



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Cage Reform

Consultation on a proposal to ban the keeping of
laying hens, pullets and breeder layers in cages

12 January 2026



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



Department of
Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We're responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy, sustaining thriving rural communities and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

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Contents

Part 1 – Introduction	4
Scope	6
Audience	6
Responding to the consultation	7
After the consultation	7
Part 2 – Consultation	8
Proposal	8
Impact of proposal	9
Consultation questions.....	10
Confidentiality and data protection	10
About you or your organisation.....	10
Animal welfare	12
Policy proposal	12
Analytical questions.....	13

Part 1 – Introduction

The UK Government, the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive are committed to the welfare of animals at all stages of life. We want to build on and maintain our world-leading record on animal health and welfare.

This is a joint consultation on proposals for regulatory welfare reforms to ban the use of cages in the laying hen sector and is being issued by Defra on behalf of the UK Government, the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive. The Scottish Government conducted their own [consultation in April 2024](#) and have since confirmed they want to collaborate on pursuing cage reform on a UK basis.

In England, the drive to higher standards for farm animals is being delivered through the [Animal Health & Welfare Pathway](#). The Pathway is providing financial support to eligible poultry, pig, sheep and cattle keepers on a voluntary basis to continually improve the health, welfare and productivity of their animals, including supporting farmers in transitioning away from the use of enriched 'colony' cages. To date, eligible poultry keepers have been able to access grants that co-fund purchases of new equipment and technology alongside a grant to update existing housing, or build new, cage-free housing.

Similarly, in Wales, the Sustainable Farming Scheme has animal health and welfare as a key component. Farmers will receive public money to meet higher animal health and welfare standards.

[The Welfare of Farmed Animals \(England\) Regulations 2007](#), [The Welfare of Farmed Animals \(Wales\) Regulations 2007](#), the [Welfare of Farmed Animals \(Scotland\) Regulations 2010](#) and the [Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2012](#) set down detailed conditions under which farmed animals¹ and, more specifically, all laying hens² must be kept.

In 1999, conventional, 'battery' cages³ for laying hens (for keepers with 350 or more birds) were banned throughout the European Union, including in the UK, but with a 12-year transition period to 1 January 2012 before the ban came into full effect. Due to the small size (area per hen of 550cm² – less than an A4 piece of paper), and barren environment with no litter, perches or separate or secluded nest area, conventional 'battery' cages severely compromised the welfare of laying hens. However, the ban on conventional 'battery' cages targeted commercial scale producers and so keepers with fewer than 350

¹ The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations define a 'farmed animal' as an animal bred or kept for the production of food, wool or skin or other farming purposes, but not including -

(a) a fish, reptile or amphibian; (b) an animal whilst at, or solely intended for use in, a competition, show or cultural or sporting event or activity; (c) an experimental or laboratory animal; or (d) an animal living in the wild.

² The term 'laying hen' means a hen of the species *Gallus gallus* which has reached laying maturity and is kept for the production of eggs not intended for hatching.

³ Conventional 'battery' cages are described in [The Welfare of Farmed Animals \(England\) Regulations 2007](#) ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)) and equivalent legislation in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

laying hens were excluded from national legislation which bans conventional ‘battery’ cages.

There are currently four different types of production systems for keepers with 350 or more laying hens: enriched ‘colony’ cages⁴ (indoor), barn (indoor), free-range, and organic. Enriched ‘colony’ cages are significantly larger than conventional ‘battery’ cages, with typically 40-80 birds in each cage. They are legally required to have separate nest areas, litter and perches. Pullets⁵ housed in caged systems as adults, are reared in cages to ensure that the two environments are matched as far as possible to reduce stress and the likelihood of injurious pecking.

Whilst enriched ‘colony’ cages are a significant welfare improvement on conventional ‘battery’ cages, they do not fully provide for the physical and behavioural needs of the birds. Laying hens in enriched ‘colony’ cages do not have full freedom to express normal behaviours, one of the Five Freedoms developed by the Farm Animal Welfare Council (now known as the Animal Welfare Committee). The enriched ‘colony’ cage system restricts a hen’s choice, preventing access to the ground, other levels and limiting the ability to run, flap her wings, dustbathe, or forage.

Our proposal to ban cages includes the use of combination (‘combi’) housing. Combi housing is a multi-tiered system which allow birds to roam when the doors are opened but is a caged system when the doors are closed and thus confines the birds. These systems are already not permitted under the egg industry’s British Lion Code of Practice. Although membership is voluntary, over 90% of UK eggs are currently produced to the British Lion Code Scheme and the ‘code’ covers the entire production chain.

Breeder layers and pullets are not currently within scope of the cage requirements in the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007, and their Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish equivalents. Under voluntary farm assurance scheme rules, producers are not permitted to keep breeder layers in cages. We, therefore, assume that the impact of a ban on cages for breeder layer producers will be minimal.

In considering how best to improve the welfare of laying hens, pullets and breeder layers (in units containing any number of birds), the key options proposed in the accompanying consultation stage de minimis assessment are:

- option 1 – a 2027 ban on the instalment of new enriched ‘colony’ cages and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers, leading to a 2032 ban on enriched ‘colony’ cage production and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers. **This is the preferred option as we consider that it most effectively balances improvements in bird welfare and ensures sustainability for the UK laying hen sector**

⁴ Enriched ‘colony’ cages are described in The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 (legislation.gov.uk) and equivalent legislation in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

⁵ The term ‘pullet’ is used to describe birds during their rearing period and at transfer to the laying house when no eggs have been laid by the flock. As soon as the first egg has been laid in the flock it becomes a laying hen flock.

- option 2 – a 2027 ban on the instalment of new enriched ‘colony’ cages and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers, leading to a 2037 ban on enriched ‘colony’ cage production and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers
- option 3 – a 2030 ban on the instalment of new enriched ‘colony’ cages and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers, leading to a 2034 ban on enriched ‘colony’ cage production and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers
- option 4 – a complete ban on enriched ‘colony’ cage production and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers in 2030

Options 1- 4 also include a ban on conventional ‘battery’ cages for laying hen units with fewer than 350 birds from 2027, which are currently exempt from the conventional ‘battery’ cage ban. This would result in a ban on all cages throughout the entire laying hen sector, including small-scale commercial producers and hobby-keepers.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the preferred policy proposal - Option 1.

The consultation invites comments on the impact of the proposal on the welfare of laying hens, pullets and breeder layers; the laying hen industry; consumers; the environment and trade. The consultation will help determine the governments’ policy in this area.

Scope

This policy proposal would ban the use of all cages for laying hens, pullets and breeder layers throughout the entire laying hen sector; this includes laying hen units with fewer than 350 birds.

Animal welfare is a devolved policy responsibility. The proposals outlined in this consultation relate to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Audience

Anyone may respond to the consultation. Those who may have an interest include:

- academic institutions
- animal welfare organisations
- consumers
- egg packers
- egg processors
- egg producers
- farm assurance schemes
- farming organisations
- food manufacturers
- food services (for example, restaurant, café, catering service, school, hospital, cafeteria)
- genetics companies
- laying hen breeders
- local authorities (LAs)

- pullet rearers
- retailers (for example, supermarket, grocery store, convenience store, online food retailer)
- trade bodies
- the veterinary profession

Responding to the consultation

This consultation starts on 12 January 2026 and closes on 9 March 2026. Any responses received after this date will not be analysed.

Please respond to this consultation using the [Citizen Space consultation hub](#). If you are unable to use Citizen Space, you can download the consultation documents and return your response by email to Laying-Hen-Cage-Reform@defra.gov.uk or in writing to:

Laying Hen Cage Consultation, Farm Animal Welfare Team, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Seacole Building 2nd Floor, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

Please note, any responses sent by post **must** have arrived at the above address by the closing date of the consultation (9 March 2026) to be counted. Any responses received after this date will not be analysed. To ensure your response is included in the analysis, please consider responding electronically, either online via Citizen Space or by email. We recognise that respondents may choose to use some standardised text to inform their response. Campaigns are when organisations (or individuals) coordinate responses across their membership or support base, often by suggesting a set of wording for respondents to use. Campaign responses are usually very similar or identical to each other. For this consultation, campaign responses may be analysed separately to other responses to ensure the breadth of views received can be summarised effectively and efficiently. All campaign responses will be taken into account in the final analysis of public views and campaigns help provide an indication of the strength of feeling on an issue. The preferred route for all respondents to provide their views (including where a response is based on a campaign) is via the Citizen Space consultation hub.

After the consultation

We will summarise all responses once the consultation window is complete. This summary will include a list of names of organisations that respond but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

This consultation is in line with the UK Government's Consultation Principles. **Please note that a consultation period of 8 weeks applies.** More information on the UK Government's Consultation Principles can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>.

Part 2 – Consultation

Proposal

The UK Government, the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive are committed to improving the welfare of laying hens, pullets and breeder layers by addressing the issue of confinement, so that birds have the freedom to exhibit their normal behaviours. We propose to ban enriched 'colony' cage production for laying hens and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers, and the remaining conventional 'battery' cages for laying hen units with fewer than 350 birds. There are only three registered premises with fewer than 350 birds still using conventional 'battery' cages.

In the last decade or so, there has been a gradual shift in focus from the public and animal welfare organisations towards farming systems which do not closely confine animals. A [2020 YouGov survey](#) found that 88% of the British public consider using cages in farming is cruel and 77% of those surveyed supported a complete ban on the use of cages in farming. More [recent polling](#) reports that 94% of the public believe that keeping hens in enriched cages is unacceptable. In 2019, an 'End the Cage Age' [petition](#) calling on the UK Government to ban all cages for farm animals resulted in over 100,000 signatures, triggering a [debate in March 2020](#). In August 2021, a [second petition](#) was started calling for the UK Government to legislate to 'End the Cage Age' and also reached enough signatures to trigger a [debate in June 2022](#). Again, in February 2025 a [third petition](#) to 'End the use of cages and crates for all farmed animals' was launched, reached over 100,000 signatures in April 2025, and was [debated in June 2025](#).

A similar 'End the Cage Age' European Citizens' Initiative was launched across Europe and was supported by over one million citizens across the EU in 2018. In June 2025, the EU Commission published a [Call for Evidence](#) on their initiative to modernise EU legislation including the phasing out of cages which closed on 16 July. Since then, the Commission has launched a [public consultation](#) on on-farm welfare including on phasing out the use of cages and aims for the first legislative proposals on cage reform to be announced in [2026](#). In the EU, Luxembourg and Austria have already banned all cages for laying hens, and Sweden has announced it is cage-free but without a legislated ban. In addition, Czechia, Slovakia, Slovenia, France, Denmark and Germany have either banned the installation of new cages and/or are already phasing out existing cages.

Consumer demand for laying hen systems which do not confine the birds is reflected in the market split in method of production in the UK. In the third quarter of [2025](#), shell eggs produced from hens in enriched 'colony' systems accounted for 17% of the total throughput, with free-range eggs accounting for 71% of the total. In 2024, annual free-range production was 68% of egg packing throughput.

In 2016, as a result of this gradual shift towards non-cage production, all the major supermarkets pledged that they would stop selling shell eggs from hens kept in enriched 'colony' cages by 2025 and some have already done so. In addition, some retailers have extended the 2025 pledge to the eggs used in their processed products, such as powder or liquid egg. In 2016, 41% of eggs in the retail sector were from caged laying hens. This had fallen to 21% in [2024](#) and has continued to fall in 2025. Whilst the retailer pledge is

welcome, it only goes so far and will not, on its own, raise welfare standards across the whole of the laying hen industry. Government intervention is needed to address the welfare of laying hens producing eggs for those retailers who haven't signed the pledge and for the food service and egg processing markets to ensure a complete ban.

We are now seeking views on our policy proposal to end caged egg production in the UK. The proposal aims to improve animal welfare standards in a way which is also sustainable and economically viable for the UK egg industry.

Following detailed consideration of a number of potential policy options, which are described in the accompanying consultation stage de minimis assessment, option 1 is our preferred policy option. This option seeks to achieve the policy objective by balancing improvements in the welfare of laying hens and pullets, whilst ensuring sustainability for UK laying hen producers and pullet rearers. A 5-year transition period to phase out the use of any remaining enriched 'colony' cages and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers seeks to give egg producers an appropriate time period to move to non-cage systems in the UK.

The proposal would also ban any conventional 'battery' cages which remain in use for laying hen units with fewer than 350 birds. This would result in a ban on all cages throughout the entire laying hen sector, including small-scale commercial producers and hobby-keepers.

The policy proposal is to ban the use of all cages across the entire laying hen sector, and the preferred policy option is the following phased approach:

- From 2027, a ban on the building or bringing into service for the first time any enriched 'colony' cage system for the keeping of laying hens (including those in establishments with fewer than 350 birds) and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers;
- From 2027, a ban on the use of existing conventional 'battery' cages for the keeping of laying hens in establishments with fewer than 350 birds; and
- From 2032, a ban on the use of existing enriched 'colony' cages for the keeping of laying hens (including those in establishments with fewer than 350 birds) and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers.

Impact of proposal

A consultation stage de minimis assessment accompanies this consultation document. It has been prepared to measure the potential impacts on businesses as a result of the proposal to introduce changes to farm animal welfare legislation to ban the use of cages for laying hens, pullets and breeder layers.

Consultation questions

Confidentiality and data protection

Complaints procedure

All complaints about the consultation process should be submitted to the Consultation Coordinator via email: consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk. To meet with Defra's service standard, all complaints will be responded to within 15 days of receipt.

Using and sharing your information

How we use your personal data is set out in the [consultation and call for evidence exercise privacy notice](#) with the following changes:

a. Who we share your personal data with

The proposals outlined in this consultation relate to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and therefore information provided in response, including personal information, will be shared with relevant policy officials in the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive.

Other information

This consultation is being conducted in line with the [Cabinet Office Consultation Principles](#).

About you or your organisation

1.a) Would you like your response to be confidential (required)?

- Yes
- No

1.b) If you answered 'Yes' to this question, please give your reason(s): [Multiple line answer component]

2. What is your name?

[Single line answer component]

3. What is your email address?

[Email address answer component]

4. Are you responding as an individual or an organisation (required)? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Individual – You are responding with your personal views, rather than as an official representative of a business, business association or other organisation
- Organisation – You are responding in an official capacity as a representative of a business, business association or other organisation

5. If you are responding as an individual in Question 4, where are you based/if you are responding as an organisation in Question 4, where is your organisation's headquarters (required)? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland
- Not UK-based (Europe)
- Outside Europe

6. If you are responding as an organisation in Question 4, what is the name of your organisation?

[Single line answer component]

7. Which of the following best describes your role? Please select all that apply.

- Academic
- Animal welfare organisation
- Consumer
- Egg packer
- Egg processor
- Egg producer
- Farm assurance scheme
- Farming organisation
- Food manufacturer
- Food service (for example, restaurant, café, catering service, school, hospital, cafeteria)
- Genetics company
- Laying hen breeder
- Local authority (LA)
- Pullet rearer
Retailer (for example, supermarket, grocery store, convenience store, online food retailer)
- Trade body
- Veterinarian
- Other – please specify below

[Single line answer component]

Animal welfare

Our aim is to improve the welfare of laying hens, pullets and breeder layers and the policy proposal seeks to achieve this by reducing confinement of birds and ensuring that their behavioural needs are better met in non-caged systems.

8. Do you consider there to be positive welfare outcomes from banning the use of cages for laying hens (including pullets and breeder layers)? If so, what are they? Please select all that apply and leave blank if none apply.

- Improved physical wellbeing
- Improved expression of natural behaviours
- Improved choice over movement and environment
- Improved mental wellbeing
- Other – please specify below

[Multiple line answer component]

9. Do you consider there to be negative welfare outcomes from banning the use of cages for laying hens (including pullets and breeder layers)? If so, what are they? Please select all that apply and leave blank if none apply.

- Increased risk of smothering
- Increased risk of injury (including injurious pecking)
- Increased risk of sickness and disease
- Increased risk of mortality (including predation)
- Other – please specify below

[Multiple line answer component]

10. What interventions could maximise positive welfare outcomes and mitigate negative welfare outcomes?

[Multiple line answer component]

Policy proposal

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

11.a) On 1 January 2027, there should be a ban on the installation of new enriched ‘colony’ cages and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers across the laying hen sector (laying hens, pullets and breeder layers). [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Agree
- Disagree, it is too early
- Disagree, I don't agree with a ban
- Not sure

11.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

12.a) A 5-year transition period, beginning with a ban on the installation of new enriched 'colony' cages and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers on 1 January 2027 and followed by a complete ban on enriched 'colony' cages and any other caged systems used for pullets and breeder layers on 1 January 2032, is appropriate. [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Agree
- Disagree, it is too long
- Disagree, it is too short
- Disagree, I don't agree with a ban
- Not sure

12.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

13.a) A ban on conventional 'battery' cages on 1 January 2027 for smaller scale commercial units or hobby-keepers with fewer than 350 laying hens is appropriate. [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

13.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

14.a) What are the barriers to moving fully to non-cage systems? Please rank the below categories, with number 1 being the most important. [Ranked question component]

- Financial
- Technical (for example, training, consulting)
- Operational (for example, logistics, planning, contracts)

14.b) Are there any other barriers that should be considered?

[Multiple line answer component]

Analytical questions

Impacts on laying hen egg producers and pullet rearers

15. Are you currently a laying hen egg producer (including smaller scale commercial producers keeping fewer than 350 laying hens) or a pullet rearer, or representing laying hen egg producers or pullet rearers? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No [skip to exemptions section]

16. What is your flock size (in number of hens)?

[Number answer component]

Egg producers

17. Are you currently an egg producer (including smaller scale commercial producers keeping fewer than 350 laying hens) or representative of egg producers?

[Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No [skip to pullet rearers section]

The accompanying consultation stage de minimis assessment estimates additional production costs⁶ (excluding housing but including feed, litter, energy use and labour costs) per egg for different production systems:

	Enriched 'colony' cage Eggs	Barn Eggs	Free-range Eggs
Production cost (excluding housing*) in pence per egg	5.8	7	8

*Housing and equipment costs were omitted to prevent double counting as these costs are included in the capital costs.

18.a) What are your views on the estimate of production costs in the accompanying consultation stage de minimis assessment? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Agree with the estimate
- Disagree with the estimate
- Not sure

18.b) If you answered 'disagree with the estimate', please explain your answer and provide any evidence you can to support your view.

- [Multiple line answer component]

⁶ Page 22 of the consultation stage de minimis assessment

Caged egg producers

19. Do you use any caged production systems as an egg producer (including smaller scale commercial producers keeping fewer than 350 laying hens) or representative of egg producers? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No [skip to non-cage producers section]

20. What caged production system(s) do you use today? Select all that apply.

- A conventional 'battery' cage system
- An enriched 'colony' cage system
- Other – please specify below

[Multiple line answer component]

21.a) In the absence of a ban, are you planning to transition to a non-cage system, and if so, which system? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- No, not transitioning
- A barn system
- A free-range system
- An organic system
- An alternative non-cage system (for example, Kipster/Rondeel)

21.b) If you are planning to transition from cage to non-cage production, when were you planning to switch? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Within the next 1 to 2 years
- Within the next 3 to 5 years
- Within the next 6 to 8 years
- Within the next 9 to 12 years
- Not considered

22.a) In the event of a ban on enriched 'colony' cages, what production system would you transition to? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- A barn system
- A free-range system
- An organic system
- An alternative non-cage system (for example, Kipster/Rondeel)
- Exit the industry
- Not sure

22.b) If you answered 'Exit the industry', how long (in years) would you expect this transition to take?

[Number answer component]

23. If you were to transition to a non-cage system, would you: [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Refurbish an existing building (reduced capacity)
- Replace an existing building (same footprint, reduced capacity)
- Replace an existing building (increased footprint, same capacity)
- Replace an existing building (increased footprint, increased capacity)
- Extend an existing building (increased footprint, increased capacity)

The accompanying consultation stage de minimis assessment estimates the following average capital costs⁷ of converting enriched 'colony' cage production to barn and free-range production. These estimates have been informed through information shared by industry:

i) **£42 per hen place** for **new** barn and free-range buildings.

This cost relates to:

- The upfront capital cost of installing a **new** building
- Appropriate equipment (such as ventilation systems, feed systems and perches)
- Purchasing/renting any land required

ii) **£19 per hen place to convert existing capacity** from enriched 'colony' cage production to barn and free-range production.

The estimated capital costs of **converting** from enriched 'colony' cages are smaller than the costs of building equivalent new barns and free-range systems because it is assumed that the building structure could remain. Nevertheless, there would still be the cost of removal and disposal of the enriched 'colony' cages and the installation of new equipment for non-cage systems (such as ventilation systems, feed systems and perches) where necessary.

24. If you think that the estimate of £42 is inaccurate, please provide an estimate of the cost of building new housing system/s. Please fill out the table for the housing systems you plan to operate by writing your answers next to the corresponding letters.

⁷ Page 21 of the consultation stage de minimis assessment

	A free-range system	A barn system	An organic system	An alternative non-cage system (for example, Kipster/Rondeel)
Costing/estimated cost to build new housing	£ a / hen	£ b / hen	£ c / hen	£ d / hen

- a) [Number answer component]
- b) [Number answer component]
- c) [Number answer component]
- d) [Number answer component]

25. If you think that the estimate of £19 is inaccurate, please provide an estimate of the cost of conversion per laying hen. Please fill out the table for the housing systems you plan to operate by writing your answers next to the corresponding letters.

	A free-range system	A barn system	An organic system	An alternative non-cage system (for example, Kipster/Rondeel)
Costing/estimated cost to convert existing housing	£ a / hen	£ b / hen	£ c / hen	£ d / hen

- a) [Number answer component]
- b) [Number answer component]
- c) [Number answer component]
- d) [Number answer component]

26. Please estimate how long the building works would take to convert from a cage to a non-cage system. [Radio button to select only one answer]

- 1 to 2 months
- 3 to 4 months
- 5 to 6 months
- More than 6 months – please specify below in months

[Number answer component]

27.a) In your view, what type of training would be needed for keepers currently working with enriched 'colony' cage systems to effectively manage a non-cage system? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- On-farm training
- Contracted (i.e. outsourced) training
- No additional training required

27.b) What is the likely cost of this training per person? Please provide your answer in £.

- [Number answer component]

27.c) How many people would require training per farm?

- [Number answer component]

28.a) In your view, would keepers that currently work with enriched 'colony' cage systems need to hire more staff to be able to manage a non-cage system? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

28.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

Non-caged egg producers

29. Do you use any non-caged production systems as an egg producer (including smaller scale commercial producers keeping fewer than 350 laying hens) or representative of egg producers? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No [skip to pullet rearers section]

30. What non-caged production system(s) do you use today? Select all that apply.

- A barn system
- A free-range system
- An organic system
- An alternative non-cage system (for example, Kipster/Rondeel)
- Other – please specify below

[Multiple line answer component]

The accompanying consultation stage de minimis assessment estimates the following average capital costs⁸ of converting enriched 'colony' cage production to barn and free-range production. These estimates have been informed through information shared by industry:

- i) **£42 per hen place** for **new** barn and free-range buildings.

This cost relates to:

- The upfront capital cost of installing a **new** building
- Appropriate equipment (such as ventilation systems, feed systems and perches)
- Purchasing/renting any land required

- ii) **£19 per hen place to convert existing capacity** from enriched 'colony' cage production to barn and free-range production.

The estimated capital costs of **converting** from enriched 'colony' cages are smaller than the costs of building equivalent new barns and free-range systems because it is assumed that the building structure could remain. Nevertheless, there would still be the cost of removal and disposal of the enriched 'colony' cages and the installation of new equipment for non-cage systems (such as ventilation systems, feed systems and perches) where necessary.

31. If you think that the estimate of £42 is inaccurate, please provide an estimate of the cost of building new housing system(s). Please fill out the table for the housing systems you plan to operate by writing your answers next to the corresponding letters.

	A free-range system	A barn system	An organic system	An alternative non-cage system (for example, Kipster/Rondeel)
Costing/estimated cost to build new housing	£ a / hen	£ b / hen	£ c / hen	£ d / hen

- a) [Number answer component]
- b) [Number answer component]
- c) [Number answer component]

⁸ Page 21 of the consultation stage de minimis assessment

d) [Number answer component]

32. If you think that the estimate of £19 is inaccurate, please provide an estimate of the cost of conversion per laying hen. Please fill out the table for the housing systems you plan to operate by writing your answers next to the corresponding letters.

	A free-range system	A barn system	An organic system	An alternative non-cage system (for example, Kipster/Rondeel)
Costing/estimated cost to convert existing housing	£ a / hen	£ b / hen	£ c / hen	£ d / hen

- a) [Number answer component]**
- b) [Number answer component]**
- c) [Number answer component]**
- d) [Number answer component]**

33. Did you transition to a non-cage system from a cage system? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No [skip to pullet rearers section]

34. When did you make the switch? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Within the last 1 to 2 years
- Within the last 3 to 5 years
- Within the last 6 to 8 years
- Within the last 9 to 12 years

35. What production system did you transition from? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- A conventional 'battery' cage system
- An enriched 'colony' cage system
- Other – please specify below

[Multiple line answer component]

36.a) When you transitioned to a non-cage system, did you: [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Refurbish an existing building (reduced capacity)

- Replace an existing building (same footprint, reduced capacity)
- Replace an existing building (increased footprint, same capacity)
- Replace an existing building (increased footprint, increased capacity)
- Extend an existing building (increased footprint, increased capacity)

36.b) Please explain why you chose to transition in this way.

[Multiple line answer component]

37. How long did it take to convert from a cage to a non-cage system? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- 1 to 2 months
- 3 to 4 months
- 5 to 6 months
- More than 6 months – please specify below in months

[Number answer component]

38. If you are able to, please provide an indication or estimate as to how long it took obtain planning permission: [Radio button to select only one answer]

- 1 to 2 months
- 3 to 6 months
- 7 to 12 months
- 13 to 18 months
- Longer than 18 months

39.a) What type of training was needed to transition from working with a cage system, to effectively manage a non-cage system? Please select all that apply.

- On-farm training
- Contracted (i.e. outsourced) training
- No additional training required
- Other – please specify

[Multiple line answer component]

39.b) How much did this training cost per person? Please provide your answer in £.

[Number answer component]

40.a) How many staff, if any, do you employ to be able to manage a non-cage system?

[Number answer component]

40.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

Pullet rearers

41. Are you a pullet rearer or representative of pullet rearers? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No [skip to exemptions]

42. Please estimate the capital cost per pullet to convert from a cage to a cage-free system. Please provide the cost in £.

[Number answer component]

43. What is the difference in production cost per pullet of rearing in a cage versus in a non-cage system? Please specify the breakdown of the costs in £.

[Multiple line answer component]

Exemptions

44.a) Should there be an exemption for the multi-tier rearing aviaries where chicks are brooded in cage systems for the first 2 weeks only? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

44.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

45.a) Should there be any exemption for other purposes? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

45.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

Trade

The UK is a world leader in animal welfare standards, and the government is proud of the high animal welfare standards that underpin our high-quality produce. The UK's reputation for high quality products drives demand for UK goods and we want to improve and build upon that record, working in partnership with farmers to support healthier, higher welfare animals.

46.a) Do you think that introducing a domestic ban on cages for laying hens, pullets and breeder layers would increase imports of shell eggs and egg products to the UK?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

46.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

47.a) Do you think that introducing a domestic ban on cages for laying hens, pullets and breeder layers would increase exports of shell eggs and egg products from the UK?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

47.b) Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

48. Are you a retailer, egg processor, food manufacturer or in food services? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No [skip to further comments section]

49.a) Does your product contain caged egg or egg products? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No

49.b) What proportion of your production cost do caged eggs represent? Please provide your answer as a percentage.

[Number answer component]

50.a) Do you currently import eggs (shell or ingredient)? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No

50.b) Will you start importing or import more eggs (shell or ingredient) in the event of a caged egg ban? [Radio button to select only one answer]

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

50.c) Please explain your answer to 50.b).

[Multiple line answer component]

Further comments

51. Please provide any comments or evidence on the environmental impacts the proposed policy may have.

[Multiple line answer component]

52. Please provide any comments or evidence on the equality impacts the proposed policy may have.

[Multiple line answer component]

53. Please provide any comments or evidence you feel should be considered concerning the socio-economic impact the proposed policy may have on both producers and consumers. Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]

54. Please provide any further considerations you feel should be noted when considering this policy proposal. Please explain your answer.

[Multiple line answer component]