

FREE RANGE EGG LABELLING

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Most Australian consumers accurate egg labelling. We choose and pay extra for eggs that we believe have been produced using humane methods. Those humane methods are based on the number of hens per hectare.

The three policy options include: (1) the status quo; (2) an information standard for free range eggs; and (3) an information standard for all eggs.

Only option (3) is acceptable.

Certainty of labeling is to better ensure that consumers are not misled by inaccurate egg labelling.

Consumers are rightly cynical about the claims made by producers about hen numbers per hectare and exactly under which conditions the hens are bred and raised.

What is required, and urgently, is a national compulsory standard of labelling for all eggs.

There must be set standards for what can be called a free-range hen. ie max 1500 per hectare.

These standards must be adhered to by law. An icon should be designed that denotes true free-range production and must be applied to packaging and marketing material when the farm has been accepted by the new national set standard.

Strict penalties should be applied to any producer who breaches the rules and dishonestly applies a free-range label when in fact those hens are kept in conditions not stipulated by the new standards.

It is imperative that these new rules are stipulated and adhered to nation-wide.