

Talking Points

Point 1: Battery cage hen farming is cruel

- Over 11 million 'battery' caged hens are imprisoned in cages across Australia.
- Most hens only live up to 18 months before they are slaughtered, and none get to see real sunlight.
- Each hen can live with up to 20 other birds and allocated a living space less than an A4 piece of paper.
- Hens are unable to act out their natural instincts and behaviours including wing flapping, grooming, preening, stretching, foraging and dust bathing.
- Because hens are unable to nest in cages, the distressed birds have been display stress and escape behaviours that can last up to four hours before laying.
- Battery hens have a high risk of experiencing chronic pain from lesions, foot malformation, osteoporosis, and bone fractures.
- Hens imprisoned in battery cages often become frustrated, fearful and aggressive leading to harmful hen pecking and cannibalism. Factory farmers attempt to prevent this behaviour by painfully searing off part of a chick's beak with an electrically heated blade.

Point 2: Battery cage hen farming increases a hen's likelihood of disease

- Hens in battery cages suffer far higher rates of overall disease compared to their barn based and free range counterparts.
- Fatty liver, which causes rupture of the liver and sudden death, as well as osteoporosis are far more common.
- These diseases are so prevalent in battery cage hens because of the inherent nature of the system - hens can be confined to spaces no bigger than an A4 piece of paper, in a high stress, high temperature environment.

Point 3: Battery cage hen farming is being phased out across the world, we should be next

- The European Union legislated to phase out battery cages by 2012. The UK has met this target and the European Commission is threatening non-compliant member countries with legal action.
- In 1981 Switzerland established new requirements for hen welfare, effectively eliminating battery cages by 1991.
- In the US, California, Massachusetts and Washington have all passed laws to make the sale of battery cage eggs illegal in their state. Michigan has committed to a phase out of battery cages by the end of this year (2019), and Ohio has enacted a moratorium against the construction of new battery cage hen facilities.
- In Australia, the ACT has completely prohibited the use of battery cages. Tasmania has prohibited any new battery hen operators from opening shop since 2013.

Point 4: There are cheaper forms of protein than cage eggs

- Plant based protein including chickpeas, lentils and sunflower seeds are by far the cheapest, healthiest forms of protein.
- The egg industry has been ripping off Australians who are struggling to make ends meet. Chickpeas are widely known to be the best, low-cost form of protein on the market.
- For just \$1, chickpeas provide over 100g of healthy plant protein.
- Other plant based proteins including lentils, sunflower seeds, and even peanut butter give you a better bang for your buck than eggs when it comes to protein.