

KNOW YOUR FOOD

A hen and her chicks in an organic farm.



Across Britain chickens are being brutally treated just to provide us with cheap eggs. But at the same time there are many chickens enjoying their lives in an organic chicken farm such as Ladilay eggs in Newton Abbot.

I have had the privilege to visit the farm where the eggs are produced and meet the owner, Andy.

He told me about the way that organic farms run compared to the way either battery or free-range egg farms are run.

The first thing we got out of the way was that an organic farm can only be organic if it is also free-range. Organic egg farming is where every chicken is given quite a large area of space to run around in, the chickens also have to have access to the outside. These are the main things that differentiate organic to non-organic, that and the fact that they are fed organic feed.

In a battery farm the hens would be shoved into cages (around six to a cage) and then they would be stuck in there for the rest of their lives until they were around 18 months old and then they would be killed.

Inside a battery shed



These chickens would also have had their beaks burnt off.

In a free-range farm the process is much the same but the only difference is that the chickens are allowed to move about freely, or as freely as you can in a shed stuffed with thousands of other chickens. These chickens also get their beaks burnt off.

No matter what the eggs are sold as, its parents will have all come from the same place: a hatchery.

Hatcheries are not organic but all organic chickens would have started their life in one. In a hatchery the process is fairly simple to follow: the chicken lays fertilised eggs, these eggs get put in an incubator, eggs hatch, chicks get put on conveyer belt, chicks are sexed, and male chicks get gassed and female chicks leave for their new home. This all happens on the day the chick is born. I don't think that people can call things organic when they were born in an un-organic business.

-<http://www.laydilay.co.uk/>

The majority of this article was from Andy, the owner of Ladilay eggs.

This article was written by Declan Elsholtz, correspondent to Scotland on Sunday.