

CAGE-FREE SYSTEMS FOR LAYING HENS

FIT FOR PURPOSE

Cage-free pullet rearing

- Use similar systems for rearing and laying
- Provide dark brooders

Adequate space

- Provide at least 1.2 sq ft of usable space per bird
- Eliminate use of cages, including those found in combination systems

Functional areas

- Adequate perches and ramps
- Nestboxes: 1 per every 5 hens
- Good quality litter covering at least one third of the floor
- Enrichments: straw bales, alfalfa blocks, pecking substrates

Adequate lighting and air quality

- Uninterrupted dark period of 6 hours
- Gradual transitions between light and dark periods
- Ammonia levels less than 15 ppm

Water and feed

- Nipple drinkers for better litter management
- Mash feed for reduced feather pecking

Animal welfare indicators

- Key indicators: disease incidence, keel bone fractures, feather cover, flock behavior, mortality

FIT FOR FUTURE

Target-setting

- Transitioning to 100% cage-free systems by 2025
- Establishing incremental goals for completion
- Matching supply with shifting demand

Transparency

- Mapping your entire supply chain
- Implementing robust third party auditing

Communication

- Bringing consumers on your cage-free journey
- Providing clear and transparent labeling
- Reporting regularly and publicly on progress

Sustainability

- Integrating your animal welfare policy with your wider sustainability agenda

