

Submission regarding Free Range Egg Labelling Standard

The huge demand for free range eggs in recent times demonstrates that Australians are concerned about hen welfare and want to purchase cruelty-free products.

For that reason labelling a product 'free range' MUST be an indication that the eggs were produced under high welfare standards, not a tokenistic incorporation of such standards.

Specifically, the Information Standard should provide consumers with certainty by:

- Tightening the exceptions for providing access to the outdoor range so that access cannot be denied on a routine basis;
- Including a requirement that regulators consider the following in determining what “meaningful and regular access” means:
 - Flock size and stocking densities inside the barn;
 - Size of openings relative to the number of hens;
 - Placement of physical structures and architecture inside the barn;
 - The condition of the outdoor range including providing adequate shelter, foliage and vegetation; and
 - The extent to which hens actually access the range.