



Getting Started with a Cage-free Campus Campaign

Thanks for your interest in our **Cage-free Campus Campaign!**

The *Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals* is a coalition of animal welfare organizations dedicated to ending use of battery cages for laying hens, crates for pregnant sows, and long-distance animal transportation. We do this through consumer education and promotion of humane food alternatives in Canada.

By way of introduction, an estimated 98 per cent of Canada's 26 million egg-laying hens are kept in small, cramped "battery" cages where they are unable to perform natural behaviours such as nesting, perching, dust-bathing, stretching a wing or walking around – activities that are important to them. Each bird has less space than a sheet of notebook paper. Hens are forced to stand on sloping wire floors, and they suffer feather loss and skin damage due to constant rubbing against the cage and cage-mates.

Some countries have banned use of battery cages. The European Union is phasing out use of conventional battery cages.

Fortunately there are viable alternatives to battery cages, where free-run hens are kept in open barns and can move around and lay their eggs in nest boxes. Certified organic eggs come from hens with access to the outdoors at least part of the time.

The Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals is encouraging student groups across Canada to urge their campus dining facilities to choose free-run, free-range or certified organic eggs. More than 100 universities and colleges in the U.S. have eliminated or reduced their use of battery eggs.

The process is not onerous. In some instances, a letter from a campus group to the campus food service was enough to bring about a change to cage-free eggs.

In April 2007, the University of Guelph is the first university in Canada to give students a choice about eggs at campus food facilities. A student group, *Guelph Students for the Ethical Treatment*

of Animals, with support from faculty, lobbied food services for change. A poll of 300 students showed majority support for cage-free eggs, despite a higher cost. Eggs are a low-cost protein to start with, so adding an extra \$.20 per cage-free egg was supported by Guelph students.

Other universities and colleges in Canada have also adopted a cage-free policy, including:

Langara College (British Columbia)

B.C. Institute of Technology

University of British Columbia

Simon Fraser University

Concordia University

University of Ottawa

McGill University

Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario

In addition to our Cage-free Campus Campaigns, the CCFA has parallel campaigns to encourage Canadian **restaurants and corporations** with in-house food service operations to go cage-free.

It's a challenge getting hens out of cages, but with your help we can make it happen! This is an

opportunity for each of us to make a real difference for animals. We hope to your add *your* campus to the list of progressive cage-free colleges and universities in Canada.

Starting an animal group on campus

If there is no animal protection organization on campus, maybe it's time to start one. You can increase your collective effectiveness by joining forces.

- Follow requirements for establishing clubs on campus. Funds may be available for club activities.
- Organize an office area and set up a phone tree so no one has to do all the calling. Be sure to get everyone's email address, too.
- Plan for the next six months: Decide on strategy, and when and where to meet. Prioritize activities to get the biggest bang for your efforts.
- Prepare media lists of campus and community newspapers and radio stations.
- Expect to be the leader and do most of the work at first, including preparing an agenda for each meeting. Even if there are only a few members, a few dedicated people can accomplish a great deal.

Campaigning for cage-free eggs

If there is already a campus animal group, you can start planning a cage-free egg campaign right away.

- The first step is to **learn as much as possible about the issue**. You will need to clearly explain the issue of battery cages, and to answer questions from students, hospitality services and the media.
- Use the materials in this info pack and our website, www.humanefood.ca. Vancouver Humane Society, a CCFA member, has a helpful website, www.ChickenOut.ca. U.S.-based animal organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and Humane Society of the United States (www.NoBatteryEggs.com) have informative websites.
- **Practice what you preach**. Make sure your diet follows the campaign philosophy, and

you eat only cage-free eggs, if you eat eggs. Observers are quick to attack inconsistencies.

- Smile, **be friendly**, and don't get into arguments if someone disagrees with you. Be respectful, but consistent in dealing with your contacts.
- **Dress appropriately** when doing campaign work. People are more likely to listen to campaigners who look like them.

Program ideas for a cage-free campaign

The goal is to reach as many people as possible, to educate them to the realities of hens confined in cages, and available alternatives (cage-free eggs.)

- Recruit other **students** and sympathetic **faculty members** as supporters. **Alumni** can also be powerful allies.
- **Meet with hospitality services** on campus. This is very important. Search the university website to find the director of dining. These officials are more receptive to their clients than outside organizations urging them to make a change. Support (including letters) from faculty members can be helpful.
- All dining facilities on campus may not be able to go cage-free immediately. Some facilities may be tied to long-term contracts, so change cannot happen right way. Find out when contracts are coming up for renewal, and note for future reference.
- It is sometimes possible to obtain cage-free policies for table (shell) eggs, but not liquid eggs, used in prepared foods. Be open to compromise if need be. Remember, the goal is to eliminate or reduce the use of battery eggs.
- For awareness building, have **info displays** in key campus locations such as the student centre, with pass-out literature available. You can also show the DVD of an Ontario battery egg farm on a closed link system (in info pack).
- Create **posters** from the enclosed CD. These images help to add a serious note, showing the hens' reality first hand. We can provide a small budget for producing posters. (Receipts are necessary for reimbursement.) We also have a large one that can be shipped or picked up in Toronto.

- Have **demos**, perhaps using our five hen costumes. We will ship the human-sized costumes to you. We have used the hen costumes effectively with a collapsible human-sized cage for demos at Loblaw. (See attached photo of a Guelph demo). If you want to build a cage, we will send the specifications. The costumes can also be used without a cage.
- Do a **brochure**, outlining the issues, and feel free to reproduce our **fact sheets** on battery hens (enclosed in the info package).
- Send **news releases** to student newspaper and radio stations, and community media, announcing events such as demos, or outcomes of key meetings with hospitality service.
- Write **op eds** (opinion articles) for the campus paper.

If you have questions, do not hesitate to email (info@humanefood.ca) or phone us. We will provide back-up, and will come to your campus if needed.

Thank you for helping out. Your campaign will make a big difference.

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