

EGGS — LABELLING

**980. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to my question without notice 891 that I asked on 9 October 2018 to the minister representing the Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations.

- (1) Does the Minister for Agriculture and Food recall the egg industry publicly raising with her at the Commercial Egg Producers Association of Western Australia Inc's sundowner on 17 July 2018 the issue of fertile meat chicken eggs being brought in from the eastern states that are then repackaged or rebranded as free-range or barn eggs and sold to Western Australian consumers?
- (2) If yes to (1), has the minister followed up and investigated whether this practice is taking place?
- (3) If yes to (2), what was the outcome?
- (4) If no to (2), why not?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1) The issue of barn and cage-laid eggs repackaged as free-range eggs was raised at the sundowner.
- (2) My staff have spoken to the president of the Commercial Egg Producers Association of Western Australia and the managing director of Golden Eggs. My understanding is that although selling fertilised eggs is not prohibited, the issue is that these eggs, likely to be laid in a barn, may be repackaged and sold to unsuspecting consumers at a premium price as free-range eggs. Although industry has some evidence demonstrating fertilised eggs are sold in Western Australia, allegations that these eggs, potentially laid in a barn, are repackaged and sold as free-range eggs at a premium, requires further substantiation.
- (3) At this time, allegations have been made but further evidence is needed to substantiate these allegations. As I have stated previously, I would encourage anyone with specific information or related complaints to contact the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety's Consumer Protection division, which in conjunction with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has responsibility for the investigation of alleged breaches of this legislation.
- (4) Not applicable.