



EGG PRODUCERS FEDERATION
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The Editor

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I write in response to a Letter to the Editor, entitled '*Farm fresh*' eggs?, written by May Maudler of Auckland. While I appreciate that Ms. Maudler has taken the time to write, there are some factual inaccuracies in her letter which I wish to address.

Firstly, Ms. Maudler states that free-range eggs have "very rich-coloured yolks, which must mean the hens are eating some grass." While yolk colour may have been an indication of the production system type in the past, this is not necessarily true now. The modern egg production industry is designed to produce a specific product for consumers based on their preferences. This means that, as most consumers prefer a darker yellow yolk, the hen's feed is tailored to produce this kind of yolk colour. This is true of all three production systems – free-range, barn and cage.

Secondly, Ms. Maudler queries why the suppliers of eggs from caged production systems do not label their cartons as such. She will be happy to hear that, last year, the major cage egg producers in New Zealand voluntarily agreed to label eggs from caged production systems as "cage eggs", and these can be seen in supermarkets today.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Brooks

Executive Director