

Hen Housing Diagrams

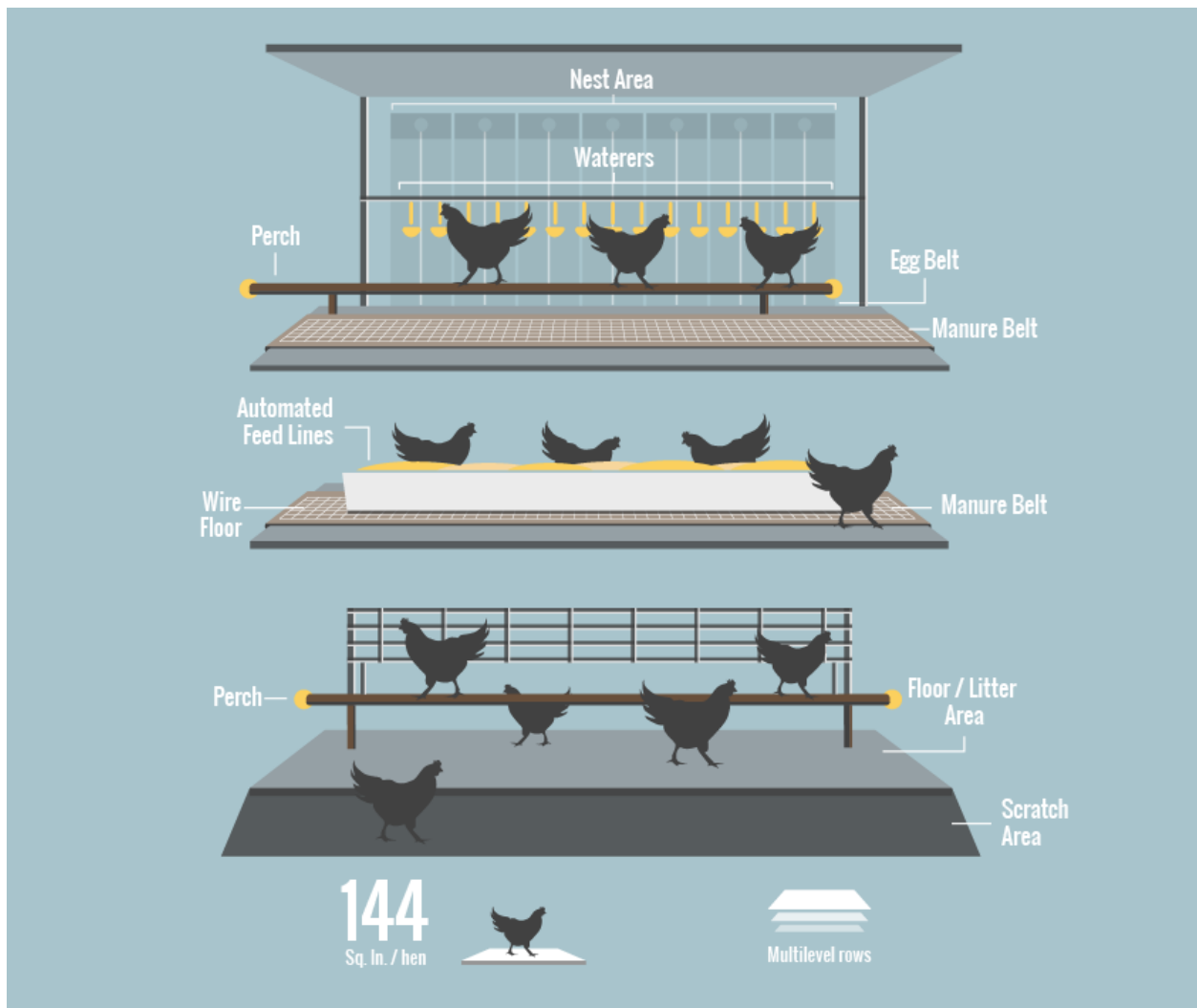
Conventional Cage

Hens are housed inside climate-controlled barns in stacked rows of cages. Each cage gives birds continual access to water and food. The cage has wire mesh floors that allow manure to drop through to a belt below, which keeps manure away from the birds, as well as their eggs, food and water. After a hen lays an egg, it gently rolls off the slightly-sloped mesh flooring onto an egg-collection belt. The belt moves the egg to processing, where it is checked for imperfections, cleaned and packaged.



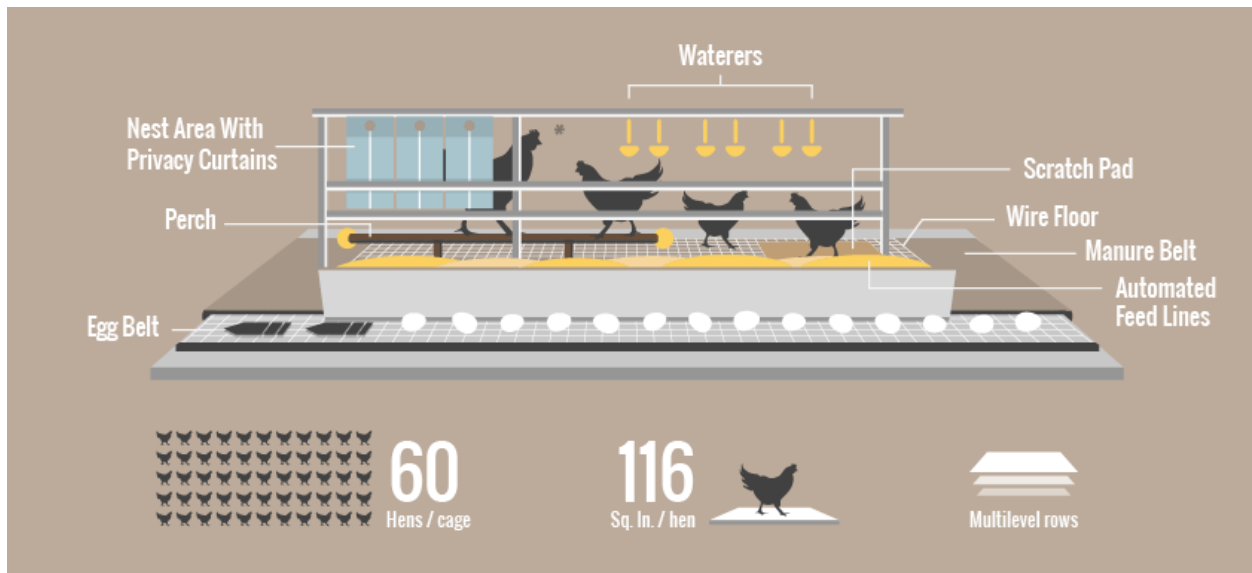
Cage-Free

Cage-free eggs are laid by hens that are able to roam vertically and horizontally in indoor houses and have access to fresh food and water. Cage-free systems vary from farm-to-farm and can include multi-tier aviaries. They must allow hens to exhibit natural behaviors and include enrichments such as scratch areas, perches and nests. Hens must have access to litter, protection from predators and be able to move in a barn in a manner that promotes bird welfare. A cage-free aviary is shown here. Manure belts help keep manure away from birds. Most of the time, hens lay the eggs in the nest box, where the eggs then rolls off the slightly-sloped floor onto a collection belt. The belt moves the egg to processing. Eggs can also be laid in the litter or elsewhere in the barn, and then they must be collected by hand.



Enriched Colony

Hens in enriched colony housing live in smaller groups and have space for natural behaviors like perching, scratching and dust bathing. Curtains provide hens with privacy during nesting. Hens are housed inside climate-controlled barns in stacked rows of enclosures, with continual access to water and food. Each enclosure has wire mesh floors so manure can drop through to a belt below to keep manure away from the birds, eggs, food and water. After a hen lays an egg, it gently rolls off the slightly sloped wire mesh floor onto an egg-collection belt, which moves the egg into the processing area.



Free-Range or Pasture-Raised

Hens in free-range or pasture-raised housing have some access to the outdoors. There are no uniform standards. These hens may forage for wild plants and insects in addition to eating grains.

United Egg Producers (UEP) is a cooperative of U.S. egg farmers working collaboratively to address legislative, regulatory and advocacy issues impacting the industry through active farmer-member leadership, a unified voice and partnership across the agriculture community. UEP's farmer-members work to provide for the health and well-being of their birds; to produce safe, nutritious, high-quality eggs; and to manage their farms responsibly with best on-farm management practices. Leadership of and participation in the UEP Certified program by the vast majority of egg producers further demonstrates a broad commitment to the care of egg-laying hens. UEP also manages the national Egg Safety Center, a leading resource for consumer and industry information on the safe production of eggs and prevention of disease. Formed in 1968, UEP members represent more than 90 percent of US egg production.

