

The Victorian Egg Industry has not generally built controlled environment sheds, only about 6% of hens are housed this way, Victorian producers have settled for high rise sheds with blinds. In answering our letter to the Public Bodies Review Committee, Professor Fels considered a 20,000 bird controlled environment farm would be acceptable to the Animal Liberation Movement because it is only a small farm. Size of farm is irrelevant. Hens kept under this system never see the light of day, they are kept under low density electric lighting.

The hens are stacked into these sheds 4 layers high, at such high density, the body heat from the hens keep the sheds warm in winter and fans are used to keep ammonia fumes off manure and keep hens cool in summer. With cages stacked 4 high it is difficult for the operator to keep an eye on the bottom and top layer of hens. We don't think we should be forced into this type of shedding.

(2a) Prices to producers will be set so that production which is surplus to Victoria's fresh egg needs is not more than 2% of total production. It is impossible to regulate production to 2% even with low egg prices. Quota cuts are the only way to control demand and supply.

(2b) Prices to producers will take account of quota price to the extent that quota prices reflect profitability as determined by the Prices Commissioner. We are enclosing a statement by Fred Wrigley, which shows that to buy small quantities of quota from the tender pool does not greatly relate to increasing the cost of eggs.

(3) Victorian producers prices will not be significantly more than sustained levels in competing States (averaged across grades and seasons). We would point out the "average across grades and seasons" means that price should be averaged over 12 months. We don't think Professor Fels has done this.

Too much importance has been placed on the "Random Sample Test" figures. This test is not "Commercial" where there are 4 people looking after 12000 hens, and is designed only to test different strains of hens laying potential. The Commercial Egg Producers Association are not against a cost of production survey, but it must include all costs.

Most egg farms in Victoria are integrated with rearing replacement pullets, mixing feed, delivering and selling eggs, etc. We think Professor Fels should have used an average 10,000 bird integrated farm