

producers using traditional battery cage systems. However, according to the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, Markos Kyprianou, there is sufficient scientific and economic support for the ban on conventional battery cages to go ahead and he urges operators: “to start phasing out the use of these cages as soon as possible so that there is full compliance with the EU ban by the deadline 2012”.

Using the findings of one study, submitted by Agra CEAS, the EC estimated that changing from unenriched cages to enriched cages might increase the cost of each egg by less than €0.01, when given a current average egg cost of €0.09. The Commission’s view, however, after considering the findings of both the 2005 and 2006 EUROBAROMETER surveys, is that consumers rate animal welfare highly and will be willing to pay more for eggs sourced from more animal welfare-friendly production systems. Included within the actions recommended by the EC is a drive towards promoting high animal welfare standards within the EU as a marketing and competitive advantage. They advise using a number of mechanisms:

- Sensitise both public and private sector to give priority to the support of scientific investments, information and education in this area
- Promotion of information campaigns on rearing systems set out in the framework given by the marketing standards for eggs
- Ensure co-operation between stakeholders across the supply chain
- Examine the possibility of creating a general EU framework to allow animal welfare labelling on the basis of welfare indicators and certification schemes valid at European level

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Various Systems of Rearing Laying Hens in Particular Those Covered by Directive 1999/74/EC (January 2008). A4, 11 pages. European Commission, Brussels, Belgium. http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/farm/laying_hens_en.htm.

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European Union Regulation (EC) No 1523/2007 Covering Use of Cat and Dog Fur in the EU

A regulation banning the production, marketing, import and export of both dog and cat fur throughout the European Union (EU) was approved in December 2007 and will apply from December 2008. Over recent years European consumers have increasingly raised strong objections to both the farming of dogs and cats for their fur and to the possibility that they may unknowingly purchase unlabelled products made from dog or cat fur. Consequently, 15 member states brought legislation into force, at a national level, to address consumer concerns including: prohibiting the rearing of cats and dogs for fur purposes, banning the production and/or import of products containing cat or dog fur and instigating specific labelling requirements. It was thought that variations between national laws would be likely to hamper the free movement

of legitimate fur products within the EU therefore regulations addressing these concerns, and applicable throughout the EU were thought appropriate.

Although these regulations have been introduced largely to prevent disruption to the internal market for other fur trade within the European Union, they also tackle welfare concerns raised in relation to dog and cat fur farming practices. Dog and cat furs are principally produced in non-EU countries and the methods of production and slaughter have been questioned following evidence received by the Commission of widescale mistreatment of cats and dogs being bred for their skin and fur. Markos Kyprianou, Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, stated that: “The message that we have received from EU consumers has been loud and clear. They do not find it acceptable to farm cats and dogs for their fur, nor do they want products containing such fur sold on the European market”.

European Union Regulation (EC) No 1523/2007 Covering Use of Cat and Dog Fur in the EU (December 2007). A4, 4 pages. The European Commission, Brussels, Belgium. information and a copy of the Regulation is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/fur_cats_dogs_en.htm.

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Animal Welfare (Leg-hold Traps) Order 2007 in New Zealand

Leg-hold traps are metal devices with sprung jaws designed to catch and hold an animal by a limb when triggered. They can be used legally in New Zealand to trap possums, ferrets, stoats and feral cats. The humaneness of leg-hold traps has been questioned, however, with regard to the degree of injury and distress caused to trapped animals, the possibility of trapped animals escaping in an injured state and the suffering that may be experienced by animals whilst held in traps. There are also concerns that non-target, domestic or endangered animals may be caught and injured.

In view of the above, and following consultation, the New Zealand Government has developed new legislation: Animal Welfare (Leg-hold Traps) Order 2007. These regulations came into effect from January this year and cover the sale and use of all leg-hold traps in New Zealand. A number of restrictions are outlined and will be phased in over a three-year period, including: prohibited use of all leg-hold traps within 150 m of a residence; a ban on all long-spring and double-coil leg-hold traps larger than 10.5 cm (size 1.5) from 2009 and a ban on all non-padded, double-coil, 10.5 cm leg-hold traps from 2011.

There are certain circumstances, however, in which approval may be sought to use or sell restricted traps, including situations in which no viable alternatives exist, or it is in the public interests, such as for biosecurity, conservation, public health or animal health reasons.

Animal Welfare (Leg-hold Traps) Order 2007 in New Zealand (November 2007). A4, 5 pages. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, New Zealand. <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/animal-welfare/req/traps/legholdtraps>.

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