



Free Range Production System

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What is it?

- Regular access to an interesting outdoor area during the day.
- Safe and comfortable sheds at night to protect hens from predators.
- Specially fitted nest boxes in the shed for the hens to go and lay their eggs.
- A popular choice for consumers.

Australia's dry climate means that free range systems can operate over all 12 months of the year!



Free Range farms must have:

- A place for hens to roam and forage outside during the day.
- Freedom for hens to roam anywhere inside the shed, or on the range during the daytime.
- A maximum of one hen per square metre of land.

Advantages

- Access to an outdoor area
- Ability to explore freely
- More opportunity for social interaction due to larger group sizes
- Practise natural behaviours, like nesting, bathing, foraging for food and perching
- Better bone strength due to more movement and activity

Disadvantages

- Higher risk of exposure to predators
- More difficult to control biosecurity because of exposure to outside germs
- Increased social stress due to large social groups which can result in feather pecking and in-fighting
- More manure-borne diseases and parasites
- Increased need for antibiotics to treat sick hens

Learn More www.australianeggs.org.au/education

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