

Free Range Egg Industry Unites to Protect Consumers Interests

The need to protect consumer interests while meeting increased demand for free range eggs was the subject of the first ever major gathering of Free Range Egg producers in Auckland last week. The meeting focused on how the industry can ensure consumers are provided with safe and high quality free range eggs now and in the future.

Michael Brooks, Executive Director of the Egg Producers Federation said “Our free range industry members are dedicated to protecting the safety and quality of free range eggs and the well-being of their flocks. This is particularly important given the increasing demand for free range eggs. In a drive to meet this demand our members want to ensure that standards are not compromised. “

“Free range egg production requires a high level of knowledge and a strong commitment to best practice. This ensures that any risks to the health and welfare of the hens and the safety and quality of the product are minimised”

The meeting discussed the entire spectrum of free range egg production from rearing practices, feed, welfare, nutrition, egg production and handling, as well as the marketing of the free range offer. In the spirit of cooperation large operators learnt from smaller ones and small operators got to hear first hand industry experience and expertise from the bigger players.

Mr Brooks said, “The Egg Producers Federation is committed to ensuring that consumers have access to quality eggs from across all egg production systems – free range, barn and cage . The combined knowledge and expertise shared at this meeting, shows us that the free range sector of the egg industry is committed to delivering on this objective. “

Over half of the country’s free range egg producers, both large and small attended. There are over 300,000 free range hens currently in New Zealand. The forum was also attended by associated businesses such as hatcheries, chick rearers and facilities manufacturers.

Guest speakers included leading poultry Vet Dr Neil Christensen, Senior Animal Nutritionist, from Massey University, Don Thomas and NZFSA risk management expert Su Langdon.

Ends

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