



# Workshop 'Animal welfare and innovation'

Hanover, Germany  
9-11 May 2023



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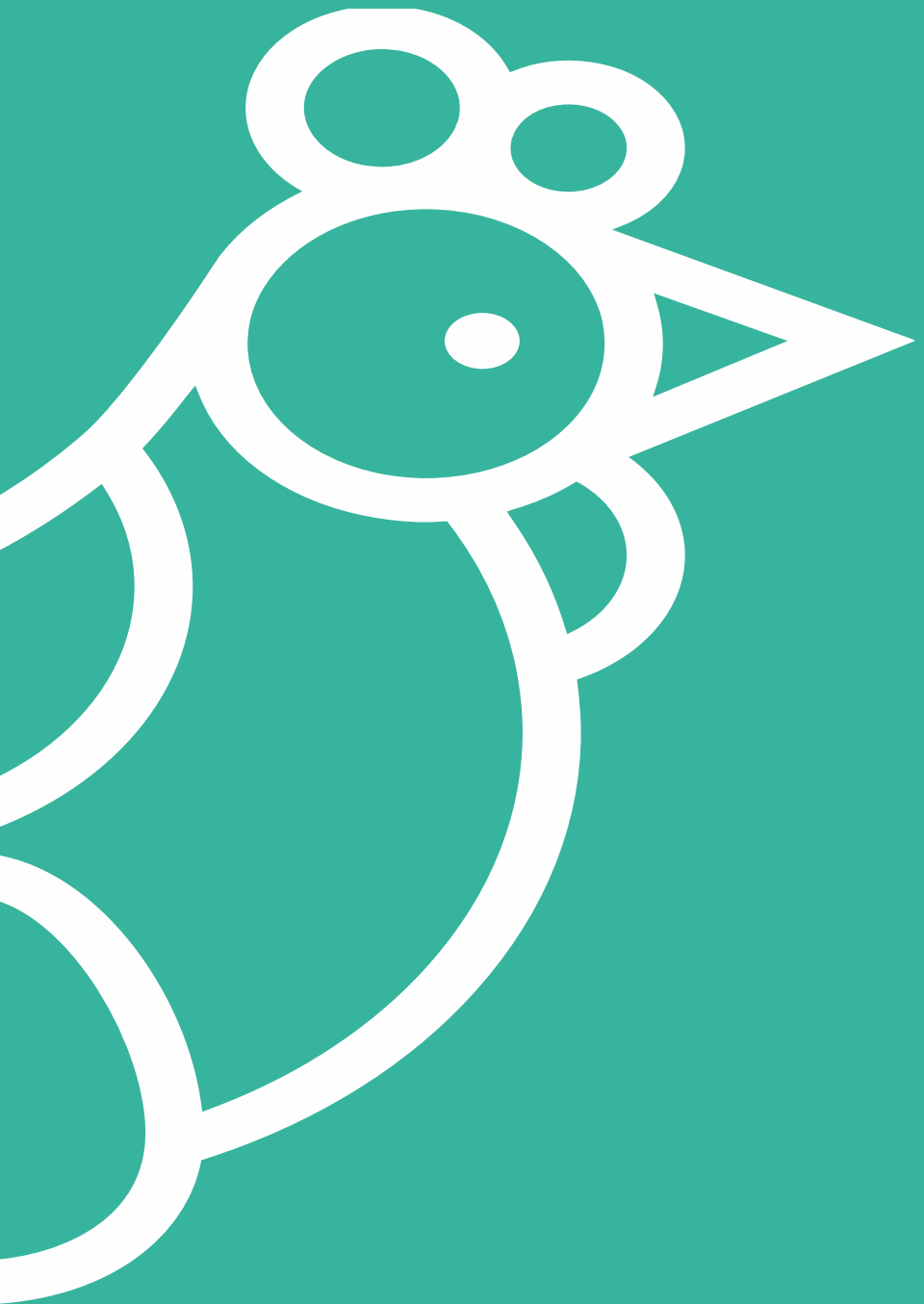
# Cage-free systems for laying hens

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ECOVALIA

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# Best Practice Hens

**Pilot project to support the transition to cage-free systems for laying hens in the EU**

Mariana Yuan R Couto

EU CAP Network „Animal Welfare and Innovation“

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## Introduction to the project



[https://youtu.be/dQLaIJdu\\_cs](https://youtu.be/dQLaIJdu_cs)



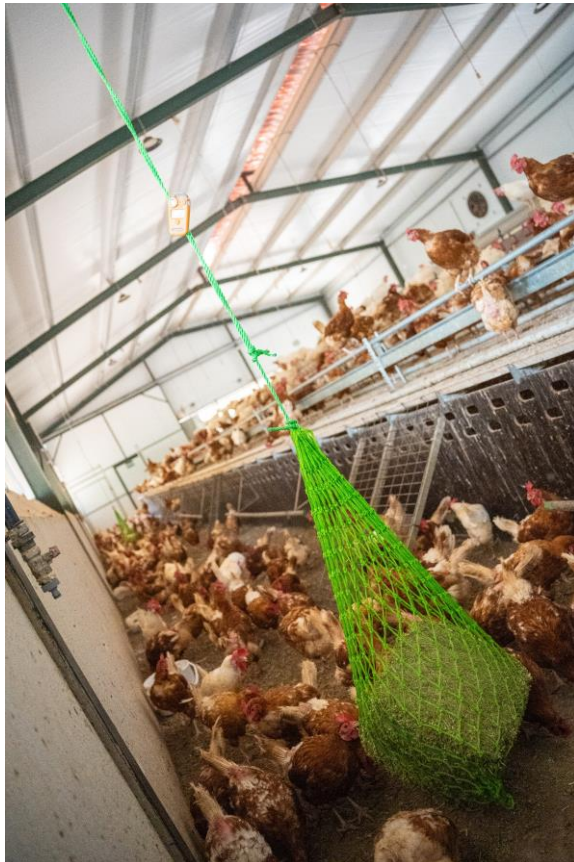
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## Different cage-free systems

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## What changes for the birds?



- More space: 3-D movement -> training, feed, water
- More contact: bird-bird, bird-feces, bird-outside
- Change of climate (in/outdoors, more dust& NH3)
- More risks: problems and diseases
- Different management
- Behaviour more important
- No beak treatment: pecking, cannibalism
  - It needs to be phased out
- Pullet rearing: Crucial
  - Match between rearing and laying environment important
  - Smooth transition from rearing farm to laying farm enhances the

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BEST  
PRACTICES  
FOR  
PULLET  
REARING

Practices to consider when an egg producer transitions to alternative housing systems, particularly from cage to cage-free systems.

- 01 CHOOSE THE REARING SYSTEM
- 02 CHOOSE GENETICS
- 03 TRAINING OF FARMER AND STAFF
- 04 INSPECTION AND STOCKMANSHIP
- 05 WELFARE ASSESSMENT
- 06 PULLET HEALTH
- 07 FEEDING EQUIPMENT AND FEEDING
- 08 DRINKING EQUIPMENT
- 09 ENRICHMENT
- 10 LITTER
- 11 PERCHES
- 12 LIGHTING
- 13 STOCKING DENSITY
- 14 AIR QUALITY AND THERMAL ENVIRONMENT
- 15 BEAK TRIMMING



## 16

BEST  
PRACTICES  
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- 09 ENRICHMENT
- 10 LITTER
- 11 PERCHES
- 12 NESTS
- 13 LIGHTING
- 14 FREE-RANGE AND COVERED VERANDA
- 15 STOCKING DENSITY
- 16 AIR QUALITY AND THERMAL ENVIRONMENT



- The practice abstracts combine knowledge from
  - scientific literature
  - management guides and other technical information
  - input gained during interviews and discussions with relevant stakeholders

## Welfare assessment

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### SEE

- What do we see

### THINK

- What is causing what you see, and is it a problem?

### ACT

- What do we do?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGhqZhD9-lw>

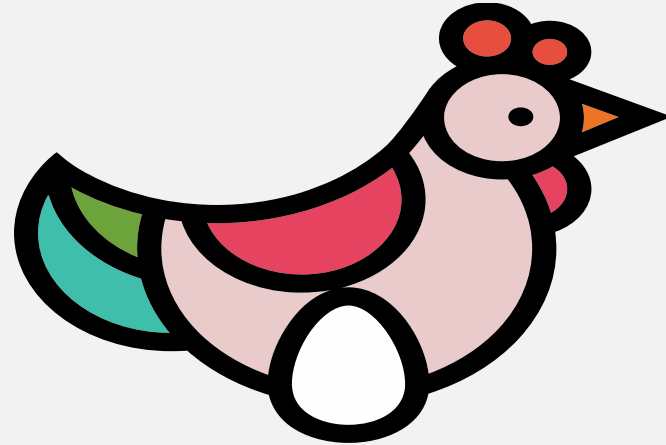


# Transition cage to cage-free



- Farmer training
  - Prevention is more important - All about monitoring
- Organization of farms in the countries
  - Pullets need to be trained well (behaviour)
- Societal demands
- Economic challenges: small and medium
- Climatic conditions - Landscapes and environmental challenges
  - Cultures and traditional knowledge

# Thank you for your attention!



## Best Practice Hens

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All information on the workshop is available on the event webpage:

[https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/events/eu-cap-network-workshop-animal-welfare-and-innovation\\_en](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/events/eu-cap-network-workshop-animal-welfare-and-innovation_en)

