



Association of California
Egg Farmers

California Hens

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California's Egg Industry

*Committed to the
Health & Safety
of Consumers & Hens*



California's Egg Industry : Fifth Largest

- Nearly 20 million egg-laying hens in state
- 4.9 billion eggs annually
- Vast majority of egg farms are family owned
- Generate about \$1 billion in annual sales



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California Egg Farmers Committed To Health & Safety of Consumers

- Vast majority of state's egg farmers comply with the *most stringent egg and animal safety standards* in the country
- California Egg Quality Assurance Plan assures:
 - Clean chicks, bio-security, sanitation, vaccination, pest control & best practices education
- Winner of Vice Presidential Hammer Award for establishing program to provide safer eggs for consumers



California Egg Farmers Committed to Health & Safety of Their Hens

- 95% comply with *comprehensive animal welfare guidelines* of the United Egg Producers Certified Animal Welfare Program
 - Developed and maintained by independent scientific advisory board
 - Incorporates all aspects of bird health and welfare: **F**eed, **L**ight, **A**ir, **W**ater, **S**pace, **S**anitation
 - The egg industry was the first livestock industry in the country to implement comprehensive welfare guidelines
- Egg-laying hens are provided with a nutritionist, veterinarian daily housekeeping and modern housing systems



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Housing Systems Protect Consumer & Hen Health

- California farmers use four hen-housing systems
 - **Colony housing:** Large structures with perches, nesting boxes & more floor space than modern cages
 - **Modern cage:** Used by 95% of California farmers; Caged indoors in multi-level structures
 - **Cage-free:** Enclosed barn or structure
 - **Free-range:** Access to outdoors



2008: Proposition 2 Approved by California Voters

- Wins 63.5% of the vote
- Humane Society of the United States sponsored
- First time egg-laying hens on a ballot
- Imposes vague mandates on housing for egg-laying hens
- Farmers must comply by 2015
- Criminal penalties apply

YES! ON PROP 2
STOP Animal Cruelty

Californians
for **SAFE** Food

NO on Prop2.com



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Association of California Egg Farmers Advocating for the Industry

- **Formed in the wake of Proposition 2 to help farmers grappling with initiative**
- Advocates on state policy issues affecting the industry
- Goal is to ensure the continued California production of fresh & affordable eggs that meet food safety & animal care standards consumers expect



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Proposition 2 Challenges



Proposition 2's Vague Mandates For Hen Housing

- **Proposition 2 says hens can't be confined for all or the majority of the day in a manner that prevents:**
 - Lying down, standing up, & fully extending...limbs
 - Turning around freely...which means...
- Fully spread both wings without touching the side of an enclosure or other hens
- Turn around without touching the sides of the enclosure



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Determination of Space Use by Laying Hens

CDFA Commissioned Study

- 2011 Dr. Joy Mench, UC Davis Animal Welfare scientist issues Final Report
- Study focuses on hen behaviors and space requirement to perform behaviors
- Recognizes that a variety of factors can affect how much space hens need
- Space required per hen varies with number of hens in a confined area, since they do not all flap their wings at once, and is estimated to be between 90-91 inches to perform Prop 2 behaviors when there are 60 Hy-Line hens in a cage.

Vague Language Presents Major Hurdles for Implementation

- Farmers need to know the answers to the following questions:
 - What is the size and dimension for a cage to comply?
 - Does each enclosure need to be specifically tailored to the specific size of each hen?
 - How will Proposition 2 be enforced?
 - How will farmers obtain financing to overhaul existing housing systems if they don't know the rules?



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Fines & Jail Time for Violating Proposition 2

- If they violate Proposition 2, farmers and their employees face:
 - Fines of up to \$1,000
 - Imprisonment in county jail for up to 180 days
- Will the criminal penalties be applied for each hen/or each day of violation, or the entire egg operation?





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Post Proposition 2



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Changes in Agricultural Industry

- Animal livestock groups are acutely aware of the need to work together to address animal welfare issues
- Greater education efforts are needed to educate the general public about the livestock community in general



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Proposition 2 Sparks Changes Outside California

- **Michigan** enacted law to phase out veal crates, battery cages and gestation crates
- **Ohio** created the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board
- **Idaho** introduced legislation to create the Idaho Livestock Care Standards Board
- **Manitoba** reached a compromise with the Winnipeg Humane Society to use enriched housing for hens
- **UEP/HSUS Agreement** – Federal proposal to enact a national standard for enriched colony housing with a transition timeline of 18 years except in California
- 2028 49 states must comply
- 2015 California must comply





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Next Steps



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California Egg Farmers Need Clear Standards

- Initiative text needs to be clarified
- California egg farmers need clear guidelines and standards for housing
- California egg farmers are willing to take the risk to invest in Proposition 2 compliant housing once guidelines are clear
- California egg farmers should benefit from the same timeline and compliance dates as its fellow egg farmers in the other 49 states
- Many California egg farmers fear that there may not be sufficient in-state production to meet demand as of January 1, 2015



Summary

- California's family farmers produce healthy and affordable eggs for California
- California has comprehensive animal welfare and egg quality guidelines
- California voters mandated changes in the state's agricultural practices with the passage of Proposition 2.
- CDFA commissioned a study "Determination of Space Use by Laying Hens" – Dr. Joy Mench – University of California, Davis
- California farmers need clear guidelines to avoid criminal penalties
- Without clear guidelines California egg production may move out-of-state or simply close down

