Dear Treasury,

Thank you for the opportunity to express my comments on free range egg labelling debacle in Australia, and to close the current loop-holes allowing for the promotion of misinformation.

As a consumer, I want to be sure that when I pay a higher price for the ethical standards of a product, that I am getting what I pay for, and am not being duped by dodgy labels and loose definitions. Because there is no national, enforceable standard for free range eggs, it's almost impossible to tell which eggs are genuinely free range and which eggs aren't. This is unacceptable as I find the cruelty of battery hen production entirely unacceptable, and refuse to support this abhorrent practice in any way whatsoever, including a standard that allows producers to label their eggs "free range" when their hens cannot even go outside freely, and have an outdoor stocking density of 10,000 hens per hectare. These producers must find another label or appellation that accurately reflects their farming techniques and does not undermine the market for genuine free range eggs.

'Free range' means that hens must freely roam outside and have room to move, indoors and out. The Model Code of Welfare states that hens should have a maximum stocking density of 1,500 hens per hectare. I support this definition wholeheartedly.

Labels are meant for consumers, not to be "railroaded" or distorted by mega-farming structures or the tyranny of the Coles/Woolies duopoly seeking to exploit flimsy and vague definitions which only serve their own purposes of misleading the consumer with a goal of maximising profits. I therefore urge you to put Australian consumers first and enforce a definition that is based on the principle of informing rather

than tricking the consumer, and to uphold the standards of the Fair Trade Act.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely,
James Bourne