

The welfare of poultry



Laying hens

by DOSO
DyreværnsOrganisationernes
SamarbejdsOrganisation

DyreværnsOrganisationernes SamarbejdsOrganisation

DOSO



127.000
står bag

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DOSO on laying hens

The 'enriched' cages should be banned and replaced by production systems that meet the behavioral needs of hens, e.g. systems that allow hens to range in the outdoors.

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Animal welfare

- Should not be assessed only in terms of mortality and egg production.
- The 'enriched' cages do not allow hens to perform species-specific behavior to a satisfactory degree.
- What can be done short-term to improve welfare of laying hens?



Improvement of current systems

- Keel bone deformities prevalent in caged hens.
- Keel bone fractures prevalent in hens in alternative systems.
- Better design and placement of perches in order to minimize deformities and fractures.



Pullets

- Current industry standards:
 - floors: 18 brown/20 white pullets pr. m²
 - cages: 33 brown/35 white pullets pr. m² (Fødevarestyrelsen 2014).
- They spend approx. ¼ of their lives (16-18 weeks) under these conditions.
- Regulations are needed in order to ensure the pullets' welfare.



Breeding programmes

- Introduction of more inclusive breeding goals where focus is not on egg production **only**.
- Breeding programmes are needed where prevention of feather plucking and cannibalism is a high priority.



Labelling of eggs

- Labelling of production method (caged, organic, etc.) is mandatory.
- Alternative names are widely used.
- This is problematic for two reasons:
 - (1) Less transparency for consumers
 - (2) Animal welfare concerns.



Labelling of eggs

- "Solblommeæg" (sun yolk eggs) from Danæg (cage-free/barn eggs).
- "Morgenæg" (morning eggs) from Danæg (caged eggs).
- "Gårdæg" (farm eggs) from Hedegaard Foods (cage-free/barn eggs).
- "Brunchæg" (brunch eggs) from Hedegaard Foods (cage-free/barn eggs, free range eggs, caged eggs).



Labelling of eggs

- Lack of consumer awareness and transparency regarding eggs in **processed foods**.
- Labelling of eggs in processed foods = logical extension of mandatory labelling of eggs.
- Higher degree of consumer transparency and decreasing demand for caged eggs.



Summary

- Goal: Production of eggs in cages, including 'enriched' cages, should be banned.

In the shorter term:

- Better design and placement of perches
- Regulations on pullet housing
- More inclusive breeding goals
- Higher degree of consumer transparency regarding eggs, including in processed foods.

