







Policies of the UK Supermarkets: *Laying hens*

Retailer	Whole shell eggs – own brand	Whole shell eggs – other brands	Own brand products (quiches, cakes, pasta, etc.)	Other information
ALDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriched cage • Free range 	Not stocked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some products specified free range 	Commitment to stop selling whole eggs from caged hens by 2025 Aldi weblink: https://www.aldi.co.uk/about-aldi/corporate-responsibility/resources-for-our-products/animal-testing-and-welfare
ASDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriched cage • Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriched cage • Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some products specified free range 	Commitment to stop selling whole eggs from caged hens (own and other brands) by 2025 Asda weblink: https://sustainability.asda.com/poultry-products
The Co-op  Whole eggs and own products (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free range 	Coop weblink: http://www.co-operativefood.co.uk/food-matters/farming-food/animal-welfare/

Retailer	Whole shell eggs – own brand	Whole shell eggs – other brands	Own brand products (quiches, cakes, pasta, etc.)	Other information
Lidl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enriched cage Free range 	Not stocked	Not detailed	Commitment to stop selling whole and ingredient eggs from caged hens by 2025 Lidl weblink: https://www.lidl.co.uk/en/Animal-welfare-744.htm?ar=12
Marks & Spencer  Whole eggs (2007) and own products (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free range 	Not stocked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free range 	M&S weblink: https://corporate.marksandspencer.com/plan-a/food-and-household/product-standards/raw-materials-commodities-and-ingredients/eggs
Morrisons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enriched cage Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enriched cage Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some products specified free range 	Commitment to stop selling whole eggs from caged hens (own and other brands) by 2025 Morrisons weblink: https://www.morrisons-corporate.com/cr/animal-welfare/
Sainsbury's  Whole eggs (2007) and own products (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barn Free range¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barn Free range 	Sainsbury's weblink: https://www.about.sainsburys.co.uk/making-a-difference/sourcing/animal-health-and-welfare

Retailer	Whole shell eggs – own brand	Whole shell eggs – other brands	Own brand products (quiches, cakes, pasta, etc.)	Other information
Tesco	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriched cage • Barn • Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriched cage • Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some products specified free range 	<p>Commitment to stop selling whole eggs from caged hens (own and other brands) by 2025</p> <p>Tesco weblink: https://www.tescopl.com/sustainability/downloads/animal-welfare-policy-group/more-information-on-our-uk-animal-welfare/</p>
Waitrose  <p>Whole eggs (2007) and own products (2008)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free rangeⁱⁱ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free range 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free range 	<p>Waitrose weblink: http://www.waitrose.com/content/waitrose/en/home/inspiration/about_waitrose/the_waitrose_way/waitrose_animal_welfarecommitments.html</p>

NB Assume all egg products listed in ingredients are from caged systems unless otherwise stated. As mentioned above, liquid or powder egg may be imported outside the EU and therefore may be from barren cage systems. Any products sold from outside the EU are likely to be produced using eggs from barren cage systems.

ⁱ **Sainsbury's** – Sainsbury's also has *Woodland* brand eggs that are organic and ensures at least 20% of the pasture range is covered with trees.

ⁱⁱ **Waitrose** – Waitrose offers financial incentives to their producers to maintain intact beaks (therefore birds that are not beak trimmed) and currently around 85% of their flocks have intact beaks. They use the British Blacktail hens which is a breed that range well, which helps with reducing feather pecking.

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Overview of standards

EU Egg standards

EU legislation includes a ban on forced moulting and the use of barren cages for laying hens (the ban on sale of barren cage eggs only covers whole eggs and therefore liquid egg imported from outside the EU may be from barren cages and can be sold in UK supermarkets). UK production is in line with EU legislation with the main addition being that hot blade beak trimming is prohibited (infra-red beak trimming is typically used). There are countries that go beyond EU legislation and have banned enriched cages: Luxembourg, Austria (by 2020) and Germany (by 2028).

By law, all eggs must be labelled with a number which denotes the production system in which the hen has been kept.

0 = Organic.

- Hens must be kept with access to a range (4m² per hen of space outside) and up to 6 hens/m² indoors (different for mobile housing) with flocks no greater than 3000
- Litter must be at least a third of the floor area and a suitable substrate for dust bathing must be provided
- There must be at least 1 nest per 7 hens
- Vegetation on the range and hens must be outdoors for at least a third of their life
- Hens are to be provided with 18cm of perch space each
- Routine beak trimming is prohibited, but can be performed under a derogation, so it is still commonly practiceⁱⁱ.

1 = Free-range

- Hens must be kept with access to a range (4m² per hen of space outside) and up to 9 hens/m² indoors with no limit on flock size
- Litter must be provided (250cm² per hen) and a suitable substrate for dust bathing must also be provided
- There must be at least 1 nest per 7 hens
- Hens are to be provided with 15cm of perch space each
- Beak trimming is permitted up to 10 days old and commonly practiced. This practice is banned in Switzerland, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Austria, Denmark and Germany.

2 = Barn

- Hens are kept indoors all their lives unless they are given a wintergarden (an aviary structure that is attached to the shed and allows more space and natural light). Wintergardens are not commonly used in the UK but widely used in Northern Europe.
- Hens are kept at up to 9 hens/m² in the shed with a suitable stocking density in wintergardens
- One third of the useable area must be litter (at least 250cm² per hen)
- At least 15cm perching space per hen
- At least 1 nest box per 7 hens
- Beak trimming is permitted up to 10 days old and routinely practiced.¹

3 = Enriched Cages

- Hens must have 750cm² of space of which 600cm² is usable (at least 30cm wide with a floor slope of no more than 14%). This provides a space allowance of 13 – 14 hens per m². Cages can have 60 to 80 birds.
- Friable litter should be provided but there is no specification on amount or space
- Head room of at least 45cm over the useable area
- Hens must have 15cm of perching space
- A nesting area must be provided but there is no specification on the space per hen
- Beak trimming is permitted up to 10 days old and routinely practiced.¹

Certification schemes in the UK

Soil Association:

- In line with EU Organic and UK legislation
- Birds must have access to the range by the age of 12 weeks.

RSCPA Assured:

- In line with UK legislation
- Pullets must be reared in the same type of system they will be laying in
- Provision of ramps, perches and environmental enrichment such as pecking substrates and straw bales.

RSCPA Assured free range (standards referred above, plus):

- Birds must have access to the range within 3 weeks of arrival on the farm (at 21 weeks of age at the latest)
- Shelter/shade must be provided with an area of at least 8m² per 1000 birds at a distance no greater than 20m from popholes

Lion cage standard:

- In line with UK legislation with the addition of vaccination against Salmonella Enteritis and a full hygiene monitoring program