Egg Farmers Correct the Record on Free Range Labelling

The New Year has started with renewed interest in the upcoming information standard for free range eggs with media reports flagging concerns by interest groups that the new standard will lead to ongoing confusion for consumers. Egg Farmers of Australia (EFA) is urging consumers not to be misled by the wing-flapping of interest groups.

"In March last year Consumer Affairs Ministers from across Australia came together to agree on a national definition for free range eggs. Many different options were considered on what farming system should constitute free range under a national information standard," said John Dunn, CEO, Egg Farmers of Australia.

"Many argued that free range egg farming should be confined to farms with an external stocking density of 1,500 hens per hectare.

"After an exhaustive examination of the evidence and a lengthy process of public consultation by Treasury, it was decided that this argument could not be substantiated.

"However, that perspective was considered and addressed. Farmers will now be required to display their stocking density on pack. So, when you buy an egg you will be able to choose between stocking densities if that is important to you.

"The requirement for stocking density to be displayed on pack is consistent with labelling changes championed by consumer group CHOICE in a June 2015 report. It's difficult to understand why they keep moving the goal posts and adding unnecessary conjecture to this process.

"For anyone interested in better understanding how food labelling works, the NSW Food Authority has launched a Food Labelling Hub which provides consumers with unbiased information about a range of products. Accurate information about free range eggs can be found there."

EFA is a national peak body representing the interests of egg farmers in each state of Australia which represents 80% of egg production. For anyone who has an interest in understanding egg farming, please contact John Dunn.

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NSW Food Labelling Hub: http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/foodsafetyandyou/food-labelling