



“Yes on 3!” for Farm Workers

Cage-free facilities result in more and better jobs

Question 3 has been endorsed by United Farm Workers and over 100 Massachusetts family farmers because it would lead to higher-quality jobs in agriculture, decreasing unemployment in rural areas.

Better Jobs: On many corporate factory farms, hens, pigs, and calves are locked in cages so small they’re rendered virtually immobile for their whole lives. Workers at these facilities often talk about the emotional toll it takes to witness and be a party to this constant cruelty.

Question 3 would ensure that farm animals are given enough space to stand up, turn around, and extend their limbs. It would also establish a retail standard so that meat and eggs sold in the state meet this modest requirement. Farmers and workers that have already made this switch attest to better working conditions. A pork industry website notes:

“Stockpeople often find more enjoyment and job satisfaction when working with sows in groups [rather than crates]. They have opportunities for positive interaction with animals, and to observe individual differences. Watching sow behavior in a group pen can provide more information to evaluate sow health and well-being.”

More Jobs and Higher Wages: While cage and cage-free facilities have reasonably comparable production costs, cage-free farms often require more employees and more skilled employees who are actually familiar with animal husbandry. Consumer Affairs says the increasing demand for cage-free products could very well be “a bonanza for rural America.” Officials in Missouri, for example, estimate that the trend towards smaller, cage-free farms would “translate into thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in sales for Missouri.”

This trend will also help workers negotiate fairer pay. In many rural areas, one corporate agricultural producer dominates and can dictate wages. More producers in an area means more competition for workers, often resulting in higher wages.

Common Opponents: A primary opponent of the ballot campaign is a hatchet-man for union-busting corporations. Richard Berman, founder of the smear websites UnionFacts.com, LaborPains.org, and TeachersUnionExposed.com, is a lead voice against Question 3 since he also works for big agribusiness corporations. The unethical CEOs that fund Berman don’t want workers or animals to have even the most basic protections.

Future of Agriculture: Consumers and voters are increasingly rejecting the factory farm system in favor of more responsible farms that pay workers a living wage and treat employees, animals and the environment with basic decency. That’s why polling shows 73% of Massachusetts residents support Question 3.

Passing Question 3 will be a major step forward for workers and animals alike.