

CAGED EGG PRODUCTION

737. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I note the minister's commitment to phase out caged egg production within 10 years, as reported by the ABC on 29 August 2022.

- (1) Will the minister guarantee consumers will not pay more for eggs or products manufactured with eggs as a result of the cessation of caged egg production?
- (2) Will the minister guarantee that the supply of Western Australian eggs will not be reduced as a result?
- (3) Will the minister commit to financial assistance for egg farmers to transition; and, if so, when will this be announced?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

- (1)–(3) I thank the member for the question. The premise of the member's question is not correct.

In light of some of the public statements he has made, talking about all those businesses that have just bought new cages and are still paying them off, I want to set a bit of context for the member. Under the new national standards and guidelines, anyone whose cages were purchased before 2011 will be required to have them decommissioned by 2032. That is the proposed national standard.

Hon Darren West: That's too quick for the National Party.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: That is right.

In 2032, any cages purchased before 2011 will need to be decommissioned and will no longer be able to be used for caged egg production. Of the approximately 64 egg producers in Western Australia, only eight are actually still using conventional cages. As far as we understand, seven of that eight—we will have this clarified by next week—are using cages purchased well before 2011. The sum total of persons the member is referring to is one or possibly two. I urge the member to get across the facts here. We have met with the Commercial Egg Producers Association of Western Australia and, as I said, we are doing a complete mapping of the industry. I am hopeful that by the end of next week we will have that complete so we can all talk factually about the industry.