



STATEMENT FROM HENNY PENNY HATCHING HEAD OFFICE

We have prepared this statement in response to concerns about the use of chicken hatching programs which have recently been raised by animal ethics groups in Queensland, and which are also raised from time to time in other states due to what we believe is simply a lack of information, or a miscommunication about our program.

We hereby specifically address concerns that have been raised regarding the use and purpose of chicken hatching programs in schools, about the placement and care of chicks at the completion of hatching programs, and about the development of compassion towards animals in children.

We appreciate the concerns that have been raised regarding the welfare of animals; however, we strongly believe, as many educators do, that the only way children can truly learn compassion, empathy and respect for living creatures is through a well-monitored, hands-on, interactive experience. Henny Penny Hatching does not mirror exactly what happens in the poultry industry, but our program provides educators with an opportunity to deliver lessons on this industry in a warm and supported environment. Through the provision of information and consistent support during the running of any of our programs, we also strive to ensure the welfare of the chicks both during and after hatching.

The poultry industry exists worldwide as a means to provide a cost effective source of protein (eggs and meat). Hatcheries facilitate this industry, with some of the larger hatcheries having the ability to hatch anywhere between 500 000 and over 1000 000 eggs per week. Henny Penny Hatching sources layer-strain eggs from a reputable, commercial hatchery which also hatches eggs for the greater poultry industry.

It is important to realise that, when hatching layer-strain eggs for the poultry industry, 50% of the chicks produced will be male. Unfortunately, as the males cannot produce eggs, they are surplus to the requirements of the hatchery and are therefore humanely euthanized, by the industry, at one day old.

Henny Penny Hatching mimics the commercial hatching process on an extremely small scale and with one significant exception – **we do not euthanize our male chicks. Therefore, Henny Penny Hatching gives life to every chick hatched.**

Unlike some hatching programs, our program is currently only available to children who attend an educational facility, as our aim is to provide education in a properly supervised environment, which facilitates the development of empathy, respect, compassion and understanding. Educators who use our program are provided with detailed information and instructions on the appropriate care of our animals. Further information is readily accessible from our website and we maintain a 24 hour on-call policy to ensure the welfare of the animals and to support the educators who are facilitating the program. At the end of the program, any chicks which cannot be given a home by the facility at which they were hatched are returned to us. Unlike the commercial hatcheries, we then **source appropriate homes for all of our chicks.** As layer strain chicks are popular and often sought after by the public, we generally have a waiting list of people who wish to take them. If any of these people end up with a rooster which they cannot keep, we are able to put them in touch with someone else who is able to do so. Male chicks are either sold at the markets or privately raised for use as stud roosters or free-range meat.

It is worth noting that our program was reviewed by the Hon John McVeigh MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, in 2012. Following this review, hatching programs became an approved activity. We also keep abreast of changes in policy in order to ensure that our procedures are consistently in line with those put forward by animal ethics committees across Australia.

As our program is widely appreciated and respected by students and educators across Australia, it seems unfair that students should miss out on the experience we can offer them due to a miscommunication, or lack of information regarding what we actually do.

If you have any further questions or concerns about our program, please contact us directly at Head Office.