

DECEPTIVE LABELING

The animal agriculture industry makes the following claims to promote product sales but these labels are loosely defined, unregulated, and even misleading.



CAGE FREE

Cages may be prohibited but hens are often still raised in enclosed, windowless warehouses. These enclosures are far from what most would consider ethical, but people are misled by the 'cage free' label. Note: Chickens and turkeys raised for meat (as opposed to eggs) are not usually caged, rendering the label meaningless on those products.



FREE RANGE

A farm needs to demonstrate that the animals have "access to the outdoors" but size, quality, and duration of access to that outdoor space is unregulated. This means that conditions vary greatly and there is no way to know what this label actually means.



ANTIBIOTIC FREE

Use of antibiotics is associated with the confined and unhealthy conditions found in the animal agriculture industry. Lack of antibiotic use does not guarantee better welfare. In fact, it can cause more problems for the animals because they are not treated for the diseases that often spread in these environments.



HORMONE FREE

Hormones are often used in the animal agriculture industry to increase the animals' natural production or to make them grow at an unnatural rate—resulting in increased pain and suffering. Many people believe that they avoid this when they purchase food with a "hormone-free" label. However, these claims are meaningless and not approved by the USDA since all animals produce hormones naturally.



GRASS FED

Animals that are 'grass fed' are required to have pasture access during most of their growth, but feedlots, antibiotics, and hormones are allowed in their final months. This label tells us nothing about how the animal was treated—only that they were fed grass.



NATURAL

As defined by the USDA, this term only refers to how meat is processed after slaughter, not how an animal was raised.



WE ALL WANT TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES

The best thing we can do to avoid contributing to the suffering of animals is to reduce or eliminate animal products from our diets. But remember, it's not about being perfect – it's about doing what we can!