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16 March 2026

Peter Kullgren, Minister for Rural Affairs of Sweden

Dear Mr. Peter Kullgren,

A ban on keeping hens in cages

Since 2025, no hens are kept in cages in Sweden.¹ This has been confirmed by statistics obtained by Djurens Rätt from both authorities and the egg industry. This positive development has been achieved through corporate dialogue, information campaigns and international efforts by animal advocacy organisations. Sweden thus stands out as the only country that has become cage-free for hens without a legal ban. However, despite the fact that cage systems are no longer in use, they remain legally permitted.

The European Commission is currently reviewing the EU animal welfare legislation. In 2020, the European citizens' initiative End the Cage Age was submitted with more than 1.4 million validated signatures, obliging the Commission to consider the proposal. In 2021, the European Parliament, the European Commission and, subsequently, the Swedish Government expressed support for the initiative and announced that cages should be phased out. In October 2023, however, we received the disappointing news that the Commission had decided not to present three quarters of the previously announced upcoming new animal welfare legislation, including the phasing out of cages.

We expect the European Commission to present a proposal for a ban on cages for hens and other animals in the agricultural systems in 2026, although no guarantees have been given. Individual member states, such as Sweden, should not wait for EU-level action but take proactive measures to strengthen animal welfare at national level. Such efforts will, in turn, contribute to better prospects for more ambitious animal welfare legislation at EU level.

The fact that cages for hens are history in Sweden sets an important example for the rest of the EU. However, if cages are not legally prohibited, there is a risk that cage systems will be reintroduced.

¹ <https://www.project1882.org/news/sweden-becomes-cage-free>



A ban on fur farms and trade in fur products in the EU

In 2025, it was also confirmed by the authorities that the last fur farm in Sweden had closed.² The final closure concerned mink farms - farms for foxes and chinchillas had already ceased operations several years earlier due to stricter legislation requiring that the animals should be able to perform their natural and motivated behaviours. The end of fur farming in Sweden was made possible through information campaigns and international work by animal rights and animal welfare organisations, which Djurens Rätt and other animal welfare organisations worked with for more than 50 years. While no formal ban exists yet, an inquiry into how such a ban could be designed is underway and will present its conclusions on April 30th.

The citizens' initiative Fur Free Europe was launched in May 2022 together with Djurens Rätt and more than 80 other organisations across Europe. The initiative calls for a ban on fur farming and the trade in fur products in the EU. A total of 1.5 million signatures were collected, reaching the threshold two months earlier than planned, with more than 100,000 signatures coming from Swedish citizens. Owing to this significant public support, the initiative was formally responded to by the European Commission, which is expected to present its decision by the end of March 2026.

Although Sweden is now free of fur farms, animals continue to suffer on fur farms in other EU Member States. Moreover, without a national ban, there remains a risk that fur farming could be reintroduced in Sweden. A recent poll from early 2026 shows that a clear majority of Swedish citizens support both a national and an EU-wide ban on fur farming.³

In summary, we urge you, Peter Kullgren, to stand up for the animals and reaffirm Sweden's role as a leading country in animal welfare by:

- ***Ensuring that a national ban on keeping hens in cages is introduced in Sweden.***
- ***Ensuring that a national ban on fur farming is introduced in Sweden.***
- ***Ensuring Sweden's efforts to secure EU-wide bans on keeping animals in cages and on fur farms and the trade in fur products, in line with the End the Cage Age and the Fur Free Europe initiatives, in the very near future.***

² <https://www.project1882.org/news/after-50-years-advocacy-all-mink-farms-sweden-close-down>

³ https://savanta.com/knowledge-centre/press-and-polls/animal-welfare-poll-in-eu-member-states-2026-eurogroup-for-animals-3-february-2026/?_jtsuid=5646175448145220660058



Yours sincerely,

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