



Search

GO

Activism

[Guide to Becoming an Activist](#)

[Join PETA's Activist Network](#)

Animals in Entertainment

Companion Animals

Cruel Science

Fishing / Wildlife

Skins

Vegetarianism

[Free Vegetarian Starter Kit](#)

[Order Vegetarian Starter Kit Business Cards](#)

Factsheets

Victory for Hens: Battery Cages to Be Banned by 2012

The European Commission has published a new report confirming the banning of battery cages in 2012, despite farmers' calls for postponement. This follows hot on the heels of increased public and media pressure after television coverage of the conditions egg laying hens are forced to endure. The European Commission have declared there will be no postponement and the 2012 ban is here to stay. The question now is whether other key EU member countries ignore this report, try to overturn it or even call to have it scrapped.

In 1999, the European Union judged that battery cages are so cruel they should be banned across the EU and passed legislation, known as the Laying Hens Directive, requiring the egg industry to stop confining hens in battery cages by 2012. Not surprisingly, members of the egg industry and some EU member states were lobbying to overturn or delay the ban because they mistakenly believed it would be economically damaging. In truth, it costs only pennies more to produce cage-free eggs instead of battery eggs, and surveys show that most consumers are willing to pay more for cage-free eggs. There was no need to push for more time as 12 years is more than enough to act upon the directive, with nine of those years already gone.



Currently, each year in the EU around 300 million hens are crammed into filthy wire-mesh battery cages stacked tier upon tier in huge warehouses. Several birds are crowded into each cage, packed so tightly together that they are unable to spread even one wing. The birds suffer crippling leg injuries from standing on wire cage floors 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until they are killed. Their bones are brittle both from forced inactivity and because calcium is leached from their bodies to produce eggs. Many more hens suffer from painful injuries when they're ripped from their cages, thrown into transport crates, and shipped to slaughter. Without even a shred of straw for comfort, all of the hen's natural instincts – including nesting, perching, scratching and pecking – are denied. These birds never get the chance to breathe fresh air, feel the sun on their backs, build nests, raise their young, or do anything else that is natural and important to them.

What You Can Do:

The best thing you can do is go vegetarian and to stop eating eggs. The 2012 ban on battery cages is an incredible step for egg laying hens, but it unfortunately does not mean that chickens will not be unnaturally confined for eggs and there is still much work to be done. Over 800 million chickens are still being slaughtered every year in the UK alone for human consumption. These intelligent creatures are kept in barren, cramped and filthy conditions and are killed at just a few months old, having been bred to grow so large that many of them can barely stand.

Whatever the reason, there's never been a better time to cut the meat out of your diet. With the huge selection of delicious vegetarian meats available - everything from faux chicken nuggets and mock mince to veggie bacon - there's no excuse not to go vegetarian. Make the switch to a compassionate, healthy lifestyle today by taking the Veg Pledge. While you're at it, be sure to [forward this pledge](#) to your friends and family members and ask them to go vegetarian too. You can also click to order your [FREE Vegetarian Starter Kit](#) today.

Sign This Petition

I want to eat better, feel better, and stop supporting cruelty to chickens, pigs, cows, and other animals raised for food. By signing my name, I pledge to explore vegetarianism.

Signed by:
[Your name]

E-Mail: *

First Name: *

Last Name: *

Sign me up for PETA Europe E-News and other special announcements

* Required Field

By signing up here and giving us your details, we're taking that as acknowledgment that you've read and agreed to our [privacy policy](#).

Sign Now