



The Hon. Rick Mazza MLC
Member for the Agricultural Region
Parliament of Western Australia
Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party



Media Statement

March 2, 2018

Conventional cages need to stay

Agricultural Region MLC Rick Mazza of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party has stood up for the egg industry in Western Australia and its consumers by supporting the conventional cage system as the Australian Animal Welfare National Standards and Guidelines for Poultry public consultation period came to a close last Monday.

Animal Health Australia received over 165,000 submissions through the public consultation period on the subject of poultry welfare.

In his submission, Mr Mazza supported the drafted National Standards and Guidelines (including the retention of conventional cages) as they provide a balance between animal welfare, practicality and consumer freedom of choice.

Earlier in the week, Mr Mazza took the opportunity to meet with the egg industry, visiting a number of conventional, furnished, barn and free range egg production system farms in the State.

“Conventional cages allow for good animal welfare through control of environment (ventilation, temperature), food, water, predation, pests and diseases whilst providing a safe and affordable protein source in terms of eggs and chicken meat to the Australian community,” Mr Mazza said.

“A lot more research needs to be done before a ban or phasing out of conventional cages is to be entertained. Science needs to focus on holistic animal welfare within a production system.”

Mr Mazza pointed to the higher risk of disease spread between poultry and wild birds on free range systems, as well as the financial burden that a phase out of conventional cages would have on businesses.

“I support the Animal Welfare National Standards and Guidelines process which should produce a final document that takes into consideration animal welfare, practicality and cost to industry while meeting community expectations,” Mr Mazza said.

“Consumers should have the freedom and the right to purchase eggs from a production system that suits their needs, budget and personal preferences.

“It would be inappropriate to take away a production system based on a perceived notion that consumers do not support conventional cages when the majority of eggs are in fact produced using the conventional cage system and consumers are preferring to purchase those eggs for a variety of personal reasons such as food safety and budget constraints.

“I hope the WA State Government will stand up and support the agricultural industry.”

Ends

Office I, 1139 Hay Street
West Perth WA 6005
Website: www.rickmazza.com.au

Phone: 08 9481 6070 (Freecall 1800 781 900)
Fax: 08 9481 6071
Email: rick.mazza@mp.wa.gov.au