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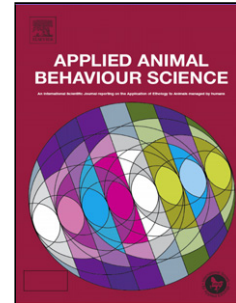
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<AT>Rearing environment and laying location affect pre-laying behaviour in enriched cages

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<ABS-HEAD>Highlights ► Rearing environment affects nest use and locomotory behaviour ► Aviary-rearing may alter hens' perceptions of an attractive nest site ► Hens laying outside the nest show indicators of both settled and unsettled laying ► Individual laying hens might perceive nest sites differently

<ABS-HEAD>Abstract

<ABS-P>The number of eggs laid in a nest is often correlated with nest acceptance and therefore hen welfare. However, evaluating pre-laying behaviour may more accurately reflect welfare independent of egg location. Our objective was to compare the effect of rearing environment and laying location on the pre-laying behaviour of hens in furnished cages (FC). We hypothesized that hens reared conventionally would be less settled (more active, aggressive) during the pre-laying period than aviary-reared hens, and floor layers would be less settled than nest layers. LSL-Lite hens (n=1080) were housed in groups of 60 (N=12, Large FC, 41 296 cm²) and 30 (N=12, Small FC, 20 880 cm²). Half were reared in an aviary (litter access 7 weeks) and half in standard cages. Hens were housed

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