



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Michigan Cage-Free Egg Law Summary

Public Act 132 of 2019 updated the Animal Industry Act (Public Act 466 of 1988) to require shell eggs sold in the state of Michigan to be from cage-free housing systems starting December 31, 2024. This new requirement does not apply to the sale of shell eggs that are the product of a farm with less than 3,000 egg-laying hens.

In general, the law prohibits business owners from engaging in the sale of any shell egg in this state that they know (or should know) is the product of an egg-laying hen that was confined in a manner that is inconsistent with the cage-free requirements. The law places responsibility on any business owner who sells shell eggs to ensure the eggs meet the state requirements.

The specific details for cage-free housing systems are outlined in the Animal Industry Act, Chapter 287.746. These details specify how, in indoor environments, the hens must be free to roam unrestricted, except for the parameters outlined in the law. Farm employees must be able to provide care to the hens while standing within the hens' usable floor space.

For both indoor and outdoor environments, the hens must be provided enrichments that allow them to exhibit natural behaviors; and in the environments, cage systems commonly described as battery cages, colony cages, enriched cages, enriched colony cages, or any cage system similar to those systems cannot be included.

The law also prohibits operators from tethering or confining hens, for all or the majority of a day, in a manner that prevents them from lying down, standing up, fully extending their limbs, or turning around freely. In addition, egg-laying hens cannot be tethered or confined in an enclosure other than a cage-free housing system or with less than the amount of usable floor space per hen as provided in the housing guidelines for cage-free production contained in "Animal Husbandry Guidelines for U.S. Egg-Laying Flocks," 2017 edition, published by United Egg Producers.

The new requirement in Public Act 132 is specific to shell eggs, meaning a whole egg of an egg-laying hen in its shell form that is intended for use as human food and it is from a female domesticated chicken, turkey, duck, goose, or guinea fowl kept for the purpose of egg production. This law does not apply to liquid or cooked egg products.

Overall, the expectation from the Department is for business owners who are selling shell eggs subject to this law must obtain written confirmation from their suppliers that the eggs were produced in an environment that meets Michigan's cage-free requirements. That confirmation should be made available upon request by the Department.

For more information and the answers to frequently asked questions, please visit www.michigan.gov/mdard/food-dairy/foodlaw/cage-free-egg-law.