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FDA/Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
5630 Fishers Lane
Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

To the FDA,

I wish to comment on ways to reduce foodborne illness in our nation's food supply, particularly chickens and their eggs. Putting an end to the forced molting of laying chickens would probably be the most important step for us to take to reduce foodborne illnesses. This cruel practice has already been banned in Britain in 1987.

This cruel economic practice contributes to disease in several ways. First, this period of food deprivation depresses the chicken's immune system, which contributes to Salmonella enteritidis and contaminates their eggs. Also, this food deprivation period causes the birds to eat litter and other birds feathers, further contributing to the spread of disease. Salmonella enteritidis and other pathogens can be spread to the rodent populations, which can exasperate the disease process in molting birds. A quote from World Poultry, Vol. 12, No 9 in 1996 says it quite simply: "While unmolted hens usually have to ingest about 50,000 Salmonella cells to become infected, molted hens need fewer than ten."

Please consider putting an end to forced molting. This practice is directly tied to salmonella enteritidis, which makes it a public health risk that we do not need!

Sincerely,


Crystal Wooldridge

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