



## Where Do Eggs Come From?

About 245 million hens are raised to lay eggs in the U.S., and 98 percent of them spend their lives in battery cages, stacked tier upon tier in huge warehouses. Confined to cages with up to 11 birds to a cage, they have less floor space than the size of this piece of paper—that's not enough room to turn around or even spread one wing. The wire mesh of the cage rubs the hens' feathers off, causes painful blisters, and cripples the birds' feet. Day-old male chicks are killed (usually in a high-speed grinder) because they are worthless to the egg industry since they will never lay eggs.

To prevent stress-induced behavior caused by extreme overcrowding, such as hens' pecking their cagemates to death, farmers cut off the ends of the hens' beaks with hot blades (without painkillers). Many hens die of shock; others suffer lifelong pain.

Although chickens can live into their teens, hens raised for eggs soon become exhausted, and their egg production begins to wane when they are about 2 years old. When this happens, they are slaughtered for food or simply buried alive.

### What's a Chicken Ever Done Wrong?

Scientists consider chickens to be as intelligent as cats and dogs, and just like cats and dogs, they feel pain. When in natural surroundings, chickens form friendships, recognize one another, love their young, and enjoy dustbathing, making nests, roosting in trees, and more. On factory farms, however, chickens are denied all these activities.



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### Eggs Are Healthy, Right?

Hens are fed antibiotics and other drugs. They are prone to bacterial infections and exposed to pesticides. That doesn't sound too healthy. Eggs are loaded with saturated fat and cholesterol. Eating eggs may also increase your risk of heart attacks, diabetes, and other diseases. Still not convinced? The practice of recycling manure, dead chickens, feathers, and condemned animal parts back into animals' feed is also believed to spread diseases.



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### Eggs Hurt the Environment

The large amount of manure produced by factory farms is harmful to local ecosystems, as is the release of ammonia gas. A farm of 1 million hens produces about 250,000 pounds of wet manure each day. Yuck! That's a lot of poop, and lots of it ends up in your water supply.



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### "Free Range" Does Not Equal Cruelty-Free

There are no regulations whatsoever for "free-range" eggs. In reality, hens may be stuffed into a barn and never get near a door, or the weather may be too cold for a door to ever be opened. Most free-range hens still do not have enough room to stretch their wings, they are often de-beaked, and they are still painfully slaughtered.



The bottom line is that free-range animals are not free. If you wouldn't trust farmers to "humanely" raise and slaughter dogs, why trust them with the well-being of chickens?

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**One egg equals 34 hours of pain and suffering for a hen.  
Please don't buy eggs. Go vegan.**

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