

**Animal Welfare
(Layer Hens)
Code of Welfare 2012,
Amendment Notice 2013**

*An amendment to the
Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2012
issued under the
Animal Welfare Act 1999*

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19 December 2013

National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee
C/- MPI
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NEW ZEALAND

Preface

The Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2012 came into force on 7 December 2012. The code sets the minimum standards for the care and management of layer hens under all forms of management used in New Zealand.

This Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2012, Amendment Notice 2013 is issued by me, by a notice published in the *Gazette* on 19 December 2013 under section 75 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999, and amends the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2012. This Amendment Notice comes into force on 20 December 2013.

This Notice amends the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2012 by amending Minimum Standard No. 4(i), Cages (iii), and Minimum Standard No. 12.

I issue this Amendment Notice on the recommendation of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee.

This Amendment Notice is a disallowable instrument for the purposes of the Legislation Act 2012 and is subject to the scrutiny of Parliament's Regulations Review Committee.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nathan Guy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Hon Nathan Guy
Minister for Primary Industries

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Notice

1 Title

This notice is the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare Amendment Notice 2013.

2 Commencement

This notice comes into force on 20 December 2013

3 Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2012 amended

This notice amends the Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2012 as specified in clauses 4 and 5 below.

4 Minimum Standard No. 4 – Housing and Equipment Design, Construction and Maintenance

Minimum Standard No. 4 is amended by revoking Minimum Standard No. 4 (i), Cages, (iii) and substituting it with the following:

(iii) All cages for layer hens must have:

- **A floor slope not exceeding 8 degrees which supports the forward facing claws.**
- **A cage height of at least 40cm over 65% of the cage floor area and not less than 35cm at any point.**
- **Access for each layer hen to at least two drinking points.**
- **Suitable claw shortening devices fitted, if any modifications are made to the cages.**

5 Minimum Standard No. 12 - Behaviour

Minimum Standard No. 12 and its accompanying *Note* are revoked and the following substituted:

Minimum Standard No. 12 – Behaviour

- (a) Hens must have the opportunity to express a range of normal behaviours. These include, but are not limited to nesting, perching, scratching, ground pecking, and dustbathing.
- (b) Any cage installed prior to 31 December 1999 must be replaced with a housing system that meets the requirements of Minimum Standard 12(a) by 31 December 2018.
- (c) Any cage installed prior to 31 December 2001 must be replaced with a housing system that meets the requirements of Minimum Standard 12(a) by 31 December 2020.
- (d) All cages must be replaced with a housing system that meets the requirements of Minimum Standard 12(a) by 31 December 2022.
- (e) Any housing system installed from 7 December 2012 must meet the requirements of Minimum Standard 12(a).

Note:

Section 73(3) of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 provides that the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) may, in exceptional circumstances, recommend minimum standards that do not fully meet the obligations to ensure that the physical, health and behavioural needs of the animal are met. In making this recommendation NAWAC must have regard to, among other things, the feasibility and practicality of effecting a transition from current practices and any adverse effects that may result from such a transition, and the economic effects of any transition from current practices to new practices.

NAWAC considers that the use of layer hen cages providing less than 750 sq cm per hen and no perches, discrete nesting areas or scratching surfaces, does not fully meet the obligations of the Act. Minimum Standards 12 (b), (c), and (d) provide for a transition from these cages to alternative ways of housing and managing layer hens – i.e. colony cages and barns.