

27th October 2015

Submission on Egg Labelling Standards.

The many terms used to describe egg labelling: free range, free roam, eco, organic, vegetarian, grain fed, battery, cage, biodynamic, barn laid etc are not terms which are used consistently by producers.

In an age of rising animal welfare concerns clear labelling of production methods and animal welfare standards is expected by the intelligible consumer. Third party certification and industrial accreditation schemes have formed due to the absence of mandatory labelling. These not only promote confusion of choice for the consumer but lack in their transparency and support a self regulated system of control which has been widely exposed in various industries to place profit before animal welfare standards and consumer expectations.

Free range is the fastest growing sector of Australian egg production and should be supported by a clear Mode of Practice set to a maximum of 1,500 birds (stocking density) per hectare or less for those producers of whom have a higher quality of produce and a higher level of ethical standards, anything above 1,500 should not be deemed as free range or labelled as such. The difference in standards also present problems for egg producer's adhering to a wide range of free range guidelines, in particular those of higher ethical standards. The regulation and monitoring oversight of these practices should be the responsibility of the ACCC. Self regulation of any kind should not be allowed.

It is time the FSC put in place a mandatory labelling system that gives clear information of all the production methods used by the producers and the level of animal welfare standards upheld. Consumers have the right to know the quality of their purchases and what those purchases are supporting. I refuse to support an industry of poor ethic's and animal abuses and deceitful producers, such practices have no place in an intelligible society that is progressive, ethical and sustainable.

Producers failing to adhere to the correct labelling of their produce resulting in the failure to adhere to ACL legislation should be prosecuted in a court of law by the ACCC and their licences cancelled.

Yours Sincerely,

Traudy Glasencnik