

Wednesday 26 February 2025

Almost half of UK adults haven't a clue how to make pancakes and a quarter don't know they contain eggs

But 60% of those who will be making pancakes think it's important eggs are higher welfare

A new survey by RSPCA Assured has revealed an unbelievable disconnect between people and their food. Almost half of UK¹ adults admit that they don't know how to make a pancake and a quarter aren't aware they contain eggs².

The survey, carried out by YouGov for RSPCA Assured - the only farm assurance scheme in the UK solely dedicated to farmed animal welfare – revealed that despite the majority of the pancake making public wanting to make better choices for hen welfare, they are clueless about egg production and what could be lurking in their food.

This Pancake Day, RSPCA Assured is encouraging everyone who chooses to eat eggs to look for cage-free and preferably those with the RSPCA Assured label.

Kate Parkes, RSPCA hen welfare expert, said: "Something as simple as not knowing what ingredients are in a pancake might seem innocuous and funny, but it exposes an important truth - we just don't know enough about what we are eating and where our food comes from.

"People want to make ethical food choices, for example, 60% of people who make pancakes said it is important to them that the ingredients come from higher-welfare farms³. But many don't realise that everyday foods, like pancakes, depend on egg production and nearly 20% of UK egg production comes from caged hens⁴.



RSPCA Assured Press Office
press@rspcaassured.org.uk
01403 286170 / 01403 915693

RSPCA Assured
4th Floor, Parkside
Chart Way, Horsham
West Sussex, RH12 1GY

01403 286170
hello@rspcaassured.org.uk
www.rspcaassured.org.uk

RSPCA press office
0300 123 0244/0288
press@rspca.org.uk

Duty press officer
Evening and
weekends
07825 158490

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“This lack of knowledge could mean people are inadvertently supporting lower welfare farming and funding cruel practices such as hens being kept in cages. If everyone knew more about what’s in their food, they might think twice before they buy and make higher welfare choices.”

In the UK, around eight million hens (20%) spend most of their lives cramped in cages, unable to move around freely, stay active and perform natural behaviours - like dustbathing. This leaves them stressed and frustrated, which means they can resort to distressing behaviours like birds pulling out each other's feathers or left with bald patches from where their heads and necks have rubbed on the bars when they poke their heads out to feed.

“Lots of people think cages are a thing of the past but they couldn’t be more wrong.” Kate continued. “The old battery cage was banned in Europe in 2012, but many were just replaced by a new type of cage called a ‘colony’ or ‘enriched cage’. In reality, these are not much better and only give each hen about as much space as the size of a large pancake, which is totally unacceptable.

“Whilst the majority of eggs sold in UK supermarkets are now cage-free, not all of them are, so it’s still really important that shoppers read the label.”

Supermarkets, including Aldi, Co-op, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons, Sainsbury’s and Waitrose have already met their commitment to only supply cage-free eggs. A number of other retailers have also pledged to be cage-free in 2025, but the clock is ticking for them to achieve this.

The RSPCA Assured label means that hens are never kept in cramped cages. Instead they live cage-free lives on free range or organic farms or inside cage-free barns with plenty of space to move around. All RSPCA Assured certified egg producers - whether free-range, organic or barn - must meet nearly 700 strict standards all aimed at improving hen welfare. These standards include providing perches, nest boxes and enrichment items like straw bales and pecking objects, which allow hens to express natural behaviours such as nesting, foraging and perching.

“We all have the power to help more hens live cage-free by simply choosing cage-free eggs,” Kate added. “We know the public care about this issue and show their support for cage-free hens at the supermarket with over 70% of all boxed egg sales now being free-range⁵.

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“However, unlike boxes of eggs which are clearly marked with the method of production, there isn’t the same requirement to declare the kinds of eggs used as ingredients, such as in pancake mixes. This means people could be unwittingly buying eggs from caged hens. Hens aren’t the only farmed animals kept in cages and we are calling on the UK Government to ban cages for all farmed animals and want to see this cruel practice urgently consigned to the past.”

Visit [RSPCA Assured’s website](#) for more information on hen welfare and support the RSPCA’s campaign for a Cage Free Future [here](#).

-ends-

Notes to editors:

Download voxpops (members of the public sharing their views on caged hens) here: <https://we.tl/t-832nACtpgU>

Download a soundbite from Kate Parkes here: <https://we.tl/t-30cPUloBsd>

Please find Broll footage for broadcast use here, if you need an even higher resolution please drop us an email and we can transfer it over:

<https://we.tl/t-M7dfaYHBrD>

Please find a high-res image selection here: <https://we.tl/t-d3pe21nR1w>

Please note all wetransfer links will expire after seven days. If you would like us to send it to you again, please just drop us an email: press@rspcaassured.org.uk. We can provide alternative resolutions and formats as well if needed.

To raise awareness, RSPCA Assured has launched a Pancake Day TV advert, showcasing the journey of an RSPCA Assured egg from farm to fork. The 30-second advert, made by 2S Films, will air across the Channel 4 network from 24 February until Pancake Day, 4 March. It is expected to appear during the ad breaks of programmes such as Grand Designs, Death in Paradise and At Home With Katherine Ryan.

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Footnotes:

- 1. 45% of UK adults did not know how to make a traditional British Pancake from scratch. RSPCA Assured commissioned survey conducted by YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,068 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 3 - 5 January 2025. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
- 2,3: RSPCA Assured commissioned survey conducted by YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,068 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 3 - 5 January 2025. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
- 4: Statistic sourced from DEFRA Q4 2024 report
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/egg-statistics/quarterly-uk-statistics-about-eggs-statistics-notice-data-to-june-2024>

5. Statistic taken from British Lion Code data:

<https://www.egginfo.co.uk/egg-facts-and-figures/industry-information/data>

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