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Consumers Overwhelmingly Support National Legislation Sought by Egg Farmers

By United Egg Producers

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 30, 2012 -- /PRNewswire/ -- American consumers overwhelmingly support the national legislation regarding egg production that was introduced last week in Congress, according to a new survey released today.

Consumers said they would support federal legislation that would transition egg production from the existing conventional cages used for egg-laying hens to enriched cages by a margin of 4-to-1. Furthermore, consumers said that federal legislation was preferable to state legislation by a margin of 2-to-1.

The study was conducted by an independent research company, The Bantam Group, and commissioned by United Egg Producers which represents the majority of egg farmers in the U.S. and which supports the federal legislation. However, the survey's sponsorship was anonymous so as to not bias any of the 2,000 respondents, all of whom were registered voters.

Consumers support the transition to enriched cages for egg production by a margin of 12-to-1. Consumers also said that the two most important groups to support this transition outlined in the federal legislation (H.R. 3798) to enriched cages are UEP and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), both of which support the bill, as do more than 11 egg and farm groups, 10 animal protection groups, and the National Consumers League. Fifty-nine percent of consumers said they would be "more supportive" if they knew that UEP and HSUS supported such legislation; only 1 percent said they would be more opposed.

Enriched cages provide egg-laying hens nearly double the amount of space they currently have in conventional cages, plus provide perches, nest boxes, and scratch pads which allow the hens to exhibit their natural behaviors.

"This is legislation that egg farmers and consumers overwhelmingly support," said David Lathem, a Georgia egg farmer and chairman of UEP.

The survey was fielded by an independent research group, Bantam, which conducted two nationwide surveys, of 1,000 registered voters each, December 27, 2011 through January 20, 2012. The first survey investigated consumer support for enriched cages, the second survey investigated consumer support for the federal legislation.

The question of federal versus state legislation is important because several states already have established, or are in the process of establishing, different laws regarding the housing and sale of eggs in each of their states. The Supreme Court last week ruled in favor of pork and beef farmers who argued that a federal law regarding livestock processing pre-empts a state law that was passed in California.

United Egg Producers (UEP) is a Capper-Volstead cooperative for U.S. egg farmers, representing the ownership of approximately 88 percent of the nation's egg-laying hens. UEP members produce eggs using various systems including modern cage production, enriched cages, cage-free, free range, organic and other specialty eggs. For more information about UEP, please go to unitedegg.org.

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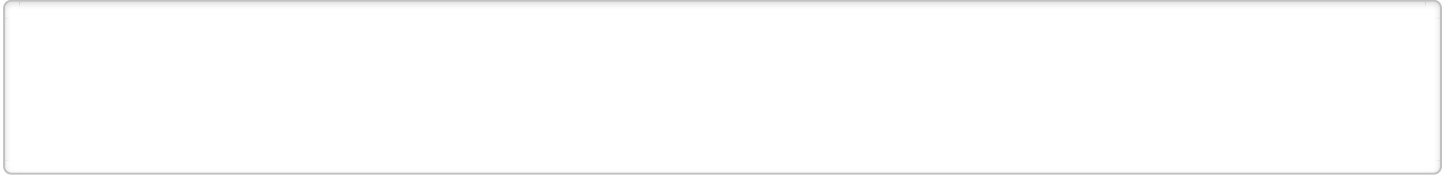
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