

Know your food!

There are two main types of egg farming, industrial egg farming and Soil Association organic egg farms.

Industrial egg farms are cruel to the chickens and don't really treat them as living things but as egg laying machines with no mind. The chickens are kept in small cages stacked on top of each other with the chickens at the bottom often dying as they can be suffocated in the poo from the chickens above it. Even if they are not kept in cages they can be kept in barns cramped up together without sufficient food or water. They eat their own eggs if they break, and peck at each other if one becomes ill or dies. Their beaks are clipped so that they can't hurt each other in the enclosed space, this can be done in a painless way if you are careful but if done wrong it causes the chicken a lot of pain. In many cases this is not done right but is claimed to be so the people get away with it and the birds are still in pain. In these conditions the chickens can get unnaturally aggressive.

We went to a Soil Association organic egg farm and I felt that although it was not as happy or caring as I had expected it was better than keeping the chickens in cages or cooped up in an overcrowded shed with corpses littered around them. The hens had plenty of food to go around. There was plenty of space for each hen. Organic certified farms have to have smaller flock sizes than free range, this means less stressed hens as they would naturally choose this. They also have to have more exits from the hen houses, GM free food (no food requirements for free range chickens) and they cannot be beak-tipped either. Once the chickens can't lay any more they are normally put down but in this farm the past 2 flocks have been sold as pets which is good.



I found out about an extremist group called Animal Liberation Victoria. This group breaks into places like egg farms with cameras, document the environment and smuggle out the weakest animals. They went to a free range egg farm and found the birds with almost no feathers, crushed into a big shed, corpses everywhere and some drowning under the floor in the poo from what must be thousands or more chickens.

<https://www.soilassociation.org/>

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