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NZ Egg Farmers Welcome Findings of Independent Welfare Study

New Zealand egg producers today welcomed the release by MAF of the country's most comprehensive investigation into hen welfare.

The detailed science-based assessment was commissioned in 2007 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). It compares hen welfare in the three key egg production systems, including cage, barn and free range.

The Egg Producers Federation of New Zealand (EPF) says the findings illustrate that each of the egg production systems have their benefits and challenges.

EPF Executive Director Michael Brooks says this thorough and independent study received the full cooperation of egg farmers throughout the country.

"This approach is the best possible way to identify and implement continued improvements in hen welfare," he says.

"The report confirms that good farming and management practices are a key factor in animal welfare, in every production system."

MAF commissioned the welfare report to assist the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) in its review of the Animal Welfare (Layer Hen) Code of Welfare.

The NAWAC review will be undertaken later this year.

"This report is an ideal launch pad for NAWAC.

"We have always maintained the best approach to welfare is a science-based approach.

"This research presents the facts and the science. It may challenge common myths and misconceptions.

"But it will be of enormous value to NAWAC as it considers future standards."

Michael Brooks

Executive Director

Egg Producers Federation of N.Z.

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