

News Release

24th November 2005

HSI and NASAA sign historic agreement to launch 'Humane Choice' alternative

Today Humane Society International (HSI) and the National Association of Sustainable Agriculture Ltd (NASAA) signed an historic agreement to provide a 'Humane Choice' alternative to the Australian public.

Negotiations have been underway to establish what we both believe to be the best animal welfare standards for farm animals anywhere in the world. Last year we were the recipient of one of the inaugural Voiceless grants which allowed us to fund the initial groundwork for this programme.

Over the next few months we will be finalising contracts and establishing national distribution chains. At last Australian consumers will have the opportunity to buy a full range of humanely reared produce right across the country.

"Many caring Australians contact our office to ask what products they should buy if they are concerned about animal welfare," said Verna Simpson, Director of HSI. "When we looked into production regimes, organic methods were far superior to the alternatives. We took those standards and improved on them to the point where they are without a doubt the most humane standards in the world."

The 'Humane Choice' label will denote the animal had the best life and death offered to any farm animal. They basically live their lives as they would have done on Old McDonalds farm, being allowed to satisfy their behavioural needs, to forage and move untethered and uncaged, with free access to outside areas, shade when it's hot, shelter when it's cold, with a good diet and a peaceful death.

"We are pleased to be associated with this initiative", said George Devrell, Chair of NASAA. "Organic farmers have always shown respect for their animals, the animals' needs and the land they manage. This is a great opportunity to raise awareness of certified organic farming practices and attract new farmers to our industry whilst giving the consumer wider choice."

"We are hoping this new label will attract many farmers who are already treating their animals with the respect they deserve to come forward and be recognised as a certified supplier of humane produce" said Verna Simpson. "The more people who are involved in this important initiative, the greater the benefit to farm animals in Australia."

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