

[REDACTED]

From: Ed Peek [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 15 November 2012 8:57 AM
To: CTMs
Subject: Free Range Eggs - definitions etc.

Categories: Consented to PR, Response sent, AECL standard response

Dear People

I am writing to support the stand of the ACCC in opposing the concept of free range chickens/hens having a density of 20,000 birds per hectare.

My main point is that the concept or definition of “free range” needs to be accepted by consumers as well as the industry.

My interpretation of the term is that the chickens would be basically free to roam about and to scratch and forage in the pasture or field – the idea of trimmed beaks and a density of 20k birds per hectare or even the 10k suggested by Coles does not fit in with this picture at all.

Frankly I do not trust the industry to “self regulate” or set the standards. I refer to an article in the Canberra Times some time earlier this year on a “raid” on a local caged hen egg producer – Parkwood – where there were stacks of egg cartons marked “free range eggs” in the packing shed as an indicator that the industry is not completely honest.

If the definition proposed by the industry is accepted, it will seriously disadvantage suppliers/ growers who actually allow their birds to “free range” at significantly additional costs in both labour and infrastructure. They are providing consumers with the product they want and that they are prepared to pay extra for. The idea that other producers can cash in on this shift in preferences by changing the definition of “free range” with out actually providing the product is to - my mind - fraudulent.

Yours sincerely

Ed Peek
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]