



MEDIA STATEMENT

AECL statement: Tasmanian eggs

18 May 2011

The egg industry is more than happy to produce the eggs consumers want. The egg industry has always been committed to consumers having the right to choose the type of eggs they buy.

A phasing out of cages in Tasmania should only be driven by market demand for Tasmanian non-cage eggs, not by Greens Party demands or activist ideology. The egg industry will totally oppose any ban on compliant cages brought about by government regulation. Market forces must prevail through consumer choice.

It is important that eggs remain affordable and available for the average family.

There has been increasing demand for free range eggs and a decreasing demand for cage eggs across Australia in recent times. The market share for free range egg sales has increased from about 8% in 2002 to around 25% in 2011 in Australia. These changes have come about by consumers exercising their right to choose, not by any government regulations – and that is the way it should be.

Hen welfare is a key concern of the egg industry. It is a well-known fact that good farm management and hen husbandry are the keys to hen welfare, not the production systems. There are welfare advantages and disadvantages with cage, free range and barn egg production systems. There are greater welfare outcomes within egg production systems than between them.

AECL continually invests in Research and Development to improve the welfare outcomes across all systems. The egg industry is investing more than \$1million in training programs that will assist egg farmers and their staff to maintain the highest welfare standards for their hens in all production systems.

For further information, please contact AECL Communications Manager, Kai Ianssen, on (02) 9409 6909 or kai@aecl.org.