



Eggs from caged hens - factsheet

Laying cages are the most common method of commercial egg production in the UK - representing around 50% of eggs produced in 2011.

Across the EU conventional 'battery' cages have been banned. In the UK, they have been replaced by larger, 'enriched' colony cages. However, producers in some other EU countries did not meet the deadline to move out of battery cages.

The new colony cages provide 750cm² per bird along with a nest box for the birds to lay their eggs in, perching space for the birds to sleep on and a scratching area to perform natural behaviours. In the UK, most of the new enriched colony cages are designed to contain between 40 and 80 birds, enabling better use of the space and giving them more room to move around the colony.

Lion egg producers are finding that the birds make good use of the enhancements of the new system, with almost all of the hens choosing to sleep on the perches and 95% of eggs laid in the nest box area. Laying eggs in a nesting area has been shown to be one of the most important behavioural needs for laying hens. When the eggs are laid they roll forward onto a conveyor belt out of reach of the birds to await collection.

Food is supplied in troughs fitted to the cages and an automatic water supply is provided. The units are kept at an even temperature and are well ventilated. Lighting provides an optimum day length throughout the year.

All British Lion cage eggs come from enriched colony cages, although this is not the case for all producers in some other EU countries.

Lion Quality eggs produced by hens in cages do not use "farm" descriptions, farmyard / countryside scenes nor pictures of hens roaming freely on the egg box.

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