

Harris/Decima 2010 Poll, commissioned by VHS – Results Summary

71% of Canadians said they are concerned about the humane treatment of farm animals and two-thirds (65%) said a political candidate's stance on farm animal welfare practices would factor into their voting decision.

Nearly three quarters of Canadians (72%) also stated they would be willing to pay more for farm animal products that were certified to humane standards of care by a 3rd party organization. British Columbians and Maritimers were the most compassionate, with 80% of those polled willing to pay more.

When respondents were asked about the welfare of egg-laying hens specifically, three in five Canadians (57%) oppose the use of battery cages for egg-laying hens, and 68% would support a legislated ban on battery cages for their province, up 5% since last year's poll and up 13% since the poll in 2007.

Despite the cruelty of cages, the poll shows that half (51%) of Canadians buy regular white eggs. The poll reported that one-third (33%) of Canadians buy cage-free eggs, and British Columbians are more likely than other regions to buy free-range eggs (17%).

One-third (32%) of respondents wrongly believed that 5-24% of eggs in Canada come from cage-free hens when it's actually as low as 3%.

Once participants learned of the differences between caged and cage-free eggs, and of the minor cost difference between egg types, half (55%) indicated they would be willing to pay more for the next most humane option from what they're currently buying (either free-run, free-range, or certified organic free-range eggs)". British Columbians (67%), women (62%) and those aged 25-34 (68%) are most willing to pay extra.

For example, 41% of those who buy regular caged white eggs said they would buy free-run eggs for an additional \$2 per carton. Two-thirds (64 %) of those who buy regular brown eggs and nearly three-quarters (72%) of those who buy regular omega-3 eggs said they would consider buying free-run eggs instead for an additional \$1.50 and 75 cents per dozen respectively.

Almost all (90%) of those who currently buy free-run eggs would be willing to pay an additional 40 cents per carton of a dozen eggs in order purchase free-range eggs; most of those who currently buy free-range eggs would be willing to spend an additional 50 cents to buy a dozen certified organic free-range eggs (82%). Prices were based on an average of one dozen eggs compared at 6 different grocery stores in Vancouver.

Most Canadians (78%) support a requirement to label cartons as "eggs from caged hens" if the hens are raised in battery cages.