

### TALKING POINTS 3

#### EGG PRODUCTION SYSTEMS (CAGE, BARN AND FREE RANGE)

- Australian egg farmers produce 19 million eggs daily to feed Aussie families - from a national flock of 21 million hens
- This equates to a \$1.8 billion injection into Australia's economy
- There are three main egg production systems in Australia: (cage, barn and free range)
- Egg Farmers of Australia represent all farmers and does not endorse one farming method over another.
- A mix of all three farming methods is needed so that customers have a choice in the type and cost of eggs that they purchase and eat

#### Here is a comparison of the three farming methods:

##### Cage Eggs

- Caged eggs are the lowest cost protein available
- They are the cleanest eggs, with the lowest incident of disease
- Antibiotics are not needed and the mortality rate is the lowest of any production system
- 88% of the world's egg production is from caged eggs
- Around 50% of all eggs sold in supermarkets are cage

- Compared to barn and free range, cage egg farming: has the lowest incidence of disease and cannibalism.
- Cage farming offers the highest protection from predators, and has the lowest need for vaccination.
- Although consumer demand for free range eggs has risen over the past decade: cage eggs remain the most affordable and sustainable protein source for many Australian families.

### **Barn Eggs**

- Barn laid eggs are a medium cost egg.
- Routine washing of the eggs is required.
- There is a medium risk to disease and antibiotics are needed
- Mortality is low, and cannibalism is at a medium rate.
- The carbon footprint is medium in comparison to low for caged eggs.

### **Free Range Eggs**

- Free Range Eggs cost the most to produce and are more likely to cost the most at supermarkets.
- Egg hygiene is essential, eggs must be washed.
- Antibiotics are needed when free range farming hens.
- The mortality of a free range flock is higher than any other farming method.
- Cannibalism among free range hens is the highest of any farming method.
- The free range carbon footprint is the highest of any other production system (ie: higher than for cage or barn methods.)