

'Farm fresh' deception, eggs laid next to rotting corpses

New Zealand Open Rescue

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Following an Open Rescue of 20 hens from Turks Poultry Farm in Foxton last month, activists have made an official complaint to MAF's Animal Welfare Compliance and Enforcement Group regarding numerous breaches of animal welfare regulations which they found onsite.

"The conditions we witnessed inside Turks Poultry Farm were in breach of several sections of the Code of Welfare for Layer Hens. We saw many dead hens inside the battery cages, meaning that live hens were forced to sit and stand on the decomposing corpses of their cage mates," says Open Rescue spokesperson Deirdre Sims.

"The owners of Turks Poultry Farm (Ronald Turk, Johannes Turk and Helena Turk) are legally obliged to ensure optimal physical health for their animals and must provide immediate veterinary or medical attention to sick animals. The Code of Welfare for Layer Hens stipulates that daily inspections of birds must be carried out, that sick birds receive prompt treatment and that dead birds are removed from the facility immediately. With the amount of decomposing hens we witnessed still inside battery cages on the Turks farm, there is no doubt they are breaking animal welfare regulations."

"Turks Poultry supplies eggs to the Pam's Farm Fresh Eggs brand. We believe Pam's are misleading consumers with deceptive marketing techniques. Pam's are fooling consumers into purchasing 'farm fresh' eggs that are nothing more than cruel, caged eggs from Turks. Since when was it 'farm fresh' for a hen to lay her eggs next to a rotting corpse?" says Ms. Sims.

"There is no regulation or inspection of factory farms and every single time we go into a farm we find evidence of non compliance with the law. No one inspects them and no one is enforcing the already weak animal welfare laws, so it is up to us to enter these farms and expose them" says another Open Rescue activist, Mark Eden.

New Zealand Open Rescue has vowed to continue to openly rescue animals from factory farms and to expose the reality behind the 'farm fresh' myth.

(Ron Turk, a committee member of the NZ Egg Producers Federation, was recently fined \$34, 000 for dumping feathers and 16 tonnes of chicken guts onto a nearby farm).