

August 6, 2008

The Honorable Risa Vetri Ferman
Office of the District Attorney
Court House 4th floor
P.O. Box 311
Norristown, PA 19404-0311

Dear Ms. Ferman:

PETA is the world's largest animal rights organization, with more than 2 million members and supporters dedicated to the protection of animals. We were interested to learn about the charges brought against Philip Fleck and Heather Darcy in regards to a series of "egging" incidents over 18 months. While your office is rightly seeking justice for the many humans who suffered at the hands of those responsible for these crimes, we hope you will also bear in mind that there are also other victims in this case.

Nearly all of the hens raised for their eggs in the U.S. spend their lives in cramped battery cages stacked tier upon tier in huge warehouses. The cages' wire mesh rubs the hens' skin raw and causes their feet to become crippled. Broken bones are also common among these birds, who are confined seven or eight to a cage, without enough room to spread their wings. To prevent stress-induced behaviors caused by extreme crowding, hens are kept in semi-darkness, and the ends of their sensitive beaks are cut off without painkillers. Farmers starve nearly spent hens for days in order to shock their bodies into a final egg-laying cycle. Although chickens can live for more than a decade, hens raised for their eggs are so exhausted that they are commonly sent to slaughter after just two years.

To produce a single egg, a chicken must endure these hellish conditions for approximately 34 hours. If Mr. Fleck and Ms. Darcy are found guilty of the charges against them, we urge you to recommend a sentence of 34 hours of community service for each egg they used. Such a sentence would address the injustice against *all* of the beings who were made to suffer because of these crimes.

Thank you for your diligence in this matter and for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Tracy Reiman
Executive Vice President



PETA

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

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AN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATION DEDICATED
TO PROTECTING
THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS