



# CONSUMERS LOSE IN ALDI DECISION

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25 May 2016

The Australian Egg Corporation Limited is disappointed with today's announcement that ALDI is seeking to phase out cage eggs from its stores. The decision demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of cage egg farming systems and their impact on hen welfare, and flies in the face of consumer demand.

AECL Managing Director James Kellaway said in making the decision to phase out cage eggs, ALDI is ignoring consumer demand. Retail figures consistently show that cage eggs are highly sought after, with cage eggs accounting for 51% of all grocery retail egg sales in March 2016 (<https://www.aecl.org/resources/retail/>) and close to 70% of total egg sales.

"With cage eggs consistently accounting for around 50% of retail sales, it is frankly absurd that ALDI is restricting their customer's right to exercise choice," Mr Kellaway said.

"The egg farming industry wishes to continue to supply eggs from cage, barn-laid and free range farming systems, in line with consumer preferences. The provision of eggs from these systems reflect current demand."

"On average, a dozen cage eggs costs \$3.31 while free range eggs cost \$5.49 (<https://www.aecl.org/resources/industry-statistics/>). In phasing out cage eggs, ALDI will force consumers to pay more for their eggs. ALDI is taking a dictatorial approach to its customers," he said.

Research undertaken by the University of Sydney has shown that hen stress levels are similar across cage, barn and free range farming environments and that it is animal husbandry practices which have the greatest influence on hen welfare. (<http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=8876>).

Mr Kellaway said that it has been proven through many studies worldwide and government reviews in different countries that there are welfare advantages and disadvantages to each laying hen farming system and ALDI's decision clearly ignores this evidence.

"Research clearly shows that the key to good welfare outcomes for hens is good farm management and that there is no variation in hen stress levels across cage, barn and free range egg farming systems. It is disappointing that science has also taken a back seat in ALDI's decision to move away from cage eggs," Mr Kellaway said.

AECL would also note that the industry continues to prioritise animal welfare, and actively supports farmers to meet higher welfare standards. The industry's national Quality Assurance scheme, *Egg Corp Assured*, sets strict criteria to protect the health and welfare of hens and ensure the quality and safety of eggs across all farming systems.

To view an AECL video comparing cage egg farming with free range, [please click here](#).

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