

Paragraph 1:

There are approximately 30 million egg-laying hens in the UK. Around 75% are kept in battery cages. The others are A recently-rescued free range hen Kept in 'alternative' systems such as 'barn' or free range. But look at these photos. Is there really much difference?

(Explanation):

- The text says that **about 30 million hens in the UK lay eggs**.
- **Most of them (around 75%) live in battery cages**, which are small, crowded cages.
- The **other hens live in different systems**, such as **barn systems** (kept inside but not in cages) or **free-range systems** (allowed to go outside).

- But the writer then asks a question after showing photos:
“Is there really much difference?”

This means the writer is suggesting that **even the ‘alternative’ or ‘better’ systems may not actually be much better** for the hens when you look closely at their living conditions.

Paragraph 2:

In battery units, four or five hens are crammed into a space not much bigger than a microwave oven. They are barely able to move, let alone stretch their wings. Battery cages are so inhumane that they will be banned in the EU from 2012 - but that means years of suffering ahead. And the replacement, so-called 'enriched' cages, will make little difference - because a cage is still a cage and the extra space the hens will have is equivalent to the size of a postcard.

Explanation: The text describes how **battery hens** are kept in extremely crowded conditions. **Four or five hens are squeezed into a tiny cage**—about the size of a **microwave oven**. Because the space is so small, the hens **can hardly move** and **cannot even stretch their wings**.

The writer says that these cages are **so cruel (“inhumane”)** that the **European Union decided to ban them starting in 2012**. However, the ban still means the hens will continue suffering for years until the rule takes effect.

The passage also explains that the new cages, called “**enriched cages**,” will **not be much better**. Even though they are supposed to be improved, the **extra space they provide is only about the size of a postcard**. The writer emphasizes: **a cage is still a cage**, meaning the hens will still live in cramped and unnatural conditions.

In short:

- Battery cages are tiny, crowded, and cruel.
- They will eventually be banned, but not soon enough.
- The new “improved” cages still do not give the hens enough space to live comfortably.

Paragraph 3:

The term 'barn eggs' is used deliberately to dupe the public into thinking that the hens are kept in bright, airy conditions with fresh straw on the floor. Not true! Though uncaged, the hens are still confined to dirty, overcrowded sheds. They will never see daylight, breathe fresh air or be able to exercise their natural instincts.

Explanation:

The writer says that the phrase "**barn eggs**" is used on purpose to **trick people** into imagining something pleasant — hens living in **clean barns**, with **sunlight, fresh air, and straw on the ground**.

But this picture is **false**.

In reality:

- The hens are **not in cages**, but they are still kept **inside large sheds**.
- These sheds are usually **dirty, crowded**, and **closed off** from the outside.
- The hens will **never go outside, never see daylight**, and **never breathe fresh air**.
- They also **cannot behave naturally**, like scratching the ground or exploring.

So even though the name "barn eggs" sounds nice, the hens' living conditions are still **poor and unnatural**.

****Sheds** = **large simple buildings** used for shelter or storage.

In this context, **sheds** are **big indoor structures** where thousands of hens are kept. They are usually **basic, crowded**, and **not very clean**—not comfortable living spaces.

Paragraph 4:

Many people associate 'free range' with 'cruelty-free' and assume the hens live a natural life. The reality is very different: thousands of 'free range hens' may be packed into huge sheds with limited access to the outdoors. Often, less than half of the birds roam freely into and out of the sheds because the others are simply unable to fight their way through to the exits.

Explanation:

Many people believe that "**free-range**" means the hens live **happily and naturally**, with lots of space, no cruelty, and plenty of time outdoors.

But the truth is often very different.

In reality:

- Even free-range hens can be kept in **huge, crowded sheds** with only **small openings** that lead outside.
- Because there are **so many hens**, the entrances to the outdoors become crowded.
- As a result, **many hens cannot reach the exits**—they are blocked by others.
- This means that **less than half** of the free-range hens actually go outside and enjoy fresh air or freedom.

So, while the term “**free range**” sounds like the hens live naturally, the conditions can still be **crowded, restricted, and far from cruelty-free**.

Paragraph 5:

Each year in the UK, approximately 30 million day-old male chicks are gassed or tossed alive into giant industrial shredders, "disposed of" because they are unable to lay eggs and are considered too scrawny a type of chicken for meat production.

Explanation:

This sentence describes a shocking and controversial practice in the poultry industry in the UK. Let me break it down carefully:

Every year in the UK, about **30 million baby male chicks** are killed shortly after they hatch. This happens because **male chicks cannot lay eggs**, so they are not useful for egg farms. They are also **too small and weak** to be raised for meat, so they are not profitable for meat farms either.

The chicks are killed in very cruel ways:

- Some are **gassed** using poisonous gas.
- Others are **thrown into large machines that shred them alive**.

This practice is called **male chick culling**, and it is done because the chicks are seen as **worthless for farming purposes**, even though it causes extreme suffering.

It shows a serious **animal welfare problem** in the poultry industry.

Paragraph 6:

Eggs contain saturated fat, one of the main causes of heart disease - and they are among the highest sources of dietary cholesterol. Research also indicates that eggs can inhibit the absorption of iron (needed for healthy blood, cells and nerves) and contribute to loss of calcium (necessary for healthy bonds). There are no nutrients in eggs that cannot be obtained from other foods. Cutting out animal products entirely is the really healthy option.

Send for a free recipe pack. See reverse.

Explanation:

- **Eggs contain saturated fat**, which is a type of fat that can raise cholesterol levels in the blood. High cholesterol can increase the risk of heart disease.
- **Eggs are very high in dietary cholesterol**, which also contributes to heart problems if eaten in large amounts.
- **Eggs can make it harder for the body to absorb iron**, which is important for healthy blood, cells, and nerves. This means eating eggs might reduce how much iron your body gets from other foods.
- **Eggs can lead to calcium loss**, and calcium is essential for strong bones.

The text also says:

- **There are no unique nutrients in eggs that you can't get from other foods**, meaning you can get everything eggs provide from plant-based foods instead.
- **Cutting out all animal products** (like eggs, meat, and dairy) is presented here as the healthiest choice according to the source.

Finally, the note about “Send for a free recipe pack. See reverse.” is just an invitation to get plant-based recipes.

In short: the passage warns that eggs can harm heart health, reduce iron and calcium, and aren't essential since their nutrients can be found in other foods.