

# BAD LABEL BRIGADE



## Perdue

Perdue, one of the largest producers of poultry in the country, has recently started to include the claims “raised cage free” and “humanely raised” on packages of some its chicken meat. It is FACT’s opinion that these claims are misleading to consumers who expect strong animal welfare standards.

To begin with, unlike egg laying hens, chickens raised for meat are not raised in cages. Confinement in cages causes bruising to the muscle, making it unappealing to purchasers. FACT believes that Perdue’s “raised cage free” claim may give consumers the wrong impression that these birds were treated differently than birds on other large-scale, conventional operations.

Perdue also claims that the birds were “humanely raised” in compliance with the company’s welfare standards. While Perdue states that their standards exceed the National Chicken Council’s (NCC) animal welfare guidelines, Purdue’s standards are not publicly available to consumers. FACT recommends that consumers be wary of any claims that are not completely transparent.

In FACT’s opinion, NCC’s guidelines are a set of weak, industry created standards. While providing for basic necessities, unfortunately the guidelines do not require outdoor access or natural light for the birds, nor do they prohibit the use of antibiotics with healthy animals. FACT thinks that customers who want to buy products backed by strong animal welfare standards should seek out packages of chicken with labels such as Certified Organic, Animal Welfare Approved, and Certified Humane.

### **UEP Certified (United Egg Producers)**

#### **“Produced in Compliance with United Egg Producers’ Animal Husbandry Guidelines”**

Many cartons of eggs found in the supermarket carry the United Egg Producers Certified logo along with the statement “Produced in Compliance with United Egg Producers’ Animal Husbandry Guidelines.” In FACT’s opinion, this label may be misleading to consumers if they expect strong animal welfare standards. UEP Certified guidelines claim to provide a best practice approach to egg production, but they do not prohibit battery cages, beaktrimming or forced-molting. FACT’s position is that customers concerned about animal welfare should seek out egg cartons with additional labels such as Certified Organic, Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane, and Free-Range.”

#### **“No Hormones” on packages of chicken**

Packages of chicken sold in supermarkets commonly sport a claim that reads “no added hormones.” While customers might take this to mean that the birds were raised humanely, in reality hormones are not permitted in chicken production by law. Using hormones with chickens is illegal and no chicken product sold in the U.S. contains them. Therefore, a “no added hormones” claim on chicken is unnecessary and misleading.