welfare?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very low | Low | Moderate | High | Very high |

The following questions ask you about your knowledge of chicken farming practices. Please answer the following questions as best as you can. What do the following practices involve? For each item, select the option that you believe to be the correct answer.

1. **Free range chickens are…..**
2. Chicken that are free to roam around in a large shed
3. Chickens that have access to an outdoor area at least during the day as they please (correct)
4. Chickens that have access to an outdoor area for their entire lives from hatch
5. Chickens that have access to the outdoors and are bred and reared without the use of chemicals and hormones
6. **Beak trimming…**
7. Involves the removal of a chicken’s beak to prevent disease
8. Involves the removal of the chicken’s beak to prevent feather pecking and cannibalism
9. Involves the removal of the tip of the chicken’s beak to prevent feather pecking and cannibalism (correct)
10. Involves the removal of the tip of the chicken’s beak to prevent disease
11. **Furnished cages…**
12. house laying hens in groups and do not allow hens the opportunity to nest, dust bathe and perch.
13. house laying hens in groups and allow them the opportunity to nest, dust bathe and perch (correct)
14. house laying hens individually and allow them the opportunity to nest, dust bath, perch and access the outdoors.
15. house laying hens individually and allow them the opportunity to nest, dust bathe and perch.
16. **Antibiotics …**
17. Are administered to chickens to prevent and treat infections and disease (correct)
18. Are administered to individual chickens to treat infections and disease
19. Are not administered to chickens in Australia
20. Are administered to increase the rate of growth in chickens
21. **Intensive meat chicken farming involves**
22. Keeping meat chickens indoors in high densities (correct)

b) Feeding growth hormones to chickens to increase their rate of growth and size

c) Housing meat chickens in cages

d) All of the above

1. **How important do you think the following factors are for chicken welfare**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1  Not at all important | 2  Of little importance | 3  Somewhat | 4  Important | 5  Very important |
| Outdoor access |  |  |  |  |  |
| Protection from extreme weather |  |  |  |  |  |
| Social contact with other chickens |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ability to engage in natural behaviour |  |  |  |  |  |
| Protection from predators |  |  |  |  |  |
| Preventative medicine |  |  |  |  |  |
| Medicine to treat disease |  |  |  |  |  |
| Protection from aggression from other chickens |  |  |  |  |  |

1. How would you rate the welfare of chickens in furnished cages?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  |
| Very poor | Poor | Moderately | Good | Very good | Don’t know |

1. How would you rate the welfare of chickens in conventional cages?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  |
| Very poor | Poor | Moderate | Good | Very good | Don’t know |

1. How would you rate the welfare of chickens in free range systems?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  |
| Very poor | Poor | Moderate | Good | Very good | Don’t know |

1. Would you support the introduction of furnished cages in Australia?

€Yes

€No

€Don’t know

* 1. If yes why…

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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* 1. If no, why not……

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. During this research project did you access any external sources of animal welfare information?

€Yes

€No

14.1 If yes, when did you access these resources?

€ Before the online forum discussion

€ During online forum discussions

€ Filling out the post forum survey

14.2 If yes, please list the up to three of the sources that you used the most.

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1. Thank you for your participation if you have any comments you would like to add, please do so here.

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