

UNDERCOVER AT KREIDER FARMS

A HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES INVESTIGATION

In February and March of 2012, an HSUS undercover investigator worked at a massive Kreider Farms egg factory, located at 525 Indian Village Road in Manheim, Penn. Pennsylvania is the third-largest egg-producing state in the country, and Kreider is its biggest egg producer. Kreider cages approximately 2 million egg-laying hens in nine buildings at its Manheim location and has about seven million birds in total. These birds are crammed into cages **even more crowded** than birds in most battery cage operations throughout the U.S.

Kreider—which supplies companies like ShopRite, Price Chopper, Weiss, US Foods, and Redner’s Market—also has farms in Mt. Joy, Middleton and Lebanon.

In addition to the suffering animals endure from such extreme confinement in barren battery cages, the investigator also documented the following problems:

- Rotting corpses in cages with hens laying eggs for human consumption
- Hens with prolapses and leg infections
- Hens stuck by their heads, legs and wings in cage wires
- Mummified hen carcasses in cages
- Overcrowding of hens in cages that only provide 54-58 square inches of living space per hen (well below the national average for egg-laying hens)
- Flies in barns so thick that the investigator had to scrape off his boots after walking down each aisle
- Thousands of hens died after not receiving water over a 2-3 day period
- Rodents on egg conveyor belts
- Piles of dead hens on floors of barns
- Dead flies in hens’ feeding troughs
- Barns so dark that workers needed head lamps and flashlights
- Ammonia levels so high that workers often had to wear masks
- Manure and eggs from some barns tested positive for salmonella
- Each worker is tasked with overseeing more than 100,000 animals.

The HSUS and The United Egg Producers (the egg industry’s primary trade organization, representing farmers who hold more than 80% of the nation’s laying hens) are jointly lobbying for the passage of [HR 3798](#), which would mandate a phase-in, over 15 years, of a welfare-friendlier system of egg production. This investigation underscores the need to enact this legislation.

HR 3798 would see the egg industry give the birds more space, more freedom of movement and better ability to engage in some natural behaviors. The legislation calls for more than double the space per bird as allotted by Kreider: between 124-144 square inches per hen. It would also require on-carton labeling of the production methods used (e.g., “eggs from caged hens”) in order to better empower consumers to make informed decisions.

Harrisburg’s *Patriot-News Ledger* in Pennsylvania’s capitol has [endorsed](#) the bill, along with dozens of other major news publications nationwide.

