



ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE  
Department of Animal And Poultry Science

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Jim Peros  
Senior Vice President, Operations  
IHOP  
450 N. Brand Blvd.  
Glendale, CA 91203  
U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Peros,

Thank you again for the time you allowed me to make a presentation to you and your team about animal welfare and the egg industry. It was a pleasure to meet you in person and tell you why I feel so strongly that laying hens should not be confined in battery cages and instead should be in well-managed cage-free facilities. I'm sure you can therefore imagine my disappointment on hearing that IHOP has decided to continue using eggs exclusively from birds confined in battery cages.

The evidence is clear that battery cage confinement causes hens severe daily frustration by restricting their movement and preventing them from engaging in vital natural behavior such as nesting. However, I understand that IHOP also claims that because we can't get in the mind of an animal, we don't know whether this frustration leads the animals to actually suffer. As I said at our meeting, although no one can get in the mind of any animal and know *exactly* what it is thinking or feeling, we do not need that information to make welfare decisions. All we need to know is how bad or how good the animal perceives the conditions to be. We can gain solid evidence of that type from the animals' behavior. Thus we can tell that a dog being beaten is experiencing fear and pain by how hard it tries to avoid the beating. We can tell that a cat being stroked on our lap is experiencing pleasure by the fact that it is purring and will return to our lap repeatedly to be stroked. It is exactly the same with hens. We do not know exactly what a hen experiences when it cannot find a nesting site inside a cage – but we know for certain that it *suffers*. It shows all the symptoms of severe frustration, it will retain its egg for several hours, and it will work extremely hard to gain access to a nesting site. There is also solid evidence that hens *suffer* in cages because they cannot find a roosting place at night, cannot forage for their food and cannot maintain a comfortable distance from their cage-mates. We also know that the pleasure associated with dust-bathing is denied to them in cages

The LayWel Project, the most comprehensive scientific review on hen welfare in history, determined, "With the exception of conventional cages [i.e., the system IHOP exclusively buys from], we conclude that all systems have the potential to provide satisfactory welfare for laying hens."

In another example, an article in *The Netherlands Journal of Agricultural Science* ranked different types of egg production methods from zero to ten, corresponding with their effect on hen welfare. The report gave barren battery cages a 0.0. To show a comparison, the scientists gave conventional cage-free systems (the type of system I'm encouraging IHOP to begin switching to) a '5.8' on the welfare scale.

Further, the prestigious Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production conducted an exhaustive 2.5 year scientific analysis on farm animal welfare (among other issues relating to industrial farm animal production) and concluded that we should phase out "all intensive confinement systems that restrict natural movement and normal behaviors, including... battery cages." Dr. Bernard Rollin from Colorado State University Departments of Animal Science and Philosophy aptly summed it up when he stated, "Research has confirmed what common sense already knew – animals built to move must move."

IHOP's claim that we cannot determine whether or not animals suffer while in extreme confinement disregards decades of scientific studies and can easily be used to condone any type of animal cruelty. After all, how can we determine if any animal is suffering, no matter how obvious the anguish, if we are using the criterion that we cannot know for sure because we can't get in the animal's head? Using that standard, people should be allowed to beat dogs because we can't get into the animal's head and know for sure.

As someone who has been a poultry scientist for more than 40 years, written more than 150 scientific papers and 30 book chapters on animal welfare, and advised governments and major companies on animal welfare policies, I'm confident in stating that an overwhelming abundance of scientific evidence has shown that IHOP's policy to exclusively purchase eggs from hens confined in battery cage facilities will lead to continued avoidable suffering of thousands of animals within IHOP's direct supply chain.

While economic realities may preclude IHOP from switching all of its eggs to cage-free, the company has a responsibility to move in a positive direction by switching at least some of its egg purchasing to cage-free systems.

Please feel welcome to get in touch should you have any questions (my e-mail address is [iduncan@uoguelph.ca](mailto:iduncan@uoguelph.ca)).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian H. Duncan". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Ian Duncan, Ph.D.  
Professor Emeritus  
Chair in Animal Welfare