

SAFE YOUTH

Kids' Voice 4 Animals



ISSUE 6 OF THE SAFE YOUTH NEWSLETTER - FOR KIDS WHO KNOW THAT ANIMALS MATTER

Welcome to Issue Six of the SAFE Youth newsletter.

This EGGciting issue of the SAFE Youth newsletter is all about chickens! Chickens are intelligent, social animals that love to scratch, forage, and dust-bathe outside. You may not see many chickens outside on farms throughout New Zealand, though. This is because most of them are kept

indoors, in windowless sheds or cramped cages, with barely enough space to move. You have the ability to help these chickens!

In this issue we will learn about some of the ways you can do that, so let's get cracking!

ANIMAL PROFILE: CHICKENS

Lifespan: Chickens can live up to 12 years.

There are lots of different names for chickens; here are a few common ones:

Hen: Female chicken.

Rooster: Male chicken.

Pullet: Female chicken (less than a year old).

Cockerel: Male chicken (usually less than a year old).

Layer Hen: Chicken kept for laying eggs.

Broiler Chicken: Chicken kept for meat.

The domestic chicken:

It is thought chickens were domesticated 8,000-10,000 years ago. Skeletons of domestic chickens as old as 7,500 years have been found in north-eastern China.

Ancestry:

Domestic chickens are descended from the Red junglefowl, a tropical and subtropical member of the *Phasianidae* family. Their native habitat includes part of India and China as well as Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, and Indonesia. Chickens are also descendants of dinosaurs, and may even be the closest living relative to the *Tyrannosaurus Rex*!



Intensive breeding:

Human exploitation of chickens has drastically changed some of their natural processes. Chickens raised for meat grow between two-four times faster than normal chickens. This has serious consequences for their health and many struggle to move or even hold their own weight. Layer hens have also been exploited – for their egg production. Wild chickens would normally lay 10-30 eggs a year, while intensive breeding has led to chickens that lay 250-300 eggs a year. This increased production can lead to diseases of the reproductive tract, and a depletion of the calcium in a chicken's bones, meaning they are fragile and break easily.

Which came first – the chicken or the egg?

Many of the characteristics of modern chicken's eggs developed in the dinosaur ancestors of birds. Scientists estimate that the first eggs evolved around 320 million years ago in early reptiles. So you could say that the egg came before the chicken!



BIRDBRAIN?

The term 'birdbrain', meaning silly and foolish, only came about in the 1920s. Before that, chickens were admired for their protective and nurturing nature as well as their ability to communicate with one another.



HAPPY HENS

CHICKEN

CHARACTERISTICS

AND BIOLOGY

Despite the exploitation and intensive breeding humans have subjected chickens to, they still retain many of the instincts, behaviour, and biology of their wild ancestors, the Red junglefowl.



INTELLIGENCE

Birds and humans have been shown to have similar brain wiring, though they have distinct brain structures. Chickens can consider the future, identify objects when they are partly out of view, distinguish different shapes, practise self-restraint, and recognise more than 100 other chickens' faces. They can also remember faces after being separated for months!

EYESIGHT

Chickens have excellent eyesight, and can even use each eye independently as well as in conjunction. Together, their eyes weigh about as much as their brain!

LEARNING

Chickens are capable of learning from one another. Mother hens teach their chicks behaviours and will adjust their teaching to suit the chicks' abilities.

SMELL

Chickens' nasal cavities are structurally similar to humans' and they have been shown to have a well-developed sense of smell.

COMMUNICATION

Chickens have over 24 different types of vocalisations, as well as visual displays. These calls are distinct and both allow chickens to communicate and identify one another.

FEATHERS

Chickens' feathers not only keep them warm, they also enable them to fly and attract a mate, waterproof them, and help camouflage them from predators.

EMOTIONS

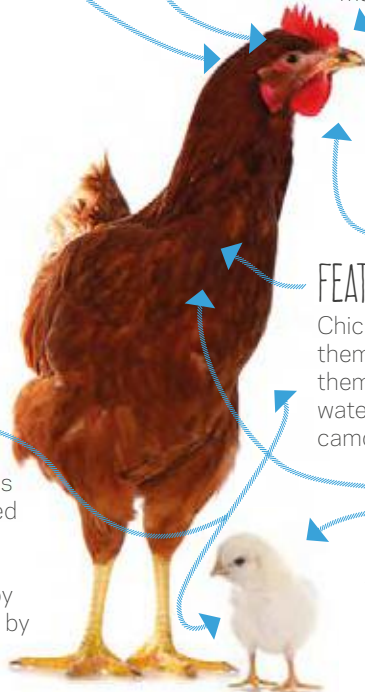
Just like humans, chickens are capable of feeling emotions. Some of the emotions they have been shown to feel are frustration and anxiety, as well as joy and friendship.

SOCIAL

Chickens naturally live in groups of around five-seven birds called a flock. They form a hierarchy, also known as a pecking order. A hierarchy is a system whereby the chickens order themselves by dominance or status.

CHICKS

Baby chickens are born 'precocial', meaning that they are able to walk freely and feed themselves almost as soon as they hatch.



ANIMALS IN TROUBLE

Unfortunately, most chickens in New Zealand are kept inside; they never see or explore outside.

Layer Hens

Around 82% of layer hens are kept in battery cages with at most 550 cm² of space; that's less space than an A4 page. Though these cages will be banned in the year 2022, they are being replaced with equally cruel 'colony' cages where birds get only 750cm² of space each. That may sound like a lot more, but it is only slightly bigger than an A4 page. Male chicks don't lay eggs so are seen as a waste product. They are killed when only one day old - even free-range farms do this. Many hens also have their sensitive beaks trimmed, where the tip of the beak is cut off using a hot blade, with no pain relief (free-range hens may also be de-beaked).

Meat Chickens

Chickens raised for meat are killed when only six weeks old. Over 99% of these chickens are kept in big, windowless sheds up to 150m long and 15m wide. As many as 40,000 birds are kept in a single shed, that's 530cm² per hen - less space than a battery cage. That's like a human having roughly eight pieces of A4 paper to live on their whole life. Imagine that!

Free-Range

Free-range meat chickens also live in windowless sheds - but with access to the outdoors. The birds, due to their intensive breeding, have serious health problems and find walking painful so may never go outside. They grow too fast for their skeletons to support them, and have very sore legs and joints. Free-range layer hens may, also, never leave the shed because they are kept in flocks as big as 8-15,000 birds and are overwhelmed. These unnaturally large flocks can also cause the birds serious stress!

Unless rescued, chickens in all these systems are killed having lived only a fraction of their normal lifespan. Any farming systems like these have inherent cruelty; animals are treated as 'products' with little consideration for their interests and needs.



A COLONY BATTERY CAGE

LIFE EXPECTANCY OF FARMED CHICKENS:

LAYER HENS	MEAT CHICKENS	MALE LAYER CHICKS
18 MONTHS	SIX WEEKS	ONE DAY



TIPS TO HELP ANIMALS

Around 100 million chickens are killed for meat each year in New Zealand and over three million are kept in battery cages. Worldwide more than 50 billion chickens are slaughtered every year. That's a lot of chickens, but there are heaps of things you can do to help.

1 ASK YOUR LOCAL SUPERMARKET TO GO CAGE-EGG-FREE

SAFE is asking Countdown to ditch cage eggs. You could write to your local Countdown, or fill out a suggestion card, asking them to stop stocking cage eggs. Supermarkets like to please their customers, so your letter can have a big impact! You can also go to the SAFE website and fill in the e-card asking Countdown to stop stocking cage eggs.

www.safe.org.nz/ecards/ask-countdown-drop-cage-eggs

2 STOP EATING CHICKENS

A person who eats chicken causes the equivalent of 1100 days of suffering a year for meat chickens. Because these meat chickens only live for six weeks, this means that for each person who eats chicken there are around 26 chickens (each year) that suffer for six weeks and are then slaughtered. If you stop eating chicken, then you are not only preventing this suffering but you are also saving around 26 chickens.

3 GO EGG FREE!

There are over three million hens packed into small cages in New Zealand, where they are unable to express their natural behaviours. This type of farming exists because Kiwis eat around 226 eggs each per year – that's around one billion eggs a year. If you want to help these suffering chickens you can stop eating eggs. It's easy and there are lots of great replacements for them.

- Instead of scrambled eggs you can have scrambled tofu – yum!

4 RESCUE AN EX-BATTERY HEN

A great way to help chickens is to re-home ex-battery hens that would otherwise be slaughtered. Adopting chickens is a big responsibility and ex-battery hens often need more care than regular chickens as well. It would be a good idea to learn about their needs before you pick them up. Animal Re-homing has produced a good document on what ex-battery hens will need and how they will adjust to their new home.

CHECK OUT ANIMAL RE-HOMING'S BATTERY HEN GUIDE AT:

www.animalrehoming.co.nz/images/chicken/2011/battery_hen_care_guide.pdf

OR

goo.gl/T4FY5D



- You can use aquafaba, which is the brine from a can of chickpeas, as a replacement for egg white. You can make meringues with only a can of chickpea brine and half a cup of sugar!
- As an egg replacement in baking you can combine one tablespoon of ground flax seed (aka linseed) with two tablespoons of water and set in the fridge for 15 minutes. There are many other egg replacers for baking too, including commercial ones.

KIND FOOD

One of the kindest things you can do for animals is not to eat them, or products that come from their exploitation. You don't need eggs to have a delicious scramble!



Scrambled tofu

UTENSILS:

- chopping board, sharp knife, big frying pan, bowl, measuring spoons, wooden spoon or spatula to mix the scramble.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 onion
- 4 mushrooms
- ½ red capsicum
- 450g of firm tofu
- 2 Tbsp. nutritional yeast
- ½ tsp. basil
- ½ tsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. parsley
- ¼ tsp. turmeric
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Carefully chop up the onions, slice the mushrooms and dice the capsicum.
- Fry the onions in the oil for a few minutes before adding the mushrooms and capsicum.
- Dry the tofu with paper towels, removing as much of the excess water as possible, before roughly mashing with a fork (leaving some bigger chunks).
- Once the mushrooms are soft add the tofu, spices and nutritional yeast to the frying pan.
- Cook until the tofu begins to brown.
- Serve on toast with some fresh parsley.



IDEA!

Nutritional yeast can be used on pasta as a replacement for cheese.

It has a delicious savoury flavour and is a good source of B vitamins, including B12.

SAFE KIDS FOR ANIMALS

This is where you can have your action for animals recognised.



LUCIAN (7)
AUCKLAND

Lucian has been using his Animals Activist Handbook and writing down lots of ways he can help out animals. Good job, Lucian!



MIA (8)
AUCKLAND

Mia recently joined SAFE Youth and has drawn a picture about no more factory farming. What a great picture of a pig and a fantastic message too. Great work, Mia.



MAJA (11)
AUCKLAND

Maja has been busy helping out chickens lately. She set up a display about factory farming at Ambury Regional Park recently. She had a coop with two ex-battery hens for her display that were later taken to a happy and loving home. Amazing, Maja!

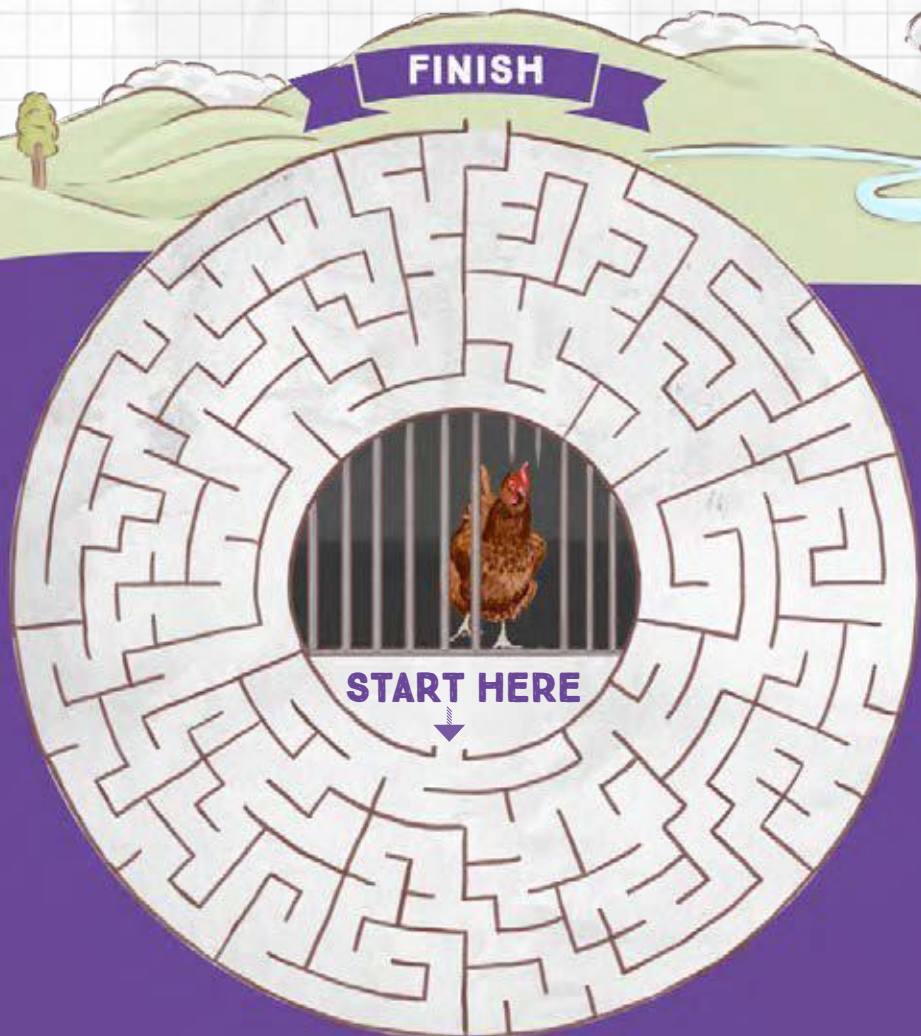


HOLLY (11)
WELLINGTON

Holly has done a 30km walk along Wellington's south coast to raise money for SAFE to end factory farming. Fantastic, thanks a bunch, Holly!
- See Holly's profile on page 6.

Maze

HELP THIS BATTERY HEN ESCAPE HER CAGE AND FIND FREEDOM!



SAFE YOUTH PROFILE

Name: Holly O'Connor

Age: 11

Hometown: Wellington

Favourite animal: Cat/Dog (I prefer playing with dogs, but would rather be learning about/drawing cats)

What got you interested in wanting to help animals?

I have been vegan all my life, so I've grown up with veg philosophies. I also have four cats (Ash, Kit, Comet, and Gingersnap) and my love for them transforms into a passion to help all animals in trouble.



What is your favourite veg food?

Vegan pizza, with vegan cheese!
My favourite food to make, though, is veg cupcakes with lots and lots of decoration!

Anything you want to share about animals?

Yes: I think that one of the greatest things about being vegan is that I can love animals without "Pet this one and eat this one". All animals deserve love and respect, whether they are farm animals (for want of a better word) or pets.



HOLLY AND COMET.



HOW TO JOIN SAFE YOUTH

If you would like to join SAFE YOUTH fill out the form below and send it to SAFE Education Officer Nichola Kriek.



I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN SAFE YOUTH.

Name:

Date of birth:

Street address:

Suburb:

City:

Phone number:

Email:

JOINING SAFE YOUTH
IS FREE!

We will send you three newsletters per year and keep you up to date with any SAFE Youth events.

**SEND YOUR ENTRY
FORM TO:**

Nichola Kriek -
Education Officer

SAFE
PO Box 13366
Christchurch 8024
Ph: 03 379 9711
Fax: 03 374 9290
Email: nichola@safe.org.nz



safe.org.nz

