

Dutch Temporarily Ditch Free-Range

Recently The Netherlands banned keeping poultry outdoors. The country's 5 million free-range birds were carefully moved indoors. This was in response to the threat of infection from migratory birds. As with so many things in life, this action became political. The other European Union countries were not willing to follow suit and told the Dutch government that farmers temporarily bringing their free range flocks indoors would not be allowed to sell the meat or eggs from those birds with a "free-range" label.

The Dutch government has removed its ban. However, individual farmers are working with the government to reduce the risk of infection. Farms on migratory routes are getting temporary roofing to cover free-range pens.

- Dr. Francine A. Bradley