



**FACTORY FARMING: THE EXPERIMENT THAT FAILED**  
Volume II



**Factory Farming: The Experiment That Failed**  
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ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE

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**Factory Farming: The Experiment That Failed**

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## A Family Pen Album

In the fall of 1986 Diane Halverson undertook an apprenticeship in the management of the Family Pen under the guidance of its designer, Alex Stolba—an ethologist—and Hansi Schmid—ethologist and agricultural engineer—at the University of Zurich, Switzerland. This is a selection of photographs from the month-long training at an agricultural research station near Zurich. It illustrates a few of the system's practical provisions for a biologically sound and comfortable life for hogs raised on commercial farms.

It has been observed that domestic sows in an outdoor, natural environment defend their nests of newborn piglets against intruders, human or otherwise, for about ten days after farrowing. In the Family Pen similar seclusion is made possible by closing a gate at the intersection of the dunging and drinking corridors. Each sow and litter will be kept in their respective pens, comprised of nesting area, activity area and drinking corridor, through the second week after farrowing. Then the gate is opened and the sow and her new litter have access to other animals and pens. During this period, says Dr. Stolba, the person who daily manages the animals must re-establish the bond between him/herself and the sow, since during the sow's period of seclusion at farrowing, this bond has been disturbed.



Scientists observed that in a natural environment, "bonds of kinship" remain between a sow and her offspring, even after the birth of subsequent litters. **Above:** the alpha sow of this Family Pen unit rests against the wall. One of her adult daughters lies next to her while piglets from a younger generation are close at hand. This quiet scene was disrupted when an older daughter of the alpha sow from an earlier litter came to the pen and forced the younger sow out, taking her place in the straw by their mother. **Below:** the younger sow walked to an adjacent pen where she lay down with her nose through a hole in the partition between the nesting and activity areas.



A piglet noses in the bark of the rooting area next to the alpha sow in an excursion from the home nest.



Diane Halverson observes an adult with some piglets from two different litters all living together in harmony.



Piglets pile atop an experimental warming plate.

Photos by Diane Halverson





Photos by Diane Halverson

*After daily feeding and cleaning, a small amount of straw is shaken up in the activity area of each pen. Adults often respond by renewing a search for food in the loose straw (top); the young hogs cavorting (middle); nosing for food and eventually resting (bottom).*

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## On Man's Inhumanity to Beast

BY HENRY MITCHELL

Why do pigs chew on iron bars when they are kept closely confined in "efficient" farm settings where they can barely move? Any "normal" fellow with an affinity for animals will tell you they are frustrated, desperate and in tremendous distress, but many believe this to be a sentimental view.

There are even people who believe animals do not "suffer" because they lack a human consciousness and that while they feel a stimulus (as in having their throats cut), they do not register pain in any way comparable to humans.

However, pigs chew the bars for a very good reason, says Donald M. Broom, the first professor of animal welfare at Cambridge University in England. If you spend two or three hours with him, you will learn that experiments show this insane chewing seems to affect chemicals that provide a degree of solace in the pig's brain.

"If you temporarily block the routes to the peptides in the brain, the pig stops chewing," he said. "These experiments, plus examinations of newly slaughtered animals, show that the seemingly insane chewing—if you saw a man doing the same thing you'd say he was insane—has a quite sensible purpose: to provide relief to the animal."

He did not know whether this kind of imperfect solace is achieved, for instance, by humans who chew gum endlessly—and he possibly did not appreciate the question as a frivolous one, for there is certainly nothing frivolous in his approach to animal welfare.

Broom lectures to veterinary and other students at Cambridge, and he proposes to measure scientifically animal misery, the very thing that some say does not exist and others say is so vast as to be immeasurable. He believes there are basic ways in which animals under human supervision suffer quite unnecessarily, and therefore, they have rights: freedom from hunger and inadequate diets; freedom from severe levels of heat and cold, pain, injury and disease; freedom from fear and distress; and freedom to behave normally as animals. An animal that naturally lives in herds, for example, should not be put in solitary confinement.

"I am not talking about killing animals," he said. "[M]any people believe it is wrong to eat them. I eat meat, except not milk-fed veal, of course. There may be arguments against killing or using animals, but I am not talking about that.

"Let's assume, as the world assumes, it is proper to raise animals for food and therefore to kill them. Even so, as long as the animal is alive, its welfare is and ought to be a moral consideration for the humans who keep and eventually eat it.

"By welfare, then, I don't mean the question of an animal's freedom, or its right, as some say, to live. I mean the human obligation to avoid giving the animal unnecessary and endless distress.

"What I am interested in is precise quantification of animal distress. I believe it can be measured accurately as it can in humans. Some people like to believe animals are so different from ourselves that no comparison is possible, but to me it is clear that vertebrates are organized very much the same, whether rat or man. Fish may feel slightly less pain than a rat or a dog but not much less.

"We want to quantify animal suffering in a respectable scientific way, so the information can be given to society at large, so that people have some scientific basis for treating animals in a humane way. For many people it's enough to just sense that animals suffer, but for others it is necessary to move

it and measure it. If it is unarguable from scientific research that animals suffer severely, then people are more ready to enact laws on behalf of animals.

"To some people it is obviously wrong to keep a calf in a box so small it cannot turn around. They would say this deprives the calf of its natural delight in romping about a field and enjoying life—even if its fate is to be slaughtered for food. But what I am interested in is providing proof that not only does the calf suffer, but also that it suffers in measurable ways and that this can be alleviated largely by people.

"Also I want to demonstrate that a farmer can adopt humane ways of raising his animals without going broke: It simply is not true that if calves, say, are raised more in accord with their nature, the farmer will lose a lot of money," Broom said.

It is the custom in much of the "civilized" world to raise chickens in batteries, small cages stacked up, with the chickens debeaked. Switzerland alone, Broom notes, is phasing out the raising of chickens as if they were factory items to be warehoused, but interest in more humane methods is growing around the world.

"In Southeastern England," he said, "it used to be that all eggs were from battery chickens, but now about 12 percent of the eggs are from chickens allowed on the ground, to scratch about in their natural way. And those who provide the new eggs are not going broke."

Some of the barbarous treatment of farm animals, it strikes me, is due to ignorance or lack of ingenuity. Some farmers are lacking in imagination and have simply not thought of alternate ways of raising beasts. People who eat meat are not usually ignorant about the suffering of calves in crates or chickens in batteries, but simply find it better not to think of such things. Presented with a crown roast of lamb, they find it easier to think of Escoffier or a dazzling restaurant than to think of a lamb and the treatment it has received before the roast comes to table.

There was once a preacher threatening his (human) flock with visions of hellfire. He told of a sinner in hell who kept crying out in torment, "Lord, I didn't know, I didn't know." Well, the preacher said that there was suddenly a great thunder from heaven that reached to the lowest depths, a tremendous voice:

"Well, you goddamn well know now."

Broom is tall, thin, quiet, healthy, educated, sane, and is by no means a thundering preacher. But he does hope his work at Cambridge will reduce the number of idiots who say, "Lord, we flat didn't know."

Excerpted from *The Washington Post*, May 8, 1987  
AWI Quarterly Spring/Summer 87 Vol 36 No 1 and 2

## European Parliament Condemns Crates, Battery Cages and Sow Stalls... But US Guide Condones Them

The European Parliament, the consultative body of the European Communities, adopted a resolution in February expressing its opinion on the intensive systems used to raise livestock and poultry. The document reflects the European public's strong objection to the suffering imposed on animals reared for food, as well as the importance the Parliament places on public concern and the expert evidence it received on the welfare of farm animals.

The "Resolution on Animal Welfare Policy" covers intensive rearing of veal calves, transport of farm animals, keeping of laying hens, and intensive rearing of pigs. Following are highlights of the Parliament's statements on veal calves, hens and pigs.

The European Parliament:

- Believes that the present system of feeding calves on an exclusively liquid diet, while housing them in individual crates, which deny them the opportunity to move or turn round, should be abolished in favor of a system of group housing;
- Is of the opinion that a diet containing roughage and adequate amounts of iron, which would lead to a pinker colored meat, would not only favor the normal development of a calf, but is not likely to create consumer resistance, especially if the consumer is made aware of the method of production of white meat;
- Is of the opinion that a diet that does not contain roughage but consists solely of feed with insufficient iron content, resulting in "white" veal, is unethical, and that such a rearing system should be prohibited in Community countries;
- Believes that legislation should be drawn up to achieve these changes, based on minimum standards that take into account the calves' need for a well-ventilated environment, a balanced diet, and adequate room to stand up, lie down, turn around and adopt a comfortable sleeping posture, and that such calves should not be deprived of social contact with other calves after 6 weeks of age;
- Notes that most experts believe that the battery cage system, even with the new recently agreed minimum standards, contravenes the Council of Europe's Convention on the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes; takes the view that the system should be phased out within 10 years, and that Member States should adopt a statement of intent to this effect;
- Welcomes the growth in the last three years of alternative systems, and that whilst much progress has been made with the application of modern technology, recognizes



that there is a need for more research and practical experience of commercial large scale alternative systems;

- Believes that minimum standards in the form of enforceable legislation should be laid down for the keeping of pigs;
- Suggests that these must include references to the need for a certain amount of straw or equivalent material for the well-being of sows;
- Strongly believes that the close confinement of sows in cell stalls or tethers should be discontinued, and points out that experts seem to confirm that this would have few negative effects on the economies of pig production;
- Also believes that more research and improvement is necessary on minimum requirements for a farrowing stall which would allow both for the provision of straw or similar material for the sows and suitable protection for the piglets;
- Additionally, believes that the minimum age for weaning should be three weeks, that weaned piglets being reared for fattening purposes should be provided with a non-slatted or non-perforated surface as a lying nesting area, and that mutilations such as tail-docking and castration of male pigs no longer need to be carried out routinely, but only where this is beneficial to the animals' welfare;
- And notes that at present, pigs are slaughtered before sexual maturity is reached, and that the consumer can therefore be protected against tainted meat more effectively in another way.

In conclusion, the European Parliament called on the Commission of the European Communities to urgently "come forward with proposals for directives relating to the intensive rearing of veal calves, fattening pigs, gilts and sows, and the transport of farm animals." It also called on the Commission to set up an information program concerning the different systems of egg production, so that consumers can be properly informed on this subject.

A number of agricultural science organizations and livestock industry groups have sponsored the development of a Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching. The writing of this guide has been organized by Professor Stanley Curtis, an animal scientist at the University of Illinois and the former editor of *Confinement*, a now defunct magazine that was dependent financially on confinement equipment manufacturers. During the 1970s, it was distributed free of charge to farmers, encouraging them to cage or crate their animals.

The Guide has been critiqued for being merely descriptive of current "standard operating procedures" such as the crates confining veal calves and the narrow stalls confining pregnant sows, both of which are biologically unsound and inhumane. Furthermore, the document approves routine housing of agricultural animals in scientific institutions in extreme confinement and the performance of painful procedures on animals without anesthetic (for instance, dehorning of calves and young cattle)—whether or not such housing or procedures are specified by research protocol.

The Guide has also been criticized for ignoring or selectively referencing the work of leading European ethologists and veterinarians on behavior and disease problems present in many standard animal agriculture practices. It gives short shrift to alternative systems.

At the International Symposium on Bio-Ethics and Applied Ethology in Montreal, held between August 15 and 16, 1987, professor Ingvar Ekesbo, a leading veterinary ethologist at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and president of the Standing Committee on Animal Welfare for the Council of Europe, asked whether the Council of Europe's Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes was included in the Guide.

This Convention, which came into effect in 1978, has been ratified by 13 European democracies. The Council of Europe Convention states in part, "Animals shall be housed and provided with food, water and care in a manner that—having regard to their species and to their degree of development, adaptation and domestication—is appropriate to their physiological and ethological needs in accordance with established experience and scientific knowledge."

It stipulates that, "the freedom of movement appropriate to an animal, having regard to its species and in accordance with established experience and scientific knowledge, shall not be restricted in such a manner as to cause it unnecessary suffering or injury." However, there is no reference in the Guide to this important document.

Rather than encouraging the design of environments that take into account the basic ethological needs of animals, the Guide promotes changing the anatomy of the animal so that it can survive and be sufficiently productive, even in a biologically unsound environment. For example, the Guide approves of debeaking chicks to reduce what it refers to as "aggressive behavior and injuries among animals." What the Guide ignores is that debeaking only treats symptoms—it does not address the real cause of pecking problems.

The Guide ignores and conflicts with both the spirit and the substance of the resolution issued in February 1987 by the



*A sow in a conventional farrowing crate, unable to build a nest for her piglets because of a lack of space, and unable to even turn around.*

Diane Halverson

European Parliament, calling for the abolition of veal crates and the iron deficient diets fed veal calves, abolition of stalls or tethers for pregnant sows, and the phase-out of battery cages for laying hens. (See opposite page.)

Only one person with a history of active concern for animal welfare was sent a copy of the draft guide to review and to circulate among colleagues for comments. The remarks of humane organizations were ignored almost entirely in the development of the provisional final draft. Nevertheless, it is presented as the farm animal research equivalent to the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, used for biomedical research on animals.

The latter has been revised repeatedly during its quarter century existence. Before the last revision, open hearings were held throughout the nation, at which scientists from a variety of disciplines and representatives of animal protective organizations gave oral and written testimony before a committee of veterinarians responsible for gathering information, suggestions and criticisms. It is officially recognized by the National Institutes of Health and the US Congress.

None of this, of course, is true of the Guide, which was drawn up hastily without public hearings of any kind. The majority of handling procedures and housing methods described in the Guide are identical to those used on commercial farms. It is embarrassingly obvious that the purpose of the guide is to attempt to throw a mantle of respectability over commercial practices that force animals to suffer extreme confinement, nutritional deprivation and unnecessary mutilations for no loftier goal than to increase profits for the industry.

Not surprisingly, a representative of the National Pork Producers Council says in the *National Hog Farmer* magazine (August 1987) that the "recommendations are reasonable" and "match the methods most researchers and teachers already use" in agriculture. In fact, the article applauds the motivation it ascribes to the whole exercise; "Guide Leads Offense Against Animal Rightists" is the heading for these thoughts.

"A bunch of regulations for university folks may seem like a stupid way to slow down animal rights activists," it states, and goes on to explain, "...the rules may be just the ammunition the livestock industry needs to help lawmakers make sensible decisions when asked to restrict how producers raise their animals."

The Guide quotes Dr. Curtis as saying, "We decided it was time we developed these guidelines because the government was being forced to come up with its own rules in response to animal activists." A final version is expected to be released this fall.

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## Life and Death on an Assembly Line

Reports on the spread of disease due to poultry slaughterhouse practices have galvanized the interest of consumer groups. On almost every butchering assembly line, shiny steel fingers scoop



Cathy Liss

out the entrails from chickens and turkeys at the rate of 90 birds a minute. These machines often tear the intestines and shower the meat with feces containing salmonella and other food poisoning bacteria. The assembly line process that speeds dead birds through inspection also rushes the live birds, fully conscious, through many of the steps from hatching through slaughter.

Beginning at the hatchery, debeaking of chicks is undertaken with maximum rapidity. Burning off a substantial part of the upper beak has unfortunately been a common practice in the poultry industry. It is intended to reduce the severity of injuries from pecking among flocks of thousands of crowded birds kept in a confinement broiler house.

University of Georgia extension poultry scientist Joseph Mauldin, commenting on his field observations of hatchery procedure, told a conference on poultry health and condemnations, "There are many cases of burned nostrils and severe mutilations due to incorrect procedures which unquestionably influence acute and chronic pain, feeding behavior and production factors. I have evaluated beak-trimming quality for private broiler companies and most are content to achieve 70 percent falling into properly trimmed categories...replacement pullets have their beaks trimmed by crews who are paid for quantity rather than quality of work. There is a dire need for more quality control in beaktrimming."

On the bright side, Mauldin reports that in just the last few years, over one-half of the broiler hatcheries in the southeastern United States have stopped debeaking, producers having found that it is more economical to rear the birds with beaks intact. Many hatcheries are slow to change however, and they continue with this painful, hastily performed procedure.

The length of time to raise chicks from hatching to slaughter age and weight has itself been sped up drastically by means of breeding and a diet promoting fast growth. Twenty years ago, the rearing time was 15 weeks, but now is only seven to eight weeks. Deformities and acute cardiac arrest in some of these birds are associated with this rapid growth. According to an article appearing in the October 1982 *Poultry Digest*, "Broilers are growing at such a rate that their legs are being pushed out of shape. Tendons are being slipped, legs are being bowed and a condition described as 'cow hocks' is being developed."

Dr. Douglas Wise of the Department of Clinical Veterinary Medicine, Cambridge University, reports that the only obvious and immediate way to reduce the incidence of twisted legs is by reducing growth rate. "In the case of broiler chickens, this is clearly uneconomic," he said. "Young, growing bone is a plastic material and the faster it is growing, the more plastic it is. The consequences of very minor deviations in perfect conformation become serious in these circumstances and can lead to bone deformity." But in the broiler industry, the suffering of these individual birds (and the economic loss that may result from their decreased "performance" or death) is considered a small price to pay for accelerating the growth rate of the mass.

Nothing slows down in the hours prior to slaughter. University of Arkansas animal scientist T.L. Goodwin, addressing a conference on poultry health and condemnations, said, "The problems associated with transporting broilers are bruises, shrinkage and those broilers dead on arrival." Many bruises apparent at slaughter result from the rapid and rough capture, loading, transport and unloading of the birds on the day of slaughter. In the close confines of the broiler house, birds are grabbed and hastily shoved into crates for transport, pulled from the crates at the slaughter plant and hung upside down by the feet on hooks that carry them by conveyor belt to an electrical stunner. With speed a priority, some birds are improperly stunned, and some are not stunned at all on their way to slaughter.

An article appearing in the July 6, 1987 issue of *The New Yorker* focused on the fourth largest producer of broilers, Perdue Farms. This article on this poultry empire notes that non-unionized, cheap labor operating Perdue's East Coast slaughterhouses and processing plants has been important in the development and expansion of Perdue's broiler operations.

Tax breaks have also been crucial in this growth. In the October 27, 1986 issue of *Forbes*, it was reported that Frank Perdue owns 90 percent of the company, worth over \$200 million. Perdue Farms is an operation of enormous size: "seven production plants...supported by a system of Perdue Farms egg hatcheries, feed mills, and a number of chicken-growing farms' producing "six and a half million chickens a week" (*The New Yorker*) with annual sales of over \$840 million (*Forbes*).

Nevertheless, Perdue is able, under the present US tax code, to use an accounting system originally intended to assist family farmers stay on the land. Another tax code provision allows Perdue Farms and other industrialized operations to depreciate equipment at a rate faster than the equipment's true "life expectancy." Unfortunately, these and other tax breaks—and the overproduction they inspire—have helped to put modest-size family farmers at a large disadvantage in their attempts to survive and have painfully intensified the conditions under which birds and other farm animals species are housed.

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## Bill Killing: California-Style

Thanks to a novel wheeze, patented in California, bills laboriously passed by the state legislature can then be painlessly cancelled out, no fuss or bother, by a "special interest" committee. It happened (not for the first time) last August and, as a result, next year some 48,000 of California's newborn calves will, like their forebearers, have to endure diabolical conditions throughout their brief lifespan.

Incarcerated in individual crates just 22" wide and 55" long they will not have enough room to groom themselves or even to turn around. They will exist on a so-called "milk-fed" diet that is in fact an antibiotic laced formula. And they will spend most of their sorry lives lying in the dark on top of their own excrement.

Yet it could and should have been otherwise. A bill—sponsored by Assemblyman Tom Bates on behalf of the Humane Farming Association and drafted to give farmers no good cause for complaint—was introduced into the California Assembly. Its sole provision was that crates should be a trifle larger, allowing the animals some minimal freedom of natural movement.

It was also convincingly argued that because the calves would then be under less stress, they would then be less prone to disease and therefore no longer in need of a hefty daily dose of antibiotics—antibiotics that, in the end, find their way into the species at the top of this food chain: the veal eater.

The Assembly passed the bill with a comfortable majority, and then the Senate approved it by a handsome 24-6. "That's that," you would have thought; a modest but important victory for sense and sensibility. But, no. Before becoming law, the bill had to clear one final hurdle in the form of the Assembly Agriculture Committee.



*This calf will live out its short, sickly life in this cramped crate.*

Humane Farming Association

The Committee met on Aug. 24. When the Bates bill was called, however, there was no quorum. Committee members had softly and suddenly vanished away. No quorum, no vote. And with the Committee not due to meet again until the next legislative session, that meant the bill was dead.

So all's to do again. However, supporters of the bill, enraged at the farming lobby's tactics, are determined to see that next time around, the will of the legislature prevails. And it would be fitting if the Forces of Light, after finally vanquishing the Powers of Darkness, could also ensure that the calves no longer have to spend nearly all their time in the dark solely because it keeps them quiet.

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## Growing Worries Over Intensive Rearing

In Britain, a recent salmonella scare linked to egg production has added fuel to existing worries about the health of everyday foods. More and more the intensive rearing of farm animals is coming under attack as being neither safe (for the consumer) nor moral. And the supermarkets are responding.

A recent example is Marks & Spencer's new brand of pork. The company says that the sows and piglets are kept together for several weeks, straw bedding is amply provided and medications are used sparingly. The company also claims that its veal comes from non-intensively raised calves.

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## Astrid Lindgren, Factory Farming Foe, Wins Albert Schweitzer Award

*Astrid Lindgren is Sweden's most popular author. When she turned her powerful mind to reforming factory farm cruelty, the Swedish government passed a new law in 1988. In recognition of her achievement, the Albert Schweitzer Medal of the Animal Welfare Institute was presented to her March 16 at the Swedish Embassy residence, where Ambassador Wilhem Wachtmeister welcomed members and special guests. "In Sweden," he said "She is not only the most famous lady, she is the most beloved. I am sure that if the animals could vote, the majority would be still greater in her favor."*

*The medal was presented to Astrid Lindgren by Congressman Charles Bennett, dean and chairman of the Florida delegation and author of the Veal Calf Protection Act now pending before the House Agriculture Committee.*

### Congressman Bennett's Remarks

I am reminded about what President Truman said one time. You know, when you come to Washington and you really want to have a friend, better buy yourself a dog.

Tonight we're going to recognize an extraordinary lady. She lived on a farm. She left at an early age and made her way into the big city and became a great writer, translated in 50

languages. Her tart and sparkling wit really touched me very much. She says here: "A good idea would be if you took the politicians along and showed them the heifers in their stalls and let them smell the manure gas and the ammonia they're on. Then, they'd more easily perceive why so many blessed antibiotics are needed to treat the animals' incessant bouts of pneumonia. Yes, you're right; we also have to take antibiotics when we are sick. Only the difference is that we don't have to inhale the ammonia day and night our whole lives, and we don't contract pneumonia quite as often."

Next thing I'd like to read to you tells about pigs. She went on to say: "How come pigs, for example, start to bite each other's tails off? There is no way that that can be a token of well-being—that's a sign of gross anxiety. Well that's the time to start up the research, says the Farmers Meat Marketing Association. Not the way one might believe—to develop a genial improvement of the pigs' environment and thus decrease their anxiety. Not at all: they want the researchers to develop a pig indifferent to anxiety, a pig, I presume that likes to have its tail bitten off! You wonder, isn't that sick? Shouldn't the animals that can transform the verdure of the pasture into the finest protein be permitted to do it (and at the same time keep the meadows from being overgrown)? Shouldn't animals be allowed to grow at the rate that's natural for them, instead of—cooped up with no exercise—being fed an overdose of grain in order to grow twice as fast, while they are being stuffed with antibiotics in order to survive all the bouts of pneumonia and boils and joint pains that constantly plague them?"

Coming out of her experiences in Northern Europe where so many of the cattle have to be kept indoors...she expressed a real empathy for the cow. She said what a pity to have artificial insemination, because the only joyful day that some of these cows have is that one day when they meet the bull out in the yard. So that touched me very much! When she took on the politicians in a sparkling, witty way, I can see how all these politicians crumbled!

I just wish you were here to try and help me out with my calf bill! I had no idea that anybody would've done all you have done on all the types of animals and, of course, they all ought to be considered the same way. It's easy for us to love dogs because they love us, and they never criticize, and they are always there to show affection for us. Most animals actually do that. I grew up in Florida, and people talk about the horrible panthers and alligators; but I've had a lot of experiences with both of them. And you know, if you don't imperil an alligator, you're not going to get much trouble with it. They are not really looking to pick on people!

Like yourself, I love animals. And I think it's a test of human kindness, whether you really love things and beings that have not been as much blessed by The Lord as have we. Around us are all these beings which have sentiments—I think they have souls—loving creatures that want to be loved like we like to be loved. I think it's wonderful that this sweet lady across the ocean from us has impressed the parliament of her country.



## Astrid Lindgren's Acceptance Speech

My dear friends!

You can't imagine what this medal means to me. I do not think I have done enough to deserve it.

For what have I done, Really? I have only over and over again pointed out—mainly in the newspapers—that our domestic animals have certain "human" rights. They have the right, for example, to a decent life during the short time they have on this earth. Animals can feel pain and sorrow and agony, and the fear of death, just as we do. Every human being who has a heart knows that, really. But apparently it is possible to repress that knowledge when profits and money making are in trouble. How else can we explain that so much cruelty to animals can be found in every country in the world?

I am a farmer's daughter. During my childhood I lived among horses and cows and calves and sheep and pigs and chickens, all kinds of animals. And the animals were our friends. *My* friends. At the time, there were mainly family farms, very few large-scale producers. Swedish farmers have always been fond of the animals and treated them as friends. That is how it has been from time immemorial. But now, family farming is pretty much a thing of the past.

It all began one fateful day in the mid 1960s. The politicians decided that it was time to get things moving! Down with the family farming! They said. Up with large-scale operation and big animal factories—so the people can have good food, and cheap! They didn't talk about "cows" and "pigs" any more—they talked about "production units," which did not exactly call for loving care, or even decent treatment. This transition to large-scale, industrialized animal husbandry was the worst decision and the worst miscalculation ever made by the Swedish Parliament.

At the time, I did not know very much about what was going on in the Swedish agriculture. I had been a city dweller for years, living in Stockholm, with no insight whatsoever into animal factories and big slaughterhouses.

But one day, I happened to write a story of humorous article about cows in our biggest daily newspaper. I have always been fond of cows. I forgave old Bessie long ago for the time she picked me up on her horns and tossed me halfway across the pasture back home. I don't know what made her do that—maybe I got in her way. I was three years old then. She was just out there with our other cows, enjoying the most glorious summer grazing, and having a wonderful time. But now, as I said, almost 80 years later, I wrote an article about cows. About how dreary the life of a cow could be nowadays. A cow didn't get to graze anymore, her calf was taken from her as soon as it was born, and, worst of all, she could no longer be courted by the interested bull. The inseminator came instead, and that was not the same.

After that article I got a letter from a female veterinarian, Kristina Forslund. She was—and still is—a docent at the Swedish University of Agriculture. She described her experiences as a veterinarian, with full insight in our animal husbandry, and it was a harrowing account about indecent treatment of animals. She succeeded in making me so upset

that even now, three years later, I still haven't gotten over it. Kristina asked me to help her in her struggle to bring about better animal husbandry. She thought—optimist that she is—that everyone would listen to me. At any rate we managed to rouse a massive public reaction, which finally resulted in a new animal protection law in Sweden. The Prime Minister himself came to my home to deliver the good news. The new law was supposed to be kind of a birthday present for me! Goodness gracious, what a wonderful present! But it turned out to not be that wonderful—not on every point—not for all animals. There is a great deal more that must be changed, before one can lean back and relax!

And that is one of the reasons why I am so happy to receive this medal. It gives me the guts to continue the struggle! The struggle, yes indeed. There are reactionaries back home, you know, they don't want any changes. It is impossible, they say. It is too expensive, they say. But let us hope that we one day can get an animal protection law as kind and decent as people in other countries believe that we already have.

For your help and encouragement, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I am sure that all Swedish cows and bulls and calves and pigs and sheep and chickens and hens are joining me when I say it once more!

Thank you!

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## Astrid Lindgren's Magic Words

For those who would like to read, in translation, the letters Astrid Lindgren wrote to the big Stockholm newspaper *Expressen* to protest cruel factory farming methods, AWI has published a 27-page booklet which includes letters and articles from 1985 to 1989.

It's satire at its best with a clear aim: to prohibit life-long incarceration of farm animals.

"The prophets of profitability," she writes, "are not going to understand this attack on today's agribusiness. They're going to go on pushing their assertion about how good animals actually have it, shut up in their animal factories.

"All right, then, prove it! Let us see how contented they are! Tell the TV companies to come on in and make a series of documentaries!

"No, the prophets of profitability won't hear of it. And you can understand them. There's a big risk that we might all become vegetarians. And what would that do for profitability?"

But Astrid has a solution and she tells the government (and the voters) about it in the form of an irresistibly outrageous dream. "I had a dream the other night—and it was about our Lord and the animals and the Minister of Agriculture..."

If you'd like to read it, send two dollars to AWI for the book entitled, "How Astrid Lindgren Achieved Enactment of the 1988 Law Protecting Farm Animals in Sweden."

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## Campaigning to Improve India's Brutal Slaughterhouses

The Center for Action, Research and Technology for Man, Animals and Nature Bangalore (CARTMAN), an organization striving against overwhelming odds to improve the lot of India's draught animals, has asked the Animal Welfare Institute to report on its work.

Currently, the prime target for CARTMAN's reforming zeal is India's 2,800 legal and illegal slaughterhouses. When the bullocks and buffaloes arrive, they are already in a pitiful state. On their long journey, have had no food, water or rest and will have been persistently buffeted and beaten. Thereafter, their treatment almost defies belief. We quote verbatim from the letter we have received:

Slaughter methods are cruel and barbarous. The neck is twisted and the animal is made to fall on the ground. It sustains bone fractures and severe body injuries. It is then dragged on the floor. Its head is severed in the presence of other animals waiting to be slaughtered. Animals panic and pass urine and excreta which stagnate on the floor.

Pig slaughter is the most cruel. They are brought to the slaughterhouse with their mouths muzzled or tied. With their legs tied they are pierced in the heart region again and again. In some cases their heads are buried in mud and they are allowed to die of suffocation. Alternatively, they are thrown in boiling water.

CARTMAN is campaigning for humane slaughter methods and modernized slaughterhouses. It is meeting with religious leaders (stunning is opposed on religious grounds), meat workers, legislators and journalists. The director of this admirable body is Professor N.S. Ramaswamy, who is also an adviser on the meat industry to several state governments and the chair of an expert committee on development of the meat industry, set up by the Indian Government.

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*The neck of this buffalo has been broken and his legs have been tied together. He waits in agony to be slaughtered.*

## AWI Program to Encourage Farmers to Rear Pigs Humanely

To combat the cruel deprivation suffered throughout their entire lives by millions of sows, boars and piglets on factory farms, the Animal Welfare Institute has begun a pilot project for special labeling of pork products derived from humanely raised pigs.

The first farm enrolled in this program is located in southern Minnesota. Pork from this farm will be marketed in eight Lund's supermarkets in Minneapolis-St. Paul beginning late August 1989. A Minnesota-based mail order food company will also distribute the meat. The program will be expanded to include more farmers as reliable markets for this product increase. The special claims label is shown below.

Mail orders can be placed with The Prairie Gourmet, which will ship Pastureland Farms pork anywhere in the country. Customers can contact Prairie Gourmet at (612)596-2217 (from Minnesota call 1(800)527-0143) or write The Prairie Gourmet, Artichoke Lake, Correll, Minnesota 56227.

More about the program and the family farmers involved will appear in a subsequent issue of the *Quarterly*.

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## The Petersons Talk About Pastureland Pigs

Sows and their piglets on the Peterson farm have come into the limelight since being shifted from an intensive system to the comfortable, straw-bedded pens required to qualify for AWI approval. The pigs are released outdoors in good weather, and farrowing crates have been removed. This pilot project has been undertaken under AWI auspices in an effort to enlist market sources in favor of a comfortable life for animals raised to supply the nation's huge demand for pork, ham, bacon and sausage. In consultation with experienced farmers and





Photos: Diane Halverson

**Above:** A herd of little pigs dash through their outdoor pen. They're never forced to fatten in cramped, flat deck batteries as early-weaned pigs on factory farms must do. **Below:** Pam, Mike and Mark keep a close watch on all the animals—and vice versa.



veterinarians, AWI has prepared guidelines for family farms that wish to market meat under the Pastureland Farms label.

Agribusiness interests have moved heavily into the hog market, building complexes to house thousands of sows. These unfortunate animals are confined during the months of their pregnancy in gestation crates so narrow they cannot turn around and can just barely stand up and lie down. Then they are transferred to farrowing crates, where they are deprived of the sow's natural instinct to build a nest for her piglets. This enforced sedentary life makes the births more difficult.

Mark Peterson, his brother Mike, and his wife Pam are the first farmers to participate in AWI's Pastureland Farms program. Speaking of the straw-bedded pens in which the sows farrow, Pam says, "They have an easier time with farrowing. I don't have any sows that, after they farrow, wait for a day, resting up before they can eat [as many sows do when they are in crates]. These girls were right up when it was feeding time." She continues, "In a pen, they can go with their instincts and they can nest, but in a crate, you can see some of them pawing at the ground trying to make a nest, and there isn't anything there for them to work with."

Despite the fact that many of the pigs had never had straw available to them before, they knew exactly what to do with it. "Experts in the industry said, 'These are confinement hogs. They're bred for confinement. They don't mind being confined.



**Above:** Straw bedded pens spell comfort for this sow and her piglets. Farrowing crates used in factory farms are taboo in AWI approved Pastureland Farms pork. **Below:** Indoor/outdoor pens provide comfort during the winter months. In summer the hogs enjoy roaming around the pasture and sampling the vegetation.



These are no longer instinctive, wild animals.' I don't believe that," says Mike. He spoke of a sow who had had nine litters in a farrowing crate, but when put in a pen, immediately started to make a nest. "You can't tell me that she doesn't remember something about how she had the last [litter]. She had her habits and things she knew that worked in the crate, and the only thing she had to tell her to break those old habits when she got in a new situation was instinct." He has observed the sows pulling straw down toward the piglets as they are being born "because they know that the piglets are going to come around to that side of the body and nurse."

As the little pigs grow, they become frolicsome. "When we give them fresh straw," says Mark, "they love to run around in it and play, and occasionally, you'd see a 500-pound sow running around the pen chasing after and playing tag with her little pigs. I would imagine that the sow in a farrowing crate would like to do this, but it's a little difficult for her."

Though the system is more labor-intensive ("about 50 percent more per sow," says Mike), start-up and operating costs are less, the satisfaction is greater. This type of system, says Pam, "makes you feel like doing it more." Her husband Mark agrees, "You're with them longer and you can tend to them better."



Pam and Mark Peterson's son Joe enjoys a playful moment with one of the piglets.

Mike says of the intensive system: "There's probably half a day involved with 1,200 pigs per year because there's no reason for you to be in the building, other than to check them, and you probably don't pay as much attention as you should. You care more about the numbers than the animals after and a while."

Pastureland Farms products are now being test marketed at two Lunds stores in Minneapolis. The program has generated a considerable amount of favorable, unsolicited farm press, including a full-page spread in the November issue of *Pork '89* and articles in the October issues of *Hog Farmer* and *Hogs Today*.

In mid-December, the Minneapolis/St. Paul CBS-TV affiliate, WCCO-TV, visited the farm after one of their camera operators noticed the product in Lunds. The resulting news segment aired three times.

Minneapolis Public Radio also picked up the story and aired a piece in early December after interviewing the Petersons and Diane Halverson, AWI's Research Associate for Farm Animals, who is heading the program. The *Minnesota Star Tribune* carried an extensive report in its January 14, 1990 issue.

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No sow under the Pastureland Farms program is compelled to live for weeks in a farrowing crate or months in a gestation crate as the unfortunate animals confined to factory farms must do. These farrowing crates were removed and replaced with straw bedded pens.

## Intensive Egg, Chicken & Turkey Production, Chickens' Lib Invites You to Face the Facts

(Chickens' Lib, P.O. Box 2, Holmfirth, Huddersfield HD7 1QT, U.K.), 22 pages, illustrated; \$4.66 postage paid.

Packed with facts, figures and photos that graphically portray life for hens and other poultry on factory farms, this booklet methodically answers 136 questions about the methods used to raise battery hens, broiler chickens and turkeys. Extreme overcrowding is common to all.

In answer to the question, "How do battery hens live?" the booklet explains that battery houses are large windowless sheds that vary greatly in size, as a small unit might contain a couple thousand hens, but 30 thousand in one building is not unusual. Units with cages in three or four tiers are the most common, but some ultra-modern batteries boast eight tiers, with "catwalks" for viewing birds in the upper cages. A typical battery cage measures 18" by 20" and houses five laying hens for life. Battery hens have a 'day' of around 17 hours, during which time they stand on the sloping wire of the cage floor. During the remaining 7 hours of darkness, they must crouch down on the same wire floor.

It further notes:

- Scientists have discovered that a very high percentage of battery hens develop malignant tumors of the oviduct. The incidence of these cancers has coincided with the dramatically increased egg production achieved by poultry breeders over the last few decades...an average of 58 percent of spent hens displaying malignant tumors in 20,000 hens from 10 different farms. "The increase in the prevalence of the (magnum) tumor coincides with continued selection of fowl for high egg production."
- Konrad Lorenz has described the egg laying process as the worst torture to which the battery hen is exposed: "For the person who knows something about animals it is truly heart-rending to watch how a chicken tries again and again to crawl beneath her fellow-cagemates, to search there in vain for cover. Under these circumstances hens will undoubtedly hold back their eggs for as long as possible. Their instinctive reluctance to lay eggs amidst the crowd of her cagemates is certainly as great as the one of civilized people to defecate in an analogous situation."
- "...[T]he modern hybrid hen's high egg output results from selective breeding combined with a carefully controlled diet, plus the simulation, by electric lighting, of constant summertime (light controls the working of hens' ovaries)."
- Recent research at Bristol's Institute of Food Research by Drs. Gregory and Wilkins indicates that more than a quarter of battery hens suffer broken bones when being caught for slaughter. Huge numbers of battery hens meet





Graham Clark

their end fully conscious, even entering the scalding tank alive. They are then processed into soups, baby foods, stock cubes, school dinners, or used in the restaurant trade. If deemed unfit for human consumption, they are incorporated into pet foods or fertilizers.

- Most intensively reared chickens are slaughtered at 7 weeks of age, when they are still baby birds. Despite his or her baby-blue eyes and high pitched “cheeps,” a 1990s chicken can weigh in at 5 1/2 lbs. at 49 days—twice the weight of a chicken reared 25 years ago. A chicken’s natural life span is 5-10 years.
- The day-old chicks are installed in windowless sheds. At first, lighting is bright to encourage maximum activity (feeding and drinking), but after about 3 weeks, it is dimmed to discourage aggression, which can lead to fighting and heart attacks. Lights remain on for 23 1/2 hours out of the 24, the 1/2 hour of darkness simulating a power cut that could cause panic and mass suffocation in birds unused to total darkness. Prolonged inactivity (rest) amongst the birds is undesirable from the grower’s point of view, for sleeping birds are not engaged in the profit-making business of eating and putting on weight.
- Broiler sheds are never cleaned out during the lifetime of any one batch of birds, so the litter becomes impregnated with feces (droppings). Should conditions be poor (e.g., if ventilation is inadequate, water spills from drinkers, or birds suffer from diarrhea), the litter can become damp, greasy, and solid. When litter becomes hardened, birds may suffer hock burns, breast blisters and ulcerated feet.
- The booklet concludes by stating, “Chickens’ Lib believes that poultry should be given living conditions which allow the expression of natural behavioral patterns, so ensuring that the birds’ lives are pleasurable. Most hens, chickens and turkeys are at this time (1990) kept within systems which promote stress and disease, and discourage contentment.” The last words are, “If you eat eggs: Boycott battery eggs, and ask for supplies of free range eggs. If you eat meat: Boycott ‘factory farmed’ produce, and ask for free range poultry.”

Published in England, the information applies widely to methods used in the United States, Europe and, to a considerable extent, the rest of the world where battery cages and close confinement have been exported as technological know-how. An enormous task lies ahead if fowl are to be allowed to lead a normal life. This requires sufficient space to engage in dust bathing, sunbathing, scratching and pecking, and exercising their wings and legs to prevent bones from becoming brittle.

Readers of the *AWI Quarterly* may wish to refer back to an article about Pierre Rannou’s henhouse with its specially designed nest boxes and provision for all the above behavioral needs of hens (Vol 32, No 3, Fall 1983). Also, please note the report in this issue entitled “Virginia Farmer Raises Free Ranging Chickens.”

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## Virginia Farmer Raises Free Ranging Chickens

There are still some farmers who believe in treating their animals to natural surroundings, not only in order to raise healthier animals, but for ethical values as well. On a small farm in the Shenandoah Valley near Swoope, Va., Joel Salatin is doing just that with his chickens.

“The long term benefits for society are greater because we are treating our animals better. But we don’t do it for business reasons. We do it because it’s right,” Salatin explained.

Salatin has developed a portable “Eggmobile” contraption that houses 100 laying hens. These hens forage as far as 200 yards from their home during the day. They naturally come back to roost so no fences are necessary to keep them contained. Salatin explained that on the usual “factory farm” laying hens are kept under prolonged lighting to create the illusion of spring time. They are therefore always laying eggs. On the Salatin family farm, the hens are well aware of what season it is, and they go through the natural winter rest period.

Salatin also raises about 6,000 Cornish cross broilers a year. These chickens are kept in 2-foot tall mobile homes that are moved over fresh grass every morning. About 100 animals are kept in each house. A pen of the same size on a factory farm would contain some 1,000 to 1,500 birds.

Both hens and broilers have a diet that is substantially different from their unlucky relatives on factory farms. Because the hens are free-ranging, they are able to choose their own food. Not only is this accomplished by natural foraging, but Salatin gives them several different feeds to choose from as well. He believes, depending on each individual chicken’s health and the time of year, these birds will choose the food that is healthiest for them.

Since the broiler houses are moved to fresh grass every morning, the broilers also have the same opportunity to choose their own diet. Both hens and broilers obviously get plenty of green material, something that would be unusual on a factory farm, and they are never given steroids or antibiotics

that induce unnaturally rapid growth. One of the results, and also the reason why it is economically sensible to raise animals in such a manner, is that the lifespan of a laying hen on Joel Salatin’s farm is generally three years, compared to a normal factory farm lifespan of one year.

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## Factory Farming: The Pig “Product”

BY GAYLE WOOD

*...Farm animals are living, breathing, feeling beings... not lifeless, cellophane-wrapped dinners.*

*-Henry Spira, Coordinator, Animal Welfare International*

Factory farming rivals the turn of the century factories of the Industrial Revolution, complete with conveyer belts, noise, and other stressful conditions for laborers and incarcerated creatures alike. The industry, of course, does not perceive itself in this way nor do many in the land grant universities or state and federal departments of agriculture. The industry calls factory farming, among other things, “confinement production.” This not-so-self-congratulatory euphemism amounts to just about what it sounds like: high tech productivity in which the factory is the mentality and cruelty is the method to convert living, breathing beings into cellophane wrapped “product.”

### Not Hog Heaven

The standard gestation crate used to house a pregnant sow is typically a 2-foot wide stall made of metal bars and a concrete floor. This piece of wizardry allows the pig to stand up or lie down. Period. Turning around is out of the question. These crates are standard fare on factory farms and house the sows for all 114 days of their pregnancy. In the most intensive operations breeding boars similarly are imprisoned in narrow crates, as they wait to be “of service.” Crates are used to save space, to facilitate hog feeding and manure handling and for easy inspection of the animals by their keepers. There is no walking about, no stretching of limbs, no turning for the unfortunate pigs.

Not surprisingly, solitary pigs in crates develop abnormal behavior. They rub their snouts raw on stall bars, chew frequently and severely on the bars, or simply chew at nothing. These behaviors—“stereotypies”—were studied by, among others, the Scottish Farm Building Investigation Unit (SFBIU) 4 I (1986). “The debate over the morality of keeping sows closely confined in tethers, stalls or crates,” says the study, “hinges upon whether the sow suffers distress or mental deprivation as a result.” According to the SFBIU, sows perform these stereotypies to self-stimulate the release of a chemical in the brain to produce “some sort of natural ‘high’ and thereby help the sow to cope with the stress of close confinement.”

The SFBIU concluded that close confinement resulted in severe distress for sows, and that the animals adjust to



H. H. Sambras

**Top:** A mourning sow unable to even turn around. **Bottom:** Total confinement. A sow in a gestation crate. A study by the Scottish Farm Building Investigation Unit concluded that close confinement resulted in severe distress for sows.

confinement in ways that mimic “the development in humans of chronic psychiatric disorders.”

Of all stereotypies, perhaps the most poignant is the one termed “mourning.” In groups, sows normally sit for only a few minutes, as a transition position from standing to lying down. With mourning, the solitary sow sits with her head hung low, ears drooping, eyes clamped tightly shut. This very atypical posture is maintained for hours and hours, like an imitation of a helpless-hopeless inmate in a state institution.

*But a full-grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or a week or even a month old. But suppose they were otherwise, what would it avail? The Question is not can they reason, nor can they talk, but can they suffer?*

*-Jeremy Bentham*



## Science to the Rescue?

To help acquire the pig “product” using the least amount of space and labor, animal scientists perform long, convoluted experiments on the use of space and the nature of feeding and feeders. The scientists, although employed by tax-payer supported land-grant universities, often carry out research financed by the swine industry. They study how much food a pig eats if one kind of feeder is used instead of another. They study floor space to learn the absolute minimum (cost-effective) space a hog can be crammed into, before losing weight or flat out dying of it, so that minimal housing for maximum pig size can be achieved. There seems no end of people willing to observe animals in adversity and detail the grisly results. A study of such people might warrant its own useful information.

*Anyone who kept a dog in the way in which pigs are frequently kept would be liable to prosecution, but because our interest in exploiting pigs is greater than our interest in exploiting dogs, we object to cruelty to dogs while consuming the product of cruelty to pigs.*

*-Peter Singer, Animal Liberation*

One scientific advancement for the hog production industry (if not the hog) has been the “surprise” feeding system for sows in gestation crates. Conventional factory feeding methods for these sows began on long rows, leaving the sows at the ends of the rows in a frenzy by the time they were fed. Pigs at the ends of rows became ill or died because the anticipation of being fed was so stressful. When an operator entered a building to feed the animals, they began to scream, chew cage bars and inhale a lot of air. They developed gastric or intestinal torsion (twisted stomach), and went off their feed. Subsequently, many died.

Surprise feeders “cut the wear and tear on equipment and the operator’s nerves and eardrums,” quips Nathan Winkelman of the Swine Health Center in Minnesota. Based on a simple pipe pivot with a lever, all sows in a row can be fed simultaneously. Now the operators’ eardrums and nerves are okay. MoorMan’s Manufacturing in Illinois boasts an “ouchless feeder.” Presumably, previous feeders were “ouchful,” if you judge by a pig with a face full of Band Aids in the company advertisement. “No jutting corners to gouge her.”

Stan Curtis of the Animal Science Department, University of Illinois, has devised a new cage for confinement production use. He and colleagues have created the “turn-around” crate for pregnant sows, and he calls it a “revolutionary gestation system.”

A 440-pound sow can turn around in a space as small as 35 inches scientists have discerned. Stan Curtis’ study counted the number of times and reasons sows turned around in their new crates. The apparently startled scientist remarked, “...We realized one interesting point: Sows didn’t turn around simply to eat or drink ... They may have turned around simply to add variety to their lives.” Not to sound ungrateful, but the right and the opportunity to turn around does not seem very revolutionary.

The new system offers moveable dividers that swing sideways, broadening a sow’s cage considerably—while constricting the space of her neighbor. The standard dimensions of gestation crates are 7’ long x 2’ wide. By placing rows back-to-back, the new crates can cut building space (the real issue) by 11 percent, “while eliminating the major flaw: Limitation of movement,” Curtis points out.

With all this concern about the well-being of pigs, what are animal welfare people talking about anyway?

## Alternatives

Scientists in this and other countries have studied many ways of raising pigs, and three are notable: 1) total confinement, such as that seen in factory farming operations; 2) partial confinement, such as pasture grazing combined with farrowing pens; and 3) free range methods of pasture raising with portable housing for shelter. Variables in the studies include litters per sow per year, time until pigs reach 230 pounds (market weight), total pounds of feed per total pounds of pigs raised, and expenses incurred.

In an 8-year University of Tennessee study of hog raising methods, the pasture system came out ahead on several counts, especially with an initial outlay of \$30,000, while partial confinement costs were \$59,000 and total confinement a hefty \$112,000. Energy costs for the three methods per pig were \$.36, \$1.44 and \$3.18, respectively.

Pasture-raised hogs had fewer post-weaning losses and disease. Total confinement pigs had higher feed efficiency, although pasture-raised pigs were quicker to arrive at market weight. All three systems required about 35 man hours per sow per year. In net profit per sow, the mid-cost, partial confinement system came out ahead.

A similar study conducted by scientists at the University of Missouri-Columbia College of Agriculture concluded that, “During relatively low input costs-output prices, the pasture system provided the highest return above all costs per sow.”

Despite such convincing studies, the trend has escalated for total confinement production systems, not just in the raising of hogs but other farm animals as well. Small farmers increasingly contract their work from the agribusiness operations. Farmers provide the land and labor to raise animals while absentee contractors provide the pigs and feed. On this basis, large confinement production operations assuage the interests of small farmers—and keep them quiet.

Many options exist—and have existed—in contrast to total confinement systems of rearing pigs. Even semi-intensive systems, indoors or out, can provide the animals with bedding at the very least and more space in which to move and socialize, without economic loss to producers. The studies of the Universities of Tennessee and Missouri proved that.

The problem of animal welfare, unfortunately, is not as simple as simple economics. It would appear to be a problem of faith. There are those who believe that animals other than humankind are entitled to the simplest basic rights. And there are those who don’t.

Astrid Lindgren, 82-year-old Swedish author, does believe in the humane treatment of animals and began writing a series of satiric stories for a Swedish newspaper. The articles underscored the plight of farm animals—hormone-injected cattle, tethered pigs, battery-caged chickens.

It did not hurt that Ms. Lindgren had some political clout as well. By July 1988, Sweden had drafted a bill of rights in which cattle, chickens and pigs were freed from many of the restrictions of factory farming. This extraordinary law bans the use of hormones and drugs, except to treat disease. Implementation is on a gradual basis, so that farmers do not feel an unreasonable economic burden while making the transition.

The gestation crate described above is prohibited under Sweden’s new law, and the change in Swedish attitude is noted in Astrid Lindgren’s comment: “...nowadays we don’t talk about production units when we mean cows and pigs and this is a blessed change. It was so difficult to say to a little piglet: Hello, how are you today little production unit?”

We pose the question to American agriculture Lindgren once asked in Sweden: “...agriculture has to be profitable; that goes without saying. But hasn’t it become a question of profitability that has gone mad, and finally turned into its opposite? Isn’t it time to look for new methods?”

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## Respirators for Workers in Hog Confinement Buildings

The cruelty of cramped, narrow sow-stalls, in which sows are forced to live for months without even being able to turn around, is familiar to our readers. Less information has been available on the air the hogs are forced to breathe in intensive confinement buildings. A current catalog distributed by Gempler’s Direct Agri Supply Specialists, in offering its numerous respirators to farmers, gives us an understanding of what the pigs must endure. There are no respirators for them.

Under the heading, “How to Select a Respirator” the catalog states, “Before selecting from the following six pages, determine what hazard you’re protecting yourself from. In agricultural settings it might be ‘hog lung’, ‘toxic organic dust syndrome’, pesticides, moldy grain, silo mold spores, anhydrous ammonia, or welding fumes.”

On the next page we read, “Finally, a dust-mist respirator that will hold its shape in hot, humid situations...Moldex dust respirators are recommended for hog confinement work and while handling dusty/moldy grains.” Referring to the “airborne particles found in hog confinement buildings” the catalog states, “Tired of your glasses fogging up or feeling like you’re in a sauna? Then try these lightweight MOLDEX government approved respirators with a molded nose bridge that maintains a seal as you work. Their collapse-resistant outer shell keeps them from breaking down in heat and humidity.”

On the following pages readers are exhorted, “Don’t let FARMER’S LUNG slow you down.” Different respirators are recommended for “use in the dairy barn and animal

confinement structures to guard against farmers lung.” Another, “for use in the transportation and application of ammonia and in hog and poultry confinement operations.” Then there are cartridges and pre-filters for various uses. Third on the list is ammonia (anhydrous or from livestock/swine/poultry confinement); order pre-filters also.” Listed fourth: “Dusts from livestock confinement.”

A photograph of a hog farmer “wearing a dual-cartridge respirator that protects him while working against both ammonia gas and feed dusts” shows the pigs in the unit compelled to inhale the dusty ammonia-laden air without benefit of protection.

“YOUR HEALTH and the risks of animal confinement work,” heads the statement. “While your animals may be in confinement for no more than six months, your lungs are subjected to the airborne dusts and gases in these buildings from 2 or more hours per day for a number of years.” Does that sound as if the pigs are being protected by a short stay? A quick calculation shows that six months of confinement for them comes to about six years of 2-hour periods of exposure for the farmer. Not to mention that after each 2-hour period, he is able to escape from the corrosive atmosphere and fill his lungs with fresh air. The pigs are incarcerated until they move to another confinement building or a slaughterhouse.

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## Great Britain Will Ban Sow Stalls and Tethers

Great Britain is about to take a big (if slow) step forward in the direction of farm animal welfare. On Jan. 10, Sir Richard Body introduced a pig husbandry bill that would phase out sow stalls and tethers in Great Britain by 1996. Just one day earlier, undoubtedly influenced by the timing of Sir Richard’s legislation, the Minister of Agriculture had announced that the government would soon introduce regulations banning sow stalls and tethers by the end of 1998.

The Pig Husbandry Bill was recently approved for a second reading before Parliament by a unanimous vote of 18 to 0. Too many pigs “are subjected to horrific confinement and deprivation and can spend up to 40 weeks a year in appalling and cruel conditions,” commented Member of Parliament (MP) Andrew Bowden during the debate on the bill. Several MPs stated they had received more mail regarding this bill than they had on the Persian Gulf War.

David MacLean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, put forward the position of the government including the following statement: “Pigs in stalls showed increased amounts of stereotyped behavior such as licking and biting of the stalls and a higher incidence of aggressive actions. Physiological measurements taken from the pigs indicated that they were showing a chronic stress response as a result of confinement. Sows subjected to this stress were considered by one author to be suffering from clinical neurosis.”



To condemn sows to seven years of “appalling and cruel conditions” seems atrocious but it compares favorably with the situation in the United States where billionaires continue to build sow stalls for thousands of animals with no end in sight.

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## Abusive Treatment at Minnesota Stockyard Warrants a Demonstration

On Memorial Day—May 27, 1991—the South St. Paul Stockyard in South St. Paul, Minn. will be the site of a major demonstration to protest blatant animal cruelty. For more than a year, horrendous animal abuse has been documented at this facility. Sick and injured animals are prodded and shocked, and when they can no longer walk, they are either dragged with a chain or left to die slowly and painfully, their basic needs completely ignored. It is common for animals to suffer for days without receiving food, water or medical care.

In one particular case, several pigs had been left in a pen without food and water. One of the pigs was already dead, and the rest were slowly dying. When the slaughter truck finally arrived, the injured and weak pigs were forced to move themselves. After repeated shocks and blows several pigs managed to drag themselves onto the truck. One pig, however, could not even crawl to the truck. The trucker finally grabbed him by the ear and dragged him up the ramp.

Despite numerous attempts by the organization Farm Sanctuary to work with stockyard officials, conditions have failed to improve. The stockyard’s consistent negligence has made it necessary for the public to urge stockyard officials to address humane concerns. For more information or to obtain a video tape showing conditions at the stockyard, contact:

Farm Sanctuary  
P.O. Box 150  
Watkins Glen, NY 14891  
(607) 583-2225

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A typical scene at the South St. Paul Stockyard.

## Min ko vill ha roligt

by Astrid Lindgren and Kristina Forslund

Raben and Sjogren Bokforlag (Stockholm, Sweden) 1990, 100 pages.

Astrid Lindgren, winner of the 1988 Albert Schweitzer Medal for her magnificent achievement in obtaining enactment of the Swedish law to protect farm animals, has a new book, published in Sweden under the title of *Min ko vill ha roligt*. Astrid has written us to say that the title means, “My Cow Wants to Have Some Fun.”

The delightful illustrations by Björn Berg, with which the book is profusely decorated, show cheerful behavior among pigs and chickens as well as cattle. Several are reproduced on this page.



Dr. Kristina Forslund, who experienced at first hand so much suffering of factory farmed animals, has emerged from her previous anonymity. She co-signs with Astrid Lindgren the dedication, entitled “Insight Into the Political Debate Over the Animal Protective Law”:

“We would like to dedicate this little book to the farmers of Sweden; all those who with love and loyalty have stuck to their soil—despite whatever difficult agricultural policies they have had to endure, even when these policies have been bordering on the crazy.

“Crazy, for example, was the policy which came from the government in 1967. This was when it was decided that the position on animals should be industrialized, extended and made more profitable. Through an enterprising loan policy,



farmers were to be aided in building animal factories. Far more cows, calves and pigs were needed per farm—that is to say there was no longer talk of cows, calves and pigs, but about ‘units of production,’ a more sophisticated term which now saw the light of day.

“During this time, a traditionally close and friendly relationship with the animals changed. Things changed slowly, but radically. All these units of production became anonymous to their owners; often there was not even time to notice the difference between sick and healthy animals. This is why farmers, as a precautionary measure, gave antibiotics to entire farmsteads, healthy as well as sickly. Many animals became contaminated—in life as well as in death, which they faced in giant slaughterhouses. It was hard, it was not at all fun to be an animal in Sweden under these new conditions...”

“‘My Cow Wants to Have Some Fun,’ a farmer’s young son said so convincingly. Maybe it is too much to ask for that our domestic animals should have fun. But a decent life without unnecessary suffering—that they should have the right to during their short time on Earth. Fortunately, most Swedish farmers understand this.”

She concludes by writing, “Listen to these wise words from the new animal protective law: ‘Animals shall be kept and tended in a good animal environment in a way that promotes their health and allows them to live naturally.’”

The Animal Welfare Institute has published the correspondence and articles by Astrid Lindgren in Sweden’s biggest newspaper, *Expressen*, as a booklet. Although it lacks the additional commentary by Astrid and Dr. Forslund, whose veterinary expertise helped Astrid so much in her successful efforts, American readers will find the AWI compilation useful in the campaign for decent treatment of farm animals. It may be ordered from AWI at cost price, \$3.00.

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## Debeaking Causes Lifetime Pain

Chickens’ Lib, the British society that devotes itself to reforming mistreatment of hens, chickens and turkeys, recently published in its newsletter excerpts from *Behavioural and Physiological Responses to Pain in the Chicken*, by Dr. Michael Gentle. Dr. Gentle is affiliated with AFRC Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics Research in England. These careful scientific observations show that the industry’s “beak trimming” or “debeaking” causes chronic pain.

“Although acute pain is important to the animal, it is chronic pain which may last for weeks, months or even years which presents a major welfare problem...Partial amputation of the beak is common agricultural practice and involves the partial removal of the upper and/or lower beak in order to prevent or control feather pecking and cannibalism in intensively reared poultry...It seems likely...that for the first few hours after amputation the birds experience a pain-free period similar to that sometimes experienced by humans following major trauma (Ty et al. 1984). By approximately 24 hours after amputation, the birds were showing pain related behavioral changes with the birds unwilling to peck at the environment, reduced food and water intake together with long periods of sitting and dozing. The behavior of the bird changes over the next 6 weeks and food and water intake increases up to the

preoperative levels. A number of behavioral patterns do not, however, change and the bird shows a reluctance to use the beak for unessential activities such as exploratory environmental pecking, head shaking, beak wiping, and preening (Gentle et al. 1990). This reduced usage of the beak can be interpreted as guarding behavior so commonly seen in humans and other mammals following painful injuries. Dozing and general inactivity were observed by Eskeland (1981) in birds OVER A 56 WEEK OBSERVATION PERIOD. (CL capitals) Increases in inactivity are common in humans suffering from chronically painful conditions.”

“Dr. Gentle...goes on to describe how, although partially amputated beaks do continue to grow back to something like a normal shape, an extensive scar tissue remains, adjacent to which damaged and regenerating nerve fibers form extensive neuromas. [Neuroma is a painful proliferating mass that may develop at the end of severed nerves, according to the Concise Oxford Veterinary Dictionary.] Dr. Gentle concludes: ‘The close similarity between birds and mammals in their physiological and behavioral response to painful stimuli would argue for a common sensory and emotional experience and it is therefore essential that the ethical considerations normally afforded to mammals should be extended to birds.’”

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## Senate Expose: 400 Percent Increase in Bacterial Contamination of Mass-Produced Chickens

On June 28, the big Senate hearing room was packed to discuss conditions in chicken slaughterhouses, and a long line of people waiting to enter extended down the corridor. Senator Metzenbaum (D-OH) was in the chair to hear testimony on the bill he had introduced nine days before, S. 1324. He focused on the bacterial contamination spread in the giant plants, which he said results in the death of 2,000 people, plus 4 million cases of illness—costing \$2 billion in medical and lost work bills each year.



Left behind; A catcher’s face-mask, used for protection against the ammonia fumes, dust and stench, lies next to a chicken skeleton.



When he introduced his bill, Metzenbaum stated on the Senate Floor, "USDA entrusts the old-fashioned inspection program to poultry producers themselves..." But, he insisted, "I want real enforcement of real regulations, and I want it now."

He pointed to research by the industry that has made chickens 50 percent larger on 15 percent less food and in 20 percent less time than 20 years ago, "but reports indicate that the same chicken carries four times as much bacterium as 20 years ago."

There is extreme concentration of ownership of the chicken business. Senator Metzenbaum said, "Today 4 companies produce 41 percent of all poultry. Twenty companies produce 79 percent." According to *The Arkansas Democrat* (April 22, 1991), "More broilers currently are produced in a single day than the entire annual output in 1930."

### **Chickens Treated Like Inanimate Objects**

What about the individual birds who make up this enormous stream of brief lives? Three newspapers did their own investigations and ran numerous articles on the packing plants, which were inserted in *The Congressional Record* by Senator Metzenbaum. Excerpts from these articles follow. Footnotes indicate their source.

The chickens' suffering begins in the "throwing room" where, "[to] keep up with the hundreds of thousands of chicks that hatch each day, in this room literally scoop up large handfuls of chicks every second, throwing them several feet through the air onto conveyor belts."

"The fluffy yellow chicks, no bigger than baseballs, are inoculated, in some plants debeaked (beaks blunted on hotplate to reduce danger), and transported to grow-out houses."<sup>1</sup>

After a few weeks in the "grow-out houses," the chickens are caught to be sent to slaughter. The "hazard to the catchers' lungs" is described, hazards that the birds undergo day and night. "Air in the chicken houses is thick with the stench of ammonia and feces, making it difficult to breathe. The litter the chickens walk on traps ammonia and other gases, as well as organic dust that contains excrement, insect parts, microorganisms and microbial toxins."<sup>2</sup>

Here is how the frightened chickens are caught: "Overhead lights switch off, faint red lights switch on, and in the dim hue Steve Crawford, 26, wades into a white sea of 25,000 chickens. Bending over, he sweeps his right hand under a chicken, grabs its scaly foot between his fingers then grabs another the same way.

"He stands and switches the two birds to his left hand, shoving them between the pinkie and ring fingers. He bends again, grabs two more, rises, and slides them between the next two fingers. Within a few seconds he has 10 chickens hanging by their feet, wedged between the fingers on his left hand. He bends again to grab three more birds between the knuckles of his right hand.

"Mr. Crawford walks over to a freezer-sized metal cage and throws them into one of 15 small compartments. Seven other Seaboard Farms 'catchers' work with him in the 400-foot-long chicken house.

"Every night, thousands of chicken catchers like Mr. Crawford fan out in the nation's grow-out houses and begin their nightlong harvest, seizing chickens by their feet."<sup>3</sup>

Describing the slaughterhouse, the article states, "(a) Chickens are dumped from their cages onto a conveyer belt; (b) workers hang the birds upside down by hooking both feet into moving shackles at about one bird per second; (c) the chickens are sprayed with water and stunned by an 18-volt electric shock; (d) a mechanized blade draws a quick, long slash across each chicken's neck and blood begins pouring onto the floor and into drains; (e) after the blood has drained, the birds are dragged through a tank of scalding water to loosen their feathers..."<sup>4</sup>

Another article notes, "The live chickens, leaving a trail of white feathers, arrive about a dozen to each 3.5-square-foot cage loaded on tractor-trailer rigs."<sup>5</sup>

The abusive treatment of the birds takes its toll, as described in an article in the April 23 *Arkansas Democrat*: "When Betty Smith comes home after eight hours of trimming the cuts and bruises from chicken carcasses, she tends her own injuries." She soaks and bandages her arms, but they are still swollen and painful when she wakes up to go to work.

Many workers suffer repetitive motion injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis. Occasionally, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) intervenes. For example, "In 1989, the Empire Kosher Foods poultry plant in Mifflintown, Pa., was fined \$1.36 million by OSHA for 'knowingly and willfully' exposing workers to cumulative trauma injuries. It was the first such fine in the country but not the last.

That same year, Cargill's plant in Buena Vista was fined \$242,000 and also cited for 'knowingly and willfully' injuring about half its workers."<sup>6</sup>

### **Consumer Beware**

People who eat chicken are at risk of contracting various diseases. For example, *The Arkansas Democrat* reported on April 21, "Estes Philpott, the retired inspector, also cited an incident that occurred Nov. 23, 1990, at the Simmons Industries plant in Siloam Springs when a load of chickens infected with the respiratory disease air sacculitis arrived.

"As Philpott was sorting the sick birds, he said the plant's chief inspector told him not to condemn any. But Philpott said he condemned more than 915 birds from an estimated 80,000. Each of the other five inspectors also condemned dozens of birds.

"Many plants use 'lung guns' to suck the infection from the lungs and salvage such birds. But Philpott and other inspectors say the infection is not limited to the lungs, but that pus and material that 'looks like phlegm' spreads throughout the bird's body.

"That's one of the worst things people can eat,' Philpott said. He stopped eating chicken about 15 years ago."

The article continues with a subhead, "Maggots Found." A former worker at the Tyson plant in Neosho, Mo., described what happened when another worker found maggots

on a chicken being processed. The plant processes chicken for products such as soups and stews.

The worker recalled a plant supervisor arriving. The manager picked the maggots off the bird and flicked them from his hand. The chicken continued along the processing line.

"'He didn't make no effort to check the meat,' the worker said. The former Tyson worker no longer eats chicken. "Once I seen how their quality control was, I don't eat their product anymore."

USDA studies that demonstrate major contamination somehow never get published. For example, "A 1988 USDA study of five processing plants in the Southeast found contamination levels of 58 percent before the chickens went to the chill tank, where further cross-contamination can occur." That study has never been published.

One USDA study showed washing even 40 times does not control or remove bacteria. Another found the rate of salmonella contamination increases by as much as 28 percent in the chill tanks, where birds are cooled after processing.<sup>7</sup>

After the chickens are killed, their feathers must be plucked. Here is a description of modern methods: "thousands of rubber 'fingers' pummel the birds to remove their feathers. Here critics contend the picking equipment spreads contamination among the birds while it pounds the dirt, feces, bacteria and other contamination into the skin and meat..."

The chickens whiz past the inspectors and workers at rates of 70 to 91 birds a minute. With two or three inspectors per processing line, the system allows between 1 and 1.5 seconds to look at each bird."<sup>8</sup>

The USDA "reduced the number of federal inspectors on each line under its so-called streamlined inspection system, relying heavily on company employees to catch processing defects."

"A better name for it would be streamlined infection system,"<sup>9</sup> asserts Mr. Devine of the Government Accountability Project, a whistleblower group based in Washington.

<sup>1</sup>Bronstein, Scott, "A Well-Bred Bird Begins in the Lab," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (May 26, 1991).

<sup>2</sup>Bronstein, "There's a Catch to Catching Birds: It's Hazardous to the Health," *The Atlanta (GA) Journal-Constitution* (June 2, 1991).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Bronstek "Awe ll..." *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (May 26,1991).

<sup>5</sup>Fullerton, Jane, "Faster Processing: More Contaminated Birds?" *The Arkansas Democrat* (April 21,1991).

<sup>6</sup>Bronstein, "For Workers, Price Can be High—Pain, Crippled Hands," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (June 2, 1991).

<sup>7</sup>Fullerton, "Consumers Have Bone to Pick on Product Safety," *The Arkansas Democrat* (April 21, 1991).

<sup>8</sup>Fullerton, "Poultry Industry: Success at a Price," *The Arkansas Democrat* (April 21,1991).

<sup>9</sup>Ingersoll, Bruce, "Fowl Process: Faster Slaughter Lines are contaminating Much US Poultry," *The Wall Street Journal* (Nov. 16, 1990).

## **Beyond Beef: A Sounder, Healthier People and World**

BY JOHN GLEIBER

There is no better way to attract the fickle attention of the public than to come on strong. And, that is exactly what Jeremy Rifkin has done in his aptly titled *Beyond Beef* (New York, Bantam, \$21.00).

This is the catalyst for a campaign to cut the consumption of beef by 50 percent. Not within the next decade, not within the next year, but now. It is a breathtaking concept and deserves the widest possible study and consideration. The author approaches the current mania for beef from every viewpoint. He is most telling when he discusses the health implications and the environmental problems that this planet's beef ranching has brought about.

Beef is bad for you, it is bad for the land, it is bad for the atmosphere, Rifkin trumpets. He backs up every pronouncement with the research garnered over the years and makes a most effective case. If diligence is not Mr. Rifkin's middle name, it should be.

This is only the opening salvo. Cries of outrage can be heard throughout the land, but no one can dismiss out of hand what this book and this campaign says. Every one of us should consider just what he promulgates. And, none of us can honestly weigh the evidence and not practice to some degree what *Beyond Beef* is telling us to do. This evidence is there. By cutting back if not cutting out our beef consumption, we will be doing the world a favor to say nothing of ourselves.

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## **A Few Facts from the Beyond Beef Campaign**

In the United States, every 24 hours, some 100,000 cows are slaughtered.

More than 6 billion hamburgers were sold last year by fast food restaurants.

In South America, the cattle population is approaching the human population.

In Australia, cattle outnumber people.

The 1.28 billion cattle on earth take up 24 percent of its land mass.

Since 1960, more than 25 percent of the forests of Central America have been cleared to create pastureland for grazing cattle. Each imported hamburger requires the clear cut of 5 square meters of jungle.

For those still eating beef, the campaign advocates the consumption of beef that is humanely raised under strict organic standards.

"By reducing the consumption of beef, we will help save the planet, protect our fellow creatures, feed the hungry and ensure our own health and well-being."

- Jeremy Rifkin



## Downed Animals Must be Protected

An important animal protection bill, only a few sentences long, was introduced by Senator Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI) March 13, 1992. The bill, S. 2296, entitled the Downed Animal Protection Act of 1992, would amend Section 3 18 of the Unlawful Stockyard Practices Involving Non-Ambulatory Livestock to state, "It shall be unlawful for any stockyard owner, market agency, or dealer to buy, sell, give, receive, transfer, market, or hold non-ambulatory livestock unless the livestock has been humanely euthanized."

Oversight hearings have been held in the House Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Subcommittee, but no legislation has been introduced as yet in that body.

In introducing his bill, Senator Akaka placed several articles on downed animals in The Congressional Record. Some key excerpts are reproduced here.

### Stockyard Conditions Criticized

"Danville Agriculture Secretary Edward Madigan said he was shocked by what he saw recently on videotape of treatment of sick and injured cattle at a St. Paul, MN, livestock market. 'I was disgusted and repelled. The stockyard thing at St. Paul was a disgrace,' he said. 'We are going to be more aggressive and effective in dealing with animal rights.'" (Fort Wayne, Ind. *News-Sentinel*, May 21, 1991).

### This Concern is Legitimate

"...With the exception of a rare injury during trucking to a livestock auction house or slaughterhouse, most animals that cannot walk off a truck when it arrives at an auction point or slaughterhouse is an animal that was too ill to be shipped in the first place.

"Few farmers and even fewer others would want to eat a slaughtered downer cow, lamb, steer or hog. Yet, there are downer animals sold at auction barns and to slaughter plants that escape the inspectors.

"Seldom has *Country Today* supported animal rights efforts, partly because the movement's adherents insist that animals, indeed, have rights. However, the attempt by Farm Sanctuary to encourage stockyards to refuse to accept downer livestock is sound and one that farmers should support." (Eau Claire, Wis. *Country Today*, February 27, 1991).

### The Industry Must Stop "Downer Cow" Abuse

"... There's no excuse for shipping animals which cannot walk. We commend stockyards that will not accept crippled animals. We strongly encourage others to adopt this common sense policy." (*Hoards Dairyman*, July 1991).

### Pro-Active Activism

"... It is unfortunate that in some cases the worst operations are represented on high level committees in a few segments of the industry." (*Meat & Poultry*, August 1991).



Sick calf left to die at Colorado stockyard.

### Seven Major Livestock Yards Stop Accepting Disabled Hogs

"... Hogs unable to walk or sick hogs that will obviously not recover should be humanely euthanized on the farm and not transported to market." (*Pork Report*, July-August 1991).

### Take Steps to Avoid Downed Hogs

"... With the trend toward more environmentally controlled housing, more attention needs to be paid to the effect of flooring on lameness and pigs.

"Many of these facilities were built 10 to 15 years ago, and aspects of these buildings, such as rough concrete, worn or uneven slats, etc. will predispose pigs to traumatic and stress-induced injuries. Many times foot injuries are followed by infections.

"... Trucks should be properly bedded (straw when temperature is below 60 degrees and wet sand or shavings when over 60 degrees) to provide a non-slip floor.

"... Keep the animal well bedded and provide access to feed and water. Hand water if necessary to insure adequate intake. Do not isolate the pig and forget about it because you are not sure what to do with the animal," says NPPC Producer Education Director Beth Launter, D.V.M.

A videotape of downed animals in a Minnesota stockyard was shown on NBC's *Exposé* last fall. The public was shocked, and both the industry and the Department of Agriculture issued statements and directives designed to stop the cruel dragging of sick and injured animals with chains and other abuse and neglect of these helpless creatures.

However, the abuses continued, as documented by a study of 24 stockyards in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado, conducted by Farm Sanctuary, an organization founded to protect farm animals. The survey showed: "Animals with impaired mobility were found at 71 percent of the stockyards visited, and downed animals, dying slowly, were found at 17 percent of the stockyards

visited." The calf shown in the photograph was among those observed.

Action and information: Farm Sanctuary, P.O. Box 150, Watkins Glen, NY 14891.

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## Alternative Systems for Laying Hens: FAWC Majority and Minority Reports

BY RUTH HARRISON

Scientific evidence against commercial battery cages for laying hens has caught up with public revulsion of them, and development of alternative systems has been gathering momentum in many European countries. In Sweden, the start of a 10-year phase out of battery cages coincides with the end of a similar phase out period in Switzerland. The European Commission is producing another report on the welfare of laying hens systems later this year and work has already started on revisions to the Battery Hens Directive (88/166/EC), which, it is hoped, will contain an appendix setting standards in alternative systems.

Reformers have always faced a classic dilemma. Is it better to be "pragmatic" and go for a series of minor changes, hoping to improve things step-by-step, or to go for what they deem necessary? It is a dilemma that has never failed to divide the animal welfare movement. It is also a dilemma that can divide government committees. Such fundamental differences have led to three minority reports from Britain's Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) and its predecessor during the last 24 years, the last of these being on the standards to be set for loose-housed laying hens: "The Welfare of Laying Hens in Colony Systems."

The majority approach on the Council was to seek moderate changes that industry could accommodate now, and then to review the situation in five years' time, with a view to making further changes. The minority approach was to seek the radical change that is only possible at the beginning of a new development and set more stringent but long-term goals. The Russian proverb "it is impossible to jump a river in two steps" epitomizes the differences in approach. The systematic approach may have been politically feasible at a time, when legislation could be more easily introduced nationally, but now that Britain is part of the European Community (EC), change is much more complicated and difficult to achieve. It takes years for all the member states to reach agreement and many more years to phase in regulations. This is the political reality of membership of the EC, and the political reality that persuaded the minority group on FAWC to go for more stringent standards to be phased in over a suitably long period. Not only was this more politically expedient, but the group felt that setting long-term goals would offer more stability to the poultry industry than a series of short-term changes.

The report highlights space as being one of the most important welfare factors. The majority report then lays down seven birds/m<sup>2</sup> floor space (1,425cm<sup>2</sup>/bird) in deep litter houses, but when 55 percent of the birds can perch, 15.5 hens/m<sup>2</sup> floor space. The report admits, "[T]here is some evidence to suggest that hens would benefit from increased space allowance (possibly up to 2,500 cm<sup>2</sup>/hen)" and recommends a review in five years' time. The minority report sets out the scientific evidence, which shows that 1,424cm<sup>2</sup>/bird lies within the range in which maximum aggression is likely to occur—and also stress and hysteria—and that 2,500cm<sup>2</sup>/bird is nearer to what is needed.

This highlights another powerful reason for aiming directly at recommendations indicated by existing scientific evidence and giving producers time to phase them in. If the quality of the total environment—and of each of the components which go to make up that environment—are not good, then the problems which confront the industry at the present time—in particular feather pecking and cannibalism—will be bound to continue affecting the well-being of millions of laying hens for decades to come.

In spite of the premiums which eggs from alternative systems command, work on the systems has been based on the premise that new systems must yield a financial return comparable to that from battery cages, and this has led to a number of undesirable features detrimental to animal welfare.

The majority group on FAWC set standards that continue to rely on debeaking and a minimum light level of 10 lux in the house (although they recommend that "routine, non-therapeutic beak trimming" [whatever that is] should be banned in 1996). The minority group were unable to accept any system that relies for its success on either debeaking or dim lighting. The choice of genetic strain, the stocking rate and the quality of the birds' environment should be such that these two major deprivations are unnecessary.

The Ministry's Agricultural and Development Advisory Service's costing of allowing more space to hens only adds 30 percent to producer costs—going from cages (stocked at 450 cm<sup>2</sup>/bird—EC standards for new cages now and existing cages in 1995) to the strawyard system (stocked at 3 birds/m<sup>2</sup>). Space allowance in cages will undoubtedly be increased, reducing this extra cost to 20 percent or even less. It is most important to remember that this extra is in production costs and not in retail costs. Indeed, the disproportionate premiums charged on non-battery eggs by retailers could easily absorb this increase without any greater cost to consumers.

One of the disadvantages of the timid, "pragmatic" approach to change is that the science of animal welfare is advancing so rapidly that recommendations can be out of date almost as soon as they are advanced. This has already happened with some of the recommendations in the majority report. It recommends a minimum lighting level of 10 lux throughout the house, whereas it has been shown that dim lighting conditions (>30 lux) have been reported to result in more fear responses, particularly when group size was large (Hughes & Black 1974). Scientific evidence quoted in the



minority report shows that hens keep lights on for 80 percent of the time when given the choice and that the adrenal glands were heavier of hens kept in dim light. Similarly, the majority report recommends 18 cm perch space/bird, but it has been found by Gregory, who is studying perching behavior of birds using infrared photography, that even 20 cm/bird is not enough to prevent birds having difficulty in finding perch space and landing on it, and this could be another cause of bone breakage.

We should not seek to test new systems to the point of scientific certainty—which in any case is impossible. There is enough evidence, if we are prepared to give the hen the benefit of the doubt, to suggest that we can be more generous in our recommendations and not hold back relying on further changes in the future. We are setting the scene for a very long time to come, and the more we permit poor conditions to become entrenched, the more difficult it will be to get even minor changes next time around.

*Ruth Harrison is the author of the ground-breaking Animal Machines published in 1964. She served on the British Governments Farm Animal Welfare Council from 1967 to 1991.*

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## Hope for Hens: Battery Cage System Due to be Changed Radically in Europe

“The days of the existing battery cage are numbered,” according to the chairman of the European Conference Group on the Protection of Farm Animals, Dr. Henry Carter, at the end of a two-day seminar in Brussels from March 24 to 25 on welfare standards for laying hens. The seminar was funded by the European Economic Community Commission and brought together experts from the veterinary field, poultry industry and animal welfare societies. They examined a report from the Commission’s Scientific Veterinary Committee which concludes quite simply that the existing “battery cage system does not provide an adequate environment or meet the behavioral needs of laying hens.” (March 26, 1992 European Report, 467) (AC)

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## House Bill on Humane Poultry Slaughter

Representative Andrew Jacobs (D-IN) introduced H. R. 4124, the Humane Methods of Poultry Products Act of 1992, to amend the Poultry Products Inspection Act so that it requires humane methods of poultry slaughter. It has been referred to the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy and Poultry of the House Agriculture Committee. The proposal gives the United States Congress an opportunity to enact the same reform that was recently adopted by the California State Legislature on humane methods of poultry slaughter.

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## New Study Demonstrates Intellectual Curiosity in Piglets

Research on the remarkable behavior of pigs conducted by Klaus Vestergaard (of AWI’s International Committee) and David Wood-Gush has received widespread acclaim including BBC Radio, Welsh Radio and an article in *The Guardian*. Following is the November 22, 1991 article written by Stephen Young, which prefaces, “Pigs have long enjoyed a reputation as resourceful, intelligent creatures. They served as customs officers and members of drug squads, nosing out chemical contraband as avidly as any dog.”

“In the latest development, biologists have proved beyond doubt that pigs are highly inquisitive creatures, with a zest for exploration and a taste for novelty. The new findings emerged during a study carried out in Denmark by David Wood-Gush, of the University of Edinburgh, and Klaus Vestergaard of the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Frederiksberg. The researchers report their findings in the latest issue of *Animal Behavior*.

“Wood-Gush and Vestergaard devised an experiment in which piglets were given a choice between two enclosures. One contained a novel toy hidden behind a screen, while the other held a familiar one, similarly disposed. ‘What we were interested in,’ said Wood-Gush, ‘was whether pigs would learn to go to a certain place simply to receive a novel object.’



*K. Vestergaard*

*Some of Dr. Vestergaard’s research subjects.*

“The toys were a knotted bicycle tire, a shiny plate, a bundle of newspapers, a watering can, a rubber boot and several other similar items. To help pigs work out which pen to go for, the researchers dropped a number of hints before each test began. So as to leave no room for doubt, they raised the Danish flag above the pen containing the novel item.

“After an initial training period, the piglets performed most obligingly, choosing novelty over familiarity in test after test, ‘They were very excited, but soon lost interest so it was the novelty they were really after,’ said Wood-Gush.

“The new research has some implications for the way pigs are treated on the farm. There is quite a high incidence of mutilation of the pigs in very dull environments, but access to things such as tires would help, as would a supply of straw bedding in which they could root around for extra bits of food.”

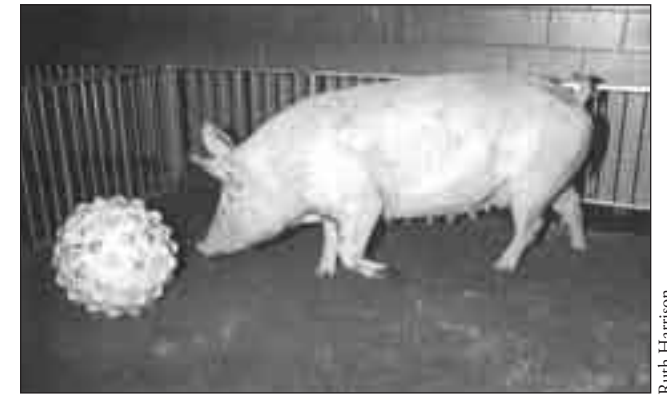
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## Wanted: A Humane Manufacturer to Produce the Edinburgh Foodball

BY RUTH HARRISON

The launch of the Edinburgh foodball toward the end of last year was decidedly good news for the animals! It has been developed by animal behavior scientists in collaboration with agricultural engineers at the Scottish Agricultural College to encourage and permit confined animals to exercise their foraging behavior. The idea is deceptively simple. The “foodball” is a large sphere with an ingenious inner mechanism that releases food randomly when the animal roots the ball around in its pen or enclosure, thus mimicking what happens when animals forage in the wild. The device is robust, waterproof and easy to clean.

The first potential beneficiaries—the animals for which the foodball was initially developed—are sows and gilts kept under commercial conditions. While under semi-natural or wild conditions pigs spend around 70 percent of their active time in foraging for food, under intensive housing conditions this basic behavior is severely frustrated. The position for pregnant sows and gilts is further exacerbated by the practice of severely restricting their food intake during the weeks immediately prior to parturition in order to avoid farrowing problems. The meager ration is consumed in just a few minutes each day, and the hungry pigs are left with an obsessive urge to forage, the frustration of which leads to prolonged bouts of stereotyped behavior. The foodball is designed to ameliorate this problem. Its internal mechanism can be adjusted so that the required quantity of food is released over a long period. The pigs’ foraging behavior is thus rewarded and encouraged, and they spend nearly as much time foraging as they would under natural conditions. We are still left with the problem of hunger, a problem that can only be solved by modified breeding programs and this should be addressed separately.



*Ruth Harrison*

What the foodball does is to make an intolerable situation more tolerable.

The foodball is intended as an addition to, rather than a substitute for, straw. Straw offers many benefits to pigs. The UK Code of Practice covering pigs strongly recommends its use. “Given the opportunity,” it says, “the pig eats fibrous material, also roots about and makes a nest and uses a separate dunging area. Bedding, and especially straw, contributes towards the needs of the pig for thermal and physical comfort and satisfies some of its behavioral requirements.” While the provision of straw does allow rooting, the behavior is reinforced by the reward provided by the foodball. It is designed to be used by sows and gilts kept with a bedded lying area and an unbedded exercise yard. It would be impossible to use the foodball in conjunction with perforated or slatted floors, as the food would be lost.

The pigs obviously enjoy this new “toy,” and its welfare advantages are enormous. Not only is its foraging behavior elicited and behavioral problems reduced, but the added exercise could lead to healthier pigs with fewer leg problems and possibly even to larger, healthier litters.

The foodball can easily be adapted for other species. A smaller version is already available for dogs. At the launch, the dog that was brought to show its potential was so excited by the cameras and all the friendly people to greet that it had little time for the foodball, but it is not difficult to see the ball’s potential in the barren conditions of dog kennels. Nor would it be difficult to envisage the joy it would bring to cats in catteries. Consideration is also being given to its use to enrich the environment of zoo animals. It has endless possibilities.

What is now needed is an enterprising manufacturer who is alive to such possibilities. Mr. Hugh Stirling of the British Technology Group is looking for a Licensee and can be contacted at 101 Newington Causeway, London, SE1 6BU, England.

*Ruth Harrison is the author of the classic treatise on factory farming, Animal Machines, now being readied for a new edition. She is an expert advisor to the Council of Europe on farm animals.*

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## Confinement of Hens in Battery Cages Ruled Cruel

On Feb. 24, 1993, Tasmanian Magistrate Phillip Wright ruled that confinement of hens in battery cages is cruel. The case was brought against Golden Egg Farms Pty. Ltd. by Pam Clarke, who has been working for over a decade to outlaw battery hen farming in Australia.

Magistrate Wright commented, "if a bird is unable to move without affecting, physically, others in the cage nor to lay or rest without affecting itself deleteriously, the cruelty is constant and continual and without relief and, I have no doubt, caused stress in all these birds."

The judge noted that the only explanation for such suffering is increased profitability of egg production. Wright said that it is his "strong view that all these birds have been treated with unjustified and unnecessary cruelty, constituted by great indifference to their suffering and pain."

Golden Egg Farms was found guilty on all seven counts of violations to the Cruelty to Animals Prevention Act of 1925, and penalties are pending.

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## Corporate Greed Targets Helpless Dairy Cows

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has given its stamp of approval to POSILAC, recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST), for commercial use. The giant Monsanto Company has spent an amazing \$300 million to create and promote this dangerous growth hormone. Cows immobilized in their stanchions must submit biweekly to injections of POSILAC, which force them to give unnaturally high amounts of milk. POSILAC's official FDA warning label reveals its threat to the cows' welfare:

- Use of POSILAC has also been associated with increases in cystic ovaries and disorders of the uterus during the treatment period. Cows injected with POSILAC may have small decreases in gestation length and birth weight of calves, and they may have increased twinning rates...
- Cows injected with POSILAC are at an increased risk for clinical mastitis (visibly abnormal milk). In addition, the risk of sub clinical mastitis (milk not visibly abnormal) is increased...
- Use of POSILAC may result in an increase in digestive disorders such as indigestion, bloat and diarrhea.
- Studies indicated that cows injected with POSILAC had increased numbers of enlarged hocks and lesions (e.g. lacerations, enlargements, calluses) of the knee (carpal region) and second lactation or older cows had more disorders of the foot region.

Mastitis is a cruelly painful disease affecting the udders of dairy cows. Farmers try to treat it with antibiotics. Increased use of antibiotics for food-producing animals is a major cause

of resistance to antibiotics when treating human bacterial infections. In addition, Dr. Samuel Epstein, chair of the Cancer Prevention Coalition, warns that higher levels of "Insulin-like Growth Factor-1" in the milk from treated cows may lead to human breast cancer.

The FDA's bias in approving use of POSILAC is accentuated by its refusal to require labeling of dairy products containing milk from POSILAC-injected cows. AWI strongly urged the FDA to require such labeling. Compassionate consumers have the right to know that a dangerous product was used on the cows who provided their milk, similar to the right to know that tuna is "dolphin safe" or that cosmetics are "cruelty-free."

The FDA contends that such labels would give "misleading implications" and that "No significant difference has been shown between milk derived from rBST-treated and non-rBST-treated cows." This ignores the clear distinction between products from a healthy animal and products from a sick and suffering one.

This distinction is made clear by dairy farmer John Kurtz who used rBST on his herd. According to Kurtz: "What actually occurred, by the time we finished the second lactation, is that we had none of the cows that received rBST stay in the herd. 100 percent of those cows failed to conceive during the second lactation, we had 19 percent death loss, and we had 14.8 percent 'down cow' loss."

After being analyzed at the University of Minnesota, it was discovered that "these cows had taken so much calcium out of their skeleton, even their shoulder blades had a ripple effect like a ripple potato chip where they had pulled the calcium out of the skeleton to produce milk."

Monsanto, reacting to negative publicity and lack of support among many producers, is beginning to sue companies who refuse rBST-tainted products. Swiss Valley Farms of Davenport, Iowa, now faces legal challenge from Monsanto for advertising that their milk is farm-certified rBST-free.

The 12 member nations of the European Union have rejected the use of rBST, but they could be forced to accept products from rBST treated cows if the United States challenges the European ban under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Thus, this unjustifiable and unnecessary suffering may be inflicted on cows on both sides of the Atlantic.

Widespread public protest is called for to stop the spread of this insidious corporate cruelty. Already an "unexpectedly strong public resistance to a new drug that makes cows produce more milk" was reported on the front page of the Business section of *The Washington Post* (March 15, 1994). Please make your voice heard. The suffering which cows are forced to undergo simply to increase milk production cannot be tolerated.

**ACTION:** Urge your supermarket, grocer or convenience store to require certification that the milk, cheese and other dairy products they carry come only from cows that have not been subjected to injections of rBST. Encourage your friends

to do the same. For more information and a list of companies whose products are rBST-free, contact: The Pure Food Campaign; 1130-17th Street, NW, Suite 300; Washington, DC 20036; 1-800-253-0681.

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## EU Extends rBST Moratorium

Hundreds of thousands of dairy cows will be spared the cruelty of recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST) injections, at least until the year 2000, thanks to the European Parliament's wise extension of its moratorium on the use of the growth hormone and importation of dairy products from injected cows.

By taking this bold action, Europe risks a US challenge under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), prompted by rBST's proponents and profiteers: the St. Louis-based Monsanto Corporation, its commercial manufacturer; and the giant US dairies that will eliminate small farms if this Orwellian drug is widely used.

The GATT does not permit import bans of products unless such action is "necessary for the protection of human, animal or plant life" and such a measure is "based on scientific principles." The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) declared rBST as safe for humans and animals when it approved the drug in November 1993.

However, Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf, vice president of the European Parliament's Agricultural Committee, defends the European ban. He wrote FDA Commissioner David Kessler that he is "fairly confident in being able to demonstrate that the safety of European citizens who consume rBST products cannot be guaranteed," but he suggests that rather than ban all meat and dairy products from treated cows, "a less contentious approach would simply be to label the meat and dairy products which are exported [to] the EU."

Consumers in the EU, Canada and the United States have made it clear that, given an informed choice, they would not buy dairy products from treated animals. The United States should ban rBST now to reverse the mistake it made with initial approval. At the very least, labeling must be required for dairy products from injected animals. Americans clearly find a moral distinction between products from healthy and sick animals. Citizens must be given the information necessary to make informed, compassionate purchases.

A Canadian television show, "Fifth Estate," aired a special program on rBST on Nov. 29, 1994. The show revealed that Dr. Margaret Hayden of the Canadian Bureau of Veterinary Drugs wrote that four or five years ago, "Monsanto representatives offered Health Canada quote, 'one to two million dollars with the condition that the company receive approval to market their drug in Canada without being required to submit data from any further studies or trials.'"

Former Division Chief in Canada's Bureau of Veterinary Drugs, Dr. Bill Drennan was at the meeting with Dr. Hayden.

When asked by the show's host if he would interpret what happened as a bribe, he replied, "Certainly."

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## USDA's Ban on Face Branding: A Good Start!

The US Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), under strong pressure from AWI and other groups, finally has made significant progress toward reducing inhumane treatment of cattle imported into the US from Mexico.

### Getting Off the Face

On Aug. 24, 1994, the USDA withdrew its misguided 1993 proposal "to require that spayed heifers and intact cattle imported into the United States from Mexico meet the same M-branding requirement" that has been routinely inflicted on Mexican steers. Until now, the USDA required that steers be painfully hot-iron branded with the letter "M" on the right jaw to signify the animals' Mexican origin. AWI objected to this attempt to expand a cruel procedure, which causes extreme pain.

Less noticed in the heat of the Mexican steer campaign is a smaller number of domestic animals who continue to be face branded as part of USDA disease control programs. Animal protectionists are now urging the USDA to eliminate face branding across the board as a desirable alternative to firing up new campaigns.

Under the modified proposal, hot-iron branding is no longer mandatory, and all brands must be placed on the right hip, rather than the extremely sensitive face of the animal. The mark must be "distinct, permanent, and legible," but it can be applied by freeze branding, which the USDA will accept under the new proposal as a painless alternative to the hot-iron brand. In 1986, the *AWI Quarterly* reported on the work of Dr. Keith Farrell, who invented and developed freeze branding—a method whereby liquid nitrogen rather than red hot iron is applied to the skin. Farrell described the feeling when he freeze branded himself as a "tingling sensation" without pain. It is widely used for identification of expensive horses but has been resisted by the cattle industry in the past.

However, it now appears that the National Cattlemen's Association (NCA) supports the modified branding proposal. *Live Animal Trade & Transport Magazine*, December 1994, quotes NCA comments to APHIS regarding the change in procedure: "If APHIS determines that moving the 'M' brand will provide an effective means of permanent identification, then we support this decision."

Accepting alternatives to hot iron branding is an extremely positive step. The USDA should now follow up with a seminal breakthrough, prohibition of hot-iron branding of imported cattle. Without such a prohibition, individuals who currently use hot-iron brands are under no compulsion to change their inhumane procedures.



## Ovariectomy Protocol: Anesthetics at Last

Great progress also has been made in modifying USDA spaying requirements for Mexican cattle. The agency's ovariectomy protocol required that "a complete ovariectomy will be surgically performed through a flank incision on each heifer." Remarkably, there was no mention of anesthesia!

Effective July 12, 1994, the USDA remedied the protocol's glaring deficiency by requiring that either local or regional nerve block anesthesia be used for the surgery. Also changed was the unnecessary requirement that two painful brands be applied to these animals: the "M" signifying Mexican origin and a spade mark, like that found on a playing card, indicating completion of the spay surgery. Now, one brand, an "M" with a slash will be placed on the hip, reducing the double cruelty formerly inflicted. The NCA also agrees with this change in procedure.

If adopted, these modifications will make a major improvement in the treatment of Mexican cattle. The USDA clearly is listening to public opinion.

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## US Hog Farmers Explore Humane Swedish Techniques

BY MARLENE HALVERSON

In September, a group of farmers from Minnesota and Iowa traveled to Sweden to visit their counterparts in that country. Unlike North American agribusinesses, Swedish farms use models of hog rearing that are based on the natural behavior of pigs. The American farmers and researchers who traveled with them made the trip with the intent of learning how to make their own farms more animal and environment-friendly.

Group housing of pregnant sows on deep straw beds has been "conventional" in Sweden since the mid-1980s. Since 1988, a new model to group house nursing sows with their piglets on deep straw is becoming popular. In both systems, modern management techniques are combined with traditional and new knowledge regarding the components of pig well-being. Together, attention to these factors helps farmers maintain individual sow productivity levels on par with the intensive, industrialized farrowing operations commonly found in the United States.

Sows move through the stages of the conception-through-weaning cycle in stable groups. Newly weaned and pregnant sows are kept on deep straw beds in large pens. Each pen has a row of individual feeding stalls, one stall for each sow. The sows are enclosed in their stalls for the 30 minutes or so that it takes for them all to finish eating. This, together with the abundant space and bedding, prevents the problems with bully sows that plague other group systems.

In the Swedish group nursing systems, sows give birth either in a separate farrowing room containing conventional



Swedish farmers Tomas and Magnus Carlevad and Gunilla Pettersson stand in one of their group nursing rooms.



The Carlevad nursery room has a special piglet creep area at the back to keep the sows away from the youngsters' special feed, a "silent" ventilation system, and sow feeding area.

Swedish farrowing pens, which are large enough for the sow to turn around and interact freely with her piglets, or in wooden cubicles set up temporarily in the group nursing room itself. After the piglets are 10 to 14 days old, or after they start to climb out of the cubicle, the temporary cubicles are removed and all sows and piglets in the group mingle.

The amount of space, both in the group pregnant sow housing and these nursing rooms, is important not only for the well-being of the pigs—smaller space results in more piglets stepped and lain on—but for the "ecology" of the system. The combination of the right amount of straw bedding, the right amount of manure and urine contributed by the sows, and the air tramped and rooted into the beds by the sows and piglets comprises a "recipe" that leads to stench-free buildings and bedding that begins to compost in the barn.

To work well, group housing and group nursing take a special interest on the part of the farmer in the well-being of pigs, a solid knowledge of their natural behavior, and very good organizational and animal husbandry skills. The visiting American farmers were highly impressed with the cleanliness, animal-friendliness, and efficiency of the Swedish farms.

Can it be done here in the United States? It is not the will that is lacking. Minnesota farmer Marv Freiborg who traveled with the group says, "I would love for us to pioneer this system in the United States. After going to Sweden and seeing that it seems to work for them without antibiotics in the feed, and seeing that the farmers and pigs have a nice, clean environment to be in, and there is no smell—it is just amazing. Just the fact I don't have to produce all that stinking liquid manure makes me want to do it."

Dan Wilson, a hog farmer from Iowa, comments, "[After a year of operating a new, intensive confinement nursery, my brother] and I are convinced that we do not want anything to do with a system of raising hogs that does not use straw. We are also at the point in our lives where we are looking ahead at the future and trying to figure out how we will help our children get started in farming if this is what they want to do. We are also looking at all the new large confinement buildings that are going up all around us and thinking about all the problems that they are going to create. We are now convinced that we would like to be part of the solution, not part of the problem, in keeping rural America alive and showing young farmers there is a better way to farm. Seeing the Swedish system I was so impressed by how little stress it puts on both the people and the animals. I was impressed by how easy it was to handle the hogs in this system and how contented they were."

To implement the Swedish model on their farms, new hog farmers will need to make a considerable up front investment. Those already in production will need to remodel or add on to older buildings. But in the long run, the Swedish model is a way for large numbers of family hog farmers to raise hogs humanely, ecologically, and profitably. Traditional agricultural lenders, including the US government, favor high-volume systems, but it is these mega farms that function at a high cost to animal welfare, environmental quality, public health, and viability of rural communities.

Marlene Halverson, a Ph.D. candidate in agricultural economics at the University of Minnesota, initiated and organized the visit by US farmers to Sweden.

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## 1981 Swiss Ban on Battery Cages: A Success Story for Hens and Farmers

Today millions of laying hens still suffer as a result of being confined in inhumane housing systems known as battery cages.

Common sense is enough to tell us that birds kept in this way are subjected to undue suffering—with just 400 sq. centimeters of space, battery hens barely have enough room to turn around. Housing systems must be adapted as far as possible to the livestock, not the livestock to the housing systems.

In 1981, the Swiss Animal Protection Act came into effect, making Switzerland the first country in the world



A free-range system offering chickens a choice between large indoor and outdoor runs.

to ban battery cages. The law requires housing systems for laying hens to provide sheltered, darkened nesting boxes and perches or slatted grids for all hens and allow a minimum area of 800 sq. centimeters per bird. This requirement effectively prohibits keeping laying hens in cages. Swiss poultry keepers have accepted the new situation and have demonstrated that it is possible to make a profit by using more humane husbandry.

The method of choice in Switzerland is now the aviary. This system is conceived in accordance with the natural behavior of fowl and is based on installations and equipment such as nest boxes and scratching areas or perches that enable birds to follow patterns of behavior specific to their species.

Despite the success of the Swiss system, millions of dollars are still being spent around the world on research into the needs of laying hens. Scientists are neglecting the progress that has been made in Switzerland over the last 30 years. Hygienic measures, behavioral aspects and economic problems are being studied over again. Thirteen years ago, the Swiss poultry farmers were presented with a major challenge. They faced up to this challenge and have now successfully mastered it. There is no logical reason why poultry farmers in other countries should not be at least as successful in the same situation.

The Swiss Society for the Protection of Animals (STS) has produced a 32-page color report entitled "Laying Hens: 12 years of experience with new husbandry systems in Switzerland," on which the above is based. For copies of the complete publication, contact the STS, Zentralsekretariat, CH-4052 Basel, Birfeldstrasse 45, SWITZERLAND.

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## Deregulated Farm Animal Transport in Canada: The Animals Pay the Price

BY TINA HARRISON, CO-COORDINATOR OF CETFA

On an April morning in 1992, an investigator with Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals (CETFA) arrived at the Ontario Stockyards with a video camera in time to spot a truck at the ramp where a crippled cow was being unloaded. For nearly two and a half hours she lay in misery on a filthy floor covered in excrement and directly in the path of other animals doing their best to sidestep her as they were goaded and shouted off the truck. Once in a while, the little cow lowed softly, sides heaving, as the chains tightened to drag her yet another few feet along the interminable journey to the doorway of the vehicle and down the long ramp.

No one seemed to give a thought to her plight. If she reached the kill floor alive, she could be approved for human consumption, with minimum loss to the industry. No misplaced compassion must allow the slightest pang of conscience to interfere with profit. No matter that this cow, reduced to a skeleton, had quite likely produced some 25 tons of milk in her lifetime. This was her reward. Annual federal statistics show that more than 3 million farm animals die in Canada on their way to slaughter. Moreover, this figure does not even include “downers” at the thousands of uninspected plants across the country.

Large rigs regularly traverse the country with full loads under the direction of drivers with no training in livestock handling and even less sympathy for the distress of their cargoes. Following is a quote from a sympathetic long distance hauler.

*One of the bigger priorities that I would like to see changed is how the animals are loaded into the front nose of some trailers. Once the deck is cranked for your second floor, the pigs are run into the trailer on the top deck and forced to jump approximately 3,112 feet into the front nose of the trailer. The pigs run around in circles trying to get away from the person(s) forcing them into this distant hole, and the look of terror in their eyes when they get to the edge of the floor and see where they have to jump is upsetting. If they are lucky they may fall on top of one another to cushion the blow, if not they fall snout first into straw and steel. I have seen many injuries resulting from sprained and broken legs to smashed snouts. Even some drivers who are not normally concerned about livestock voice their concern about this inhumane act.*

Transportation of farm animals in Canada is deregulated\*, and clearly out of control. Protection of livestock in transit was eliminated in 1987 as a budgetary measure, and the results have been chaotic—both in terms of enormous animal anguish, and in staggering economic losses to an industry already heavily subsidized by long-suffering taxpayers.

\*Except for the “28-hour law,” which was passed in 1906 and only applies to livestock shipped by rail, farm animal transport in the United States has never been regulated.

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## Do Animal Protection Laws Dupe the Public?

BY HENRY SPIRA

“If, as Mahatma Gandhi states, ‘the greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated,’ the United States is being left behind by much of Western Europe.” So says David Wolfson in a soon to be published study documenting the fact that present laws are of no help to the cruel realities suffered by seven billion farm animals. Wolfson, an attorney in a major international law firm, suggests that while farm animals have no real legal protection, society perceives that they do.

As outlined by Wolfson, laws give the perception of protecting farm animals but, in reality, provide little or no protection. Federal law fails to provide any protection to farm animals on the farm. Moreover, while many state cruelty laws still cover farm animals in theory, they are rarely if ever applied. And most disconcerting is the trend of farm animals being increasingly excluded from the reach of state cruelty laws.

At present, 25 states exclude “accepted farming practices” from the reach of such cruelty laws. Nineteen states amended their statutes in the last twelve years. Eleven of these amended their statutes in the last six years, and in just the past year, two states amended their state cruelty statutes to exclude accepted animal agricultural practices. The result is that any “accepted farming practice” is legally permitted—no matter how cruel. Obviously, there would be no need to amend state cruelty laws were there not the fear that accepted practices would be judged cruel. In effect, Wolfson states, animal agriculture has been left to regulate itself.

Consequently, our legal system appears to acquiesce to dragging a half dead cow, chained around her hind leg, through the stockyards and keeping calves deliberately anemic by depriving them of the most basic foods and water while imprisoning them in wooden crates for their entire short, utterly miserable lives. “The reality in the US,” says Wolfson, “is that our society, through its laws, seemingly condones cruelty to animals.”

Is this how the American public wants farm animals to be treated? Much has happened in the past few years to suggest that not only are increasing numbers of people opposed to the routine and needless misery inflicted on seven billion farm animals each year, but that industry and government are finally beginning to respond to the public’s concerns.

Encouraging developments include the US Department of Agriculture’s rapidly halting the face branding of Mexican cattle in the wake of widespread public outrage. And the USDA then following through by placing the issue of farm animal well-being on their agenda. Earlier, the American Meat Institute issued groundbreaking guidelines promoting the

humane handling and transport of animals. Major American slaughter houses have recently replaced the shackling and hoisting of large conscious animals. And fast food giant McDonald’s has told its suppliers to adhere to guidelines for more humane treatment of farm animals.

These reforms are encouraging. Still, life for farm animals has never been more miserable. Today, the only limits to increasing the confinement and trauma of farm animals are economic. The only reason they don’t cram more laying hens into a cage is because the increased mortality would make it less profitable. The same thing holds true for the pigs and veal calves routinely denied the most basic freedoms to turn around, lie down, and extend their limbs.

The enormous response to our recent campaign to end the face branding of Mexican cattle suggests that the public will not tolerate animal abuse if it is made aware of the facts. But, as Wolfson notes, the public believes that “although we eat animals, there are laws which prevent these animals from being treated cruelly.” In reality, farm animals are being subjected to ever more stressful confinement systems and have no legal protection.

How do we proceed? The public may want to replace or reduce its consumption of meat. At a minimum we can all agree that as long as the public eats meat, there’s a need to refine current methods of animal agriculture. But in order to make informed choices, we need to know the realities of confinement systems, transport, handling, and slaughter of farm animals. We also need to understand the lack of legal protection for farm animals and the need for a farm animal protection bill. The USDA and producer groups must be encouraged to promote the well-being of farm animals. Users of the products of animal agriculture need to enforce more humane standards for their suppliers.

Until the 7 billion farm animals do have legal protection, agribusinesses need to respond rapidly and substantively to emerging public concerns. If they do not, let us place them in the unenviable position of having to publicly defend their right to be cruel.

Henry Spira, who has been active in human and animal rights movements for half a century, has coordinated successful campaigns to promote alternatives to the use of animals in laboratories. He has been a merchant seaman, auto assembly line worker, journalist, teacher, and an activist for civil rights and trade union democracy. He is now focusing on the plight of 7 billion farm animals and plans to write a column regularly for the *AWI Quarterly*.

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## USDA Reviews Livestock Care and Handling at Nation’s Stockyards

In October, the US Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Packers and Stockyards Administration announced completion of its review of handling practices, services, and facilities in US

stockyards. The USDA conducted the review in response to public complaints of cruel treatment of downed animals at stockyards. “Downers” are animals who are unable to walk or stand without assistance.

The USDA sent warning letters to 52 markets, citing practices that must be corrected or discontinued immediately. Eighty-one downed animals were observed at 66 markets. A total of 1,415 markets were inspected. The agency issued administrative complaints against two stockyards for the manner in which they handled downed animals. In addition, seven warning letters were sent to markets for failure to provide proper care and handling of downed animals.

Downers suffer horribly, particularly during transport. When calling for support of a 1992 Senate bill requiring the humane euthanasia of downed livestock, the *Eau Claire, Wisconsin County Today* stated, “With the exception of a rare injury during trucking to a livestock auction house or slaughterhouse, an animal that cannot walk off a truck when it arrives at an auction point or slaughterhouse is an animal that was too ill to be shipped in the first place.”

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## The Dangerous Business of European Live Animal Transport

A routine animal rights protest turned deadly when Jill Phipps, mother of a 9-year-old boy and dedicated campaigner for animal protection, was crushed to death under the wheels of a truck carrying veal calves to Coventry airport in central England for transnational shipment. Ms. Phipps was part of a group demonstrating for more humane treatment for animals during export. According to *The Washington Post* on Jan. 27, “The profile of the average member of the protesting organizations,” said Trevor Hayes, spokesperson for the National Farmers Union, “is a 44-year-old Tory woman.” 60-year-old Betty Clydesdale told British news reporters of facing off against police in riot gear during passive protests against long-distance sheep export from the English port at



Four trucks carrying 2,000 live sheep draw a police escort in Brightlingsea.

Agence France Presse



Brightlingsea: "They sent into a one-horse place like this, people who had only been trained for violence. They were picking up middle-aged mothers and throwing them onto the pavement." Mrs. Julie Wayland, 39, claimed, "I was kicked, punched, and dragged by the hair."

The United Kingdom has more stringent animal welfare regulations than many of the nations to which live animals such as calves and lambs are shipped. The practice of confining calves raised for veal in crates, for instance, was banned in there in 1990, but roughly half a million calves are exported to other EU members that still use dark, cramped, inhumane crates for confinement.

An individual member of the European Union cannot impose unilateral trade restrictions to prevent other members from treating animals however they wish. If such unilateral action were allowed, the United Kingdom simply could prohibit the export of live animals to any nation that does not have humane requirements comparable to domestic UK law.

The animal protection organization, Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), has worked diligently to win improved conditions for these animals. On Jan. 16, protestors succeeded in halting the transport of almost 2,000 sheep to port for export. Philip Lymbery of CIWF told the British newspaper *The Guardian* that, "There cannot be any further excuse not to listen to the voice of the people. These sheep would have been sent for slaughter in continental abattoirs where the conditions and methods of slaughter are nothing short of barbaric."

The journey to the continent causes great suffering, with animals often transported as long as 48 hours without food, water or rest. Journey time limits have often been debated among Europe's agriculture ministers without significant progress.

Germany has long advocated an eight-hour time limit for such transport, but has met with strong opposition from consumer nations such as France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece. William Waldegrave, Britain's Farm Minister, urged other member nations of the EU to join Britain in outlawing the "abhorrent" veal crates and support journey time limits. But his credibility is undermined by the fact that he sells calves from his farm to European exporters. His wife even wrote a cookbook recommending Dutch veal.

Ministerial discussions in February collapsed with no decision reached on how to provide better care and handling for animals in transport. The Ministers did agree, however, to resume talks in March.

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Humane Farming Association

*A veal calf suffers life in a crate.*

## Smuggled Drug Dangerous to Calves and Consumers

Clenbuterol is a highly toxic, illegal drug used to promote rapid, unnatural growth in veal calves. Use of the drug reportedly can increase daily weight gain as much as 30 percent while creating chemically induced, pale, anemic, so-called milk fed veal.

Thousands of animals from veal factory farms suspected of using Clenbuterol may have been slaughtered and sold to consumers. Clenbuterol is toxic to humans. Even trace amounts have the potential to cause increased heart rate, muscle tremors, headache, dizziness, nausea, fever and chills.

A special report by the Humane Farming Association (HFA) reveals the results of a federal investigation into the veal industry's use of this dangerous substance. According to HFA, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been aware of alleged uses of Clenbuterol since 1989, when a rancher's calves experienced "an unusually high and unexplainable death rate." The rancher learned from Vitek Supply Corporation, a Wisconsin feed supplement company, "that Clenbuterol was used in the feed and that it is smuggled into the country within shipments of other feed ingredients."

In February 1994, armed FDA and Customs Service agents raided Vitek, setting off eight months of raids at leading veal factories, feed manufacturers and distributors. Veal calf supplements seized from the Vitek raid allegedly tested positive for Clenbuterol. An Oct. 14, 1994 article in the Los Angeles Times states that in Europe more than 1,000 human illnesses and five deaths have been attributed to use of the drug on calves.

According to the HFA report, underground use of Clenbuterol may be widespread throughout the industry. Former Vitek president Aat Groenevelt is now the chair of the nation's largest veal companies, Provimi, Inc. It is not known how many factories produce veal from drugged animals or how much of the tainted meat has been eaten by unwitting American consumers.

For more information, please contact HFA, 1550 California St., Suite #6, San Francisco, CA 94109.

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## Face Branding: Going, Going...

BY HENRY SPIRA

On May 17, the Federal Register published the US Department of Agriculture's proposal to end face branding of domestic cattle and bison in the agency's tuberculosis and brucellosis identification program. As readers are probably aware, January 1995 saw an end to face branding of Mexican steers. However, smaller numbers of domestic cattle have continued to be face branded as part of disease control programs. With the current announcement, we can look forward to the complete elimination of the face branding of cattle within the next few months.

USDA Acting Assistant Secretary Patricia Jensen said, "We are committed to continually evaluating USDA identification requirements to ensure that our methods are both humane and effective for livestock disease control and public health purposes." Jensen also said that these proposed regulations are the USDA's response to increasing public concern that hot-iron branding on the jaw may cause undue distress to cattle or bison.

Congratulations to all of you who voiced your strong concerns to the USDA. You stopped the proposed expansion of face branding in its tracks. In fact, the USDA was so impressed with your reaction that they moved to eliminate all face branding with speed uncharacteristic of a government agency.

Many of you also voiced strong concern to the USDA about other painful animal agriculture practices. This concern is now empowering USDA officials to place farm animal well-being on the federal agenda. A similar recognition by fast food giant McDonald's recently led the company to publish a statement requiring their suppliers to adhere to humane guidelines for farm animals. Independent experts are suggesting the McDonald's initiative is already making a meaningful difference. There will now be pressure on other major companies to take similar initiatives, including fast food parent PepsiCo, with whom we are now in discussion.

Until very recently, "food animals," who account for 95 percent of all animal suffering, have not been considered as appealing or deserving of concern as some other animals. But now, increasing numbers of individuals and organizations are beginning to direct serious energies towards solving the nightmarish problems of the more than 7 billion farm animals in the United States.

Clearly, we now have momentum and enormous opportunities for progress. But not all the news is good news. In future columns, we will discuss the negative trends, including how the United States is promoting the consumption of a debilitating, high-fat diet in countries that to date have benefited from a largely meatless life-style, and the proliferation of mega factories, where pigs live their entire lives in steel cages in which they are unable even to turn around, at a time when such cruel systems are being phased out elsewhere.

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## Bovine Economics

Having twins is usually a cause for celebration. But for a dairy farmer a cow that bears twin calves can be a bad omen: twin births weaken both the mother and her offspring. One or two sets of twins is par for the course, but when Lisbon, N.Y. dairyman Jay Livingston discovered 20 sets of twins among his 200 milk-producing cows, it was a calamity. He lost little time in dispatching the 40 calves to the slaughterhouse where they were ground up for bologna and hot dogs. Many of the sickly mothers will soon follow their weakling calves, ending up as hamburger in the school lunch program.

The lot of these cows is more than an inexplicable twist of fate. Livingston had been injecting his herd with Monsanto's new genetically engineered growth hormone known as rBGH—trade name Posilac—which promises to increase the amount of milk a cow produces....

For the first couple of months on rBGH "our cows seemed to be doing OK," [Livingston] says. "Their milk production increased from 40 to 65 pounds per day. Then they just went all to pieces. We had a half a dozen die and then the rest started experiencing major health problems, cows went off their feed, experienced severe weight loss, mastitis and serious foot problems ..."

Dairy Profit Weekly, [an] industry report, quotes Mike Connor, a dairy nutritionist in Black Earth County, Texas, who said two-thirds of his client farmers are phasing out rBGH. Noting recurrent side effects, he said, "Many concluded that the risk was not worth the benefit." Dick Bengen, an 800-cow dairy producer from Everson, Wash., recently told a Toronto dairy symposium that he had disappointing results using rBGH on his herd, saying that many of the cows with increased milk production require more feed. The extra costs—a shot per cow every two weeks runs \$5.80—and the additional feed made the economic gains marginal at best.

*Excerpted from "Bovine Economics" by James Ridgeway. The article appeared in the March 28, 1995 issue of the Village Voice.*

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## Factory Farm Lawsuit Ignites Midwest "Journey for Justice"

When a giant pig factory sued a tiny Missouri township for \$7.9 million last year, the stage was set for a David and Goliath battle that would engage the hearts and minds of citizens around the country. In 1994, the voters of Lincoln Township, Mo. enacted a zoning ordinance that placed restrictions on the planned construction and operation of Premium Standard Farms, Inc. (PSF) pig factories. The ordinance was written to ensure that new development in the township would conform to a variety of standards designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public. PSF, with the massive financial clout of Morgan Stanley and Chemical Bank to back it, refused to





Photos: D. Halverson/Humane Farming Association

**Top:** A sow in typical hog factory conditions chews neurotically at her stall's bars. **Bottom:** "Journey for Justice" marchers against hog factories.

abide by the ordinance. PSF sued the township, protesting what it called "retroactive zoning." The township filed a counterclaim, seeking enforcement of the zoning ordinance and the restriction of the facility on the grounds that it is a public nuisance.

In March 1995, the newly formed national Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment (CFFE) organized an April 1 rally in Lincoln Township to show support for Township residents and opposition to corporate factory farms. Country music star and FarmAid co-founder Willie Nelson drove from his Texas home just for the event. Nelson spoke out on behalf of the township residents and entertained the crowd of 3,000 with his music. Thirty-five speakers represented a broad range of organizations, including advocates of animal welfare, environmental protection and family farms, along with the United Auto Workers, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, United Rubber Workers and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund. The event received coverage on radio and television and in newspapers from coast to coast. Lincoln Township residents have also drawn the support of former presidential candidate Reverend Jesse Jackson. In a March 15 address to students at Northwest Missouri State University, Jackson said Premium Standard Farms was attempting to "literally devour" the township, called PSF's actions "fundamentally unjust," and promised to help township residents.

Under mounting public pressure, PSF dropped the monetary portion of its lawsuit against the township on March 24, but still refuses to abide by the township zoning ordinance. The case is still in the courts.

Carrying signs emblazoned "Stop Factory Farms" and "No Hog Factories," CFFE launched a march in Lincoln Township on April 21. CFFE representatives, joined by Missouri and Iowa residents, headed for the site of the Rural Conference

held by President Clinton, Vice President Gore and Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman in Ames, Iowa on April 25. Flyers and homemade signs declared the march a "Journey for Justice" to draw attention to the abuse of people, animals, rural communities, land and water caused by corporate hog farms. Along the route of the journey, CFFE representatives held meetings in communities threatened by corporate hog factories, gathered a list of citizen concerns, and offered CFFE support for local fights against factory hog farms. Local residents joined representatives of the campaign as the journey marched through their communities. On April 25, the journey culminated with 150 marchers from several states converging in Ames to carry clear messages of protest against factory farms to the Clinton Administration.

CFFE provides a unique forum to expose the severe animal welfare problems created by factory hog production. By uniting a broad range of groups opposed to factory farms in direct action, the Campaign can have an enormous impact on factory pig farming. The campaign also offers an unprecedented opportunity to demonstrate that permitting cruel treatment of farm animals leads to human health and environmental problems, the destruction of family farms and the erosion of rural communities. If farm animals were treated humanely in the first place, factory farms and the associated environmental and social problems would not exist.

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## Anti-Factory Farming Group's Genesis

In early 1995, a new grassroots effort, the Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment (CFFE), was initiated. This campaign united family farmers, environmentalists, advocates of animal protection and citizens in rural communities who are working to halt the proliferation of factory hog farms. CFFE believes that local and large-scale actions, such as those described above, are necessary to publicize the horrors of factory farming and to effectively pressure the government agencies, corporations, universities and trade associations that promote factory hog farms. FarmAid has assisted the efforts of the Campaign since its inception. The organizing committee is currently composed of the following groups:

- The Missouri Rural Crisis Center
- Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
- The Land Stewardship Project (Minnesota)
- Citizens for Lincoln Township (Missouri)
- Land Loss Prevention Project (North Carolina)
- Clean Water Network
- Animal Welfare Institute

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## The 25 Million Gallon Wake-Up Call

BY HENRY SPIRA

On June 21, 25 million gallons of manure from 10,000 hogs broke out of a "lagoon" at the Ocean View Hog Farm in Onslow, N.C., pouring into nearby fields and streams feeding the New River. The spill was enormous—twice the volume of the 11 million gallons the Exxon Valdez dumped in 1989. That same day, another hog lagoon ruptured in Sampson, N.C. Then on July 3, a four-acre poultry lagoon broke in Duplin County, N.C., spewing 8.6 million gallons of waste into tributaries of the Northeast Cape Fear River.

*Feedstuffs*, the leading publication of the animal agriculture industry, commented that "Anti-corporate farming activists have the smoking gun they've been looking for." Meanwhile, the *Raleigh News & Observer*, with the headline "Big Stink in Onslow," commented, "The pork industry has assured North Carolinians repeatedly that it has environmental risks under control. But those assurances were undermined last week in about as dramatic a fashion as you can get. The collapse of a dike on the waste lagoon of a huge state-of-the-art hog farm in Onslow County allowed the public to see and smell the real story...That was the public's water that is now befouled, and those are neighbors who are having to cope with the mess... Of course hog farms can pollute in ways more insidious than gushing spills, including the release of ammonia gases, seepage from lagoons and runoff from fields treated with manure."

Cathy Davis, a hog farm executive, said, "It was terrible what happened...It is bad publicity for pork producers. It is bad for the environment. It's been a field day for the environmentalists and the media. It's been a wake-up call for the industry." For industry, a "wake-up call" could translate into more protection money paid out to legislators. In the past four years more than half the current North Carolina General Assembly members got campaign contributions from the pork industry, according to the *News & Observer*.

For environmental activists, these massive spills translate into a dramatic wake-up call that the raising of seven and a half billion animals for food every year is destroying our environment while using up our limited resources with an insatiable appetite for land, water and energy.

It is encouraging that more environmental groups are now protesting the environmental damage caused by mega hog factories (see page 15). In the past, many environmentalists have spent too much time trying to save the world from plastic plates while ignoring the meat that's served on them. Isn't now the time for environmental activists, nationwide and worldwide, to get their heads together and help the planet, the people and the suffering animals?

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## Is the Public Ready to Roast the Meat Industry?

BY HENRY SPIRA

For decades, the well-being of farm animals has been a largely ignored issue. So it may come as a surprise that most Americans want animals to be protected from cruelty. This is the overall finding of a recent telephone survey of 1,012 adults by the Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, N.J. for Animal Rights International.

The survey found that 93 percent of US adults agreed that animal pain and suffering should be reduced as much as possible even though the animals are going to be slaughtered any way.

Nine out of 10 adult Americans also disapprove of current methods of raising food animals in spaces so confining that sows and calves cannot even turn around and that laying hens are unable to stretch their wings.

With these concerns, it is hardly surprising that more than eight out of 10 people think the meat and egg industries should be held legally responsible for protecting farm animals from cruelty, and that 91 percent think the US Department of Agriculture should be involved in protecting farm animals from cruelty.

What may well alarm corporate executives is that on top of this, 58 percent of the public also believes that fast food restaurants and supermarkets, who profit from factory intensive farming, should be held legally responsible for protecting farm animals from cruelty.

Too often, in the past, animal protectionists have ignored the 95 percent of animals who do not necessarily rank high in popularity. But, this study shows that the American public cares about all vulnerable animals. In addition, as demonstrated by the recent successful campaign to abolish the face branding of cattle, they are ready to confront and challenge abuses in animal agriculture.

As the public focuses on the horrors of factory farming, smart thinking, image-conscious corporations who profit from animal agriculture would do well to respond swiftly and pro-actively. The alternative will almost certainly be a consumer backlash as animal protectionists begin to launch public awareness campaigns. In this connection, we have begun to use the survey to talk with major companies such as Campbell Soup, Heinz and PepsiCo about setting humane animal standards for themselves and their suppliers. This was the successful formula that energized Revlon and the whole cosmetics industry in the 1980s.

Pressures on the meat-industrial complex will continue to intensify from all directions. In addition to farm animal well-being issues, intensive confinement systems will be increasingly challenged on the grounds of public health, protecting the environment, feeding the starving millions, and leaving some quality of life for future generations.

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## Veal Drug Smugglers Indicted

On Dec. 6, 1995, a federal grand jury indicted a Wisconsin feed distributor, the Vitek Supply Corporation, on 12 counts of conspiracy, receipt of smuggled merchandise, and smuggling unapproved drugs that were allegedly added to feed mixtures and sold to veal producers used throughout the United States.

As we reported in the winter 1995 *AWI Quarterly*, Clenbuterol, one of the smuggled growth enhancers, increased heart rate, muscle tremors, headaches, dizziness, nausea, fever and chills in humans who ingest the tainted veal.

In addition to the hazardous Clenbuterol, other unapproved drugs in the indictment include: Avoparcine, which promotes growth and feed efficiency but is not FDA approved; Furaladone and Furazolidone/Nitrofurazone, all of which had FDA approval withdrawn because they were considered unsafe in the conditions under which they are used and because these nitrofurans are potentially carcinogenic; and Zinc Bacitracin, a new animal drug that is not yet approved for use in veal calves.

According to the indictment, Vitek sold 1,733,205 pounds of drug-contaminated products worth \$1,329,062.40. Thirty-two alleged acts in furtherance of the conspiracy are acknowledged in the indictment. These include importing illegal substances from the Netherlands as early as 1988, falsifying documents for US Customs claiming the contaminated feed mixes to be "unmedicated cal premix," and shipping contaminated feed to companies in Kansas, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Illinois.

James Doppenberg, named in the indictment as "at times relevant an employee, officer, shareholder and director of Vitek," allegedly wrote a letter to an Illinois feed company referring to Clenbuterol as "Vitamin C" and sent a letter to a Wisconsin feed company owner asking for a "Kickback" of over three thousand dollars "based on sales of premix containing Clenbuterol."

If convicted on all counts, Vitek faces up to more than half a million dollars in fines.

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## Major Pork Producer in Default

Premium Standard Farms, a gargantuan Missouri factory-farm concern, has defaulted on \$325 million in bonds, the Des Moines *Register* reported in April 1996. The company's mass-production approach to pig farming, with its intensive confinement of pigs, large-scale automation, and speculative financing, appears to be economically unsupportable as well as inhumane and ecologically unsound. Founded six years ago by former grain-processing executive Dennis Harms, Premium Standard has become the fourth largest pork producer in the country. These massive, high-tech, high-density factory farms are fast putting traditional family farms out of business.

Pigs in these hog factories are forced to live in narrow metal crates barely larger than their bodies. Gestating sows cannot even turn around. As many as 1,000 pigs live in metal barns the size of football fields, breathing air filled with acrid dust. The waste from all these animals is flushed into large cesspools that the industry calls "lagoons." Many have burst or leaked their waste, flooding fields and contaminating groundwater and rivers (see the summer 1995 *AWI Quarterly*). The huge farms, in which most tasks are automated, bring communities relatively few jobs—and a great deal of controversy over their sickening odor, which confines neighbors to their homes.

Premium Standard, financed by New York banking firm Morgan Stanley, operates on a 40,000 square foot compound in Princeton, Mo. In addition to huge investments in equipment, animals, and supplies, the company built itself an opulent headquarters (complete with a 25-foot waterfall made of black marble in its atrium), and pays its executives handsome bonuses (totaling \$3.1 million in 1992). The company's operating losses, and a 20-year low in hog prices, have left its bondholders with no return on their investment and massive non-paying debt.

### More Pork Industry Notes:

- The *Raleigh News & Observer* won journalism's top prize, the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, for an extensive expose of the problems with large-scale factory hog farming as practiced in North Carolina. The articles ran as a five-part series in February 1995, titled "Boss Hog: North Carolina's Pork."
- The devastation caused by hog factories in North Carolina has inspired some South Carolina legislators to try to stem the mega-industry's proliferation. Last year, they scuttled a bill that would have opened the door to widespread North Carolina-style hog production. Now, a new, tougher law has been drafted, and strict, enforceable regulations are on their way—including a ban on new farms with more than 3,000 hogs per acre.

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## A Cow Who Took Matters into Her Own Hooves

Emily the cow was on her way to a slaughterhouse in Hopkinton, Mass. in November 1995, when she evidently decided she would rather be free. The 3-year-old, 1,400-pound Holstein heifer bravely leaped over a five-foot fence. For 40 days and 40 nights following her daring escape, she managed to live in the woods around the town, foraging for food and hobnobbing with a herd of deer.

As the escaped cow cleverly evaded capture, people began rooting for her. Emily's partisans left out hay for her and shielded her whereabouts from authorities and from the slaughterhouse's employees. "Like some bovine pimpinel," reported *People* magazine, "she was sought everywhere but never captured."



Emily's story excited the interest of animal lovers Meg and Lewis Randa, who have given many animals sanctuary at their Life Experience School, a school for children with special needs in Sherborn, Mass. The A. Arena & Sons slaughterhouse ended up selling Emily to the Randas for \$1, reasoning that the cow had run off much of her value.

Meg Randa, who took great care to assure Emily that she and her family were vegetarians, coaxed the elusive heifer into a trailer with a bucket of feed. The Randas had their Christmas dinner outside in the barn with Emily, who now lives, and serves as a teacher, at the Life Experience School.

This cow-rageous Holstein has become quite famous, as her story has appeared in countless newspaper and magazine articles, as well as coverage by CBS and a forthcoming children's book. There are rumors of a film being planned, but Emily is keeping quiet about whether she is destined to become a ruminant movie star.

Emily has become something of a cult figure, as sympathizers have pledged in her presence to stop eating meat. She has also been bovine-of-honor at a human wedding that took place in the Randas' barn.

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## The Albert Schweitzer Medal

Since 1995, AWI has given the Albert Schweitzer Medal "for outstanding contributions to animal welfare." AWI President Christine Stevens says 1996 recipient Henry Spira "epitomizes what animal protection can and should be." The following is adapted from Spira's talk at the award ceremony.

Thank you for the honor of receiving the Albert Schweitzer medal. What makes this award so special is getting it from people you admire, people whose guiding principle is to protect the vulnerable. As we all know, Christine Stevens is a superb and effective advocate for the animals on Capitol Hill, in the halls of Congress. I feel particularly honored in getting this award from Christine.

I see this as a collective award—you're only as good as the people you work with. I've always tried to work according to the philosophy of advertising legend David

Ogilvy, who operated under the principle of always working with people smarter than him, and asking them, in turn, to do likewise. He would recall the well-known Russian folk dolls which nest one inside the other. And observed that if each of us chooses to work with someone smarter than ourselves we will become an enterprise of giants. I've been fortunate in having access to many people smarter than myself, and that's made all the difference.

I'd like to take this opportunity to share my thoughts on where we're at. Many of us are familiar with former New York mayor Ed Koch who used to walk the streets and never tired of asking: "How'm I doing?" That's not an uncommon question. It's asked in focus groups and in telephone surveys by everybody from politicians to toothpaste manufacturers. This is also a question we need to ask of the animal protection movement, "How are we doing?"

By some measure we've done very well. Since Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation*, there's been a total revolution in people's thinking. Thanks to the involvement of people like yourselves, there's an acceptance by the overwhelming majority of the public that the suffering of animals does matter. And over the past couple of decades, there's been an estimated 50 percent reduction in the number of laboratory animals used. There is a completely new scientific discipline of in vitro, non-animal toxicology which has entered the scientific mainstream. There's the public perception that the movement is enormously powerful and successful.

But, the reality is that this success has only affected 5 percent of the problem. And this is not recognized by the general public, nor by many activists. With regard to the 95 percent of animal suffering, things keep getting worse. If we look at the entire universe of animal pain and suffering, the gains of the 1970s and 80s have only been a drop in the bucket. And as regards the 8 billion farm animals, their confinement is becoming ever more intense and their numbers are massively increasing, because the United States is now exporting the products of factory farming to foreign lands.

In the 1960s, 2 billion farm animals were slaughtered every year. Now we're slaughtering 8 billion. And in earlier years, their confinement was less intensive than it is now.

Unlike cosmetic testing, factory farming is not being massively challenged by the animal rights movement. Most of the animals are being kept out of the loop of our campaigns. I had assumed that after the lab animal victories there would be the farm animal victories, but it hasn't worked out that way.

We need to live up to the public's perception that we are fighting all animal suffering. The movement cannot claim to be relevant and successful while eight billion animals continue to suffer.

And in fighting, against intensive confinement animal agriculture, we are fighting not only to liberate farm animals. We are also fighting to protect our environment—the land, water and air. And we're protecting food for the billions by not wasting resources.





Jenny Pike

Henry Spira, the 1996 Schweitzer Medalist, at the ceremony held June 27 in Washington DC.

With this in mind, I would like to encourage the animal protection community to place more energies on factory farming and to take the necessary steps to address the massive suffering. To begin to knock zeros off the eight billion farm animals who live and die in misery. This gathering has the people who can make it happen. Who can make it possible to proudly answer the question of "How are we doing?"

Henry Spira is the coordinator of Animal Rights International.

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## A Shocking Firsthand Account of Inhumane Treatment of Livestock

In March 1994, a Canadian trucker who transports farm animals for a living started writing to a group called Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Food Animals (CETFA) about cruel and negligent transport conditions. Over the last two years, the letters have kept coming, documenting an appalling lack of concern for animal welfare in the animal transport industry. CETFA recently published the reports in a booklet titled "Operation Transport."

The trucker, who wishes to remain anonymous, gives a chilling account of handlers using electric prods on the rectums and eyes of animals, animals freezing to the sides of metal trucks, and crippled animals being dragged by chains or carelessly left in piles of dead animals.

Abusive animal handlers, whether they are employees of the stockyard, of the slaughterhouse, or drivers, frequently boast about their rough treatment of the animals. Few have any training in how to humanely load, unload, or transport the animals, and stubbornly resist correction. "Some feel they are tough cowboys who will tame these wild animals, no matter what it takes," the trucker wrote of his fellow livestock haulers. "They want to show the animals 'who's boss.'"

"Operation Transport" includes the story of a slaughterhouse worker who "dragged a live downer pig to

the back of the top deck of the trailer and pushed it off to smash onto cement 10 feet below." "Problem—what problem?" one stockyard worker said of a horse that was whipped and goaded for 20 minutes while being forced to climb a steep ramp. "Nothing that a little bit of coaxing with a whip and cattle prod wouldn't fix."

Livestock is often transported hundreds of miles across the vast Canadian plains, temperatures can be brutally hot or miserably cold (reaching -70 degrees with the wind chill), and the trailers in which the animals are shipped are very rarely heated or air-conditioned. The sympathetic long-distance hauler in "Operation Transport" tells of a calf whose belly froze to a truck floor. The driver of that truck jabbed the calf with a prod before he realized she couldn't move. By the time he got help three hours later, she had been trampled and died from hypothermia.

This and other tragic incidents could be easily prevented by putting an adequate amount of straw in the trailers. The Canadian government routinely fails to enforce the requirement that sufficient straw be used to cushion the animals' ride, help keep them warm in winter, and absorb waste. The veterinary inspectors at weigh stations all too often give only the most cursory inspections of animal trailers. Sometimes, the drivers have to pay for straw, which often means that the animals go without enough—there is little incentive for the drivers to take the trouble to make the animals comfortable. Adequate straw piled in the trailers can also help keep animals' legs from slipping through vents and spaces between planks. Sometimes a limb will be sliced off if it falls through an aperture.

This trucker's eye view of appalling abuse and neglect in animal transport can be obtained from CETFA by writing to PO Box 18024, 2225 West 41st Ave., Vancouver, BC, Canada V6M 4L3; phone: (604) 261-3801.

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## Canadian Farm Animal Transport: Regulated or Unregulated?

**Dear Editor:** Readers of the *AWI Quarterly* who are familiar with animal welfare issues in Canada could be forgiven for being confused by the recent article "Deregulated Farm Animal Transport in Canada—The Animals Pay the Price" (Winter 1995). The article claims "transportation of farm animals in Canada is deregulated and clearly out of control."

That assertion is incorrect, as the transportation of animals is well-regulated in Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) does not intend to deregulate this area of its mandate.

Four years ago, AAFC comprehensively reviewed its regulations. As part of that review, we asked Canadians to identify the regulations they found valuable and those that could be improved. Respondents cited the regulations covering the transportation of animals as worthwhile but

emphasized the need for improved delivery of the federal humane transportation program.

In response to these comments, we restored previously reduced resources to the program and initiated a major review of the transportation of all animals in Canada. The goal is ambitious: to create a shared, national quality assurance system for the transportation of animals in Canada that involves farmers, transporters, animal welfare agencies, receivers, provincial governments, law enforcement agencies, the veterinary profession, and the research community.

Over the past two years, we have consulted hundreds of interested Canadians, completed and distributed a "Discussion Document," and launched a one-year pilot project. This project includes several regional and national initiatives, including the development of a "Recommended Code of Practice" for the humane transportation of animals.

During the review, Canadians told us that a new system should include research and data collection, standards setting, training, and enforcement. Of course, enforcement will always depend on a strong regulatory base.

In Canada, the Health of Animals Act (1990) contains regulations that define conditions for the humane by all means of conveyance. These conditions prohibit overcrowding, transportation of incompatible animals, and transportation of animals unfit to travel. They also specify the proper facilities and methods for loading and unloading, adequate feeding and watering, good ventilation, maximum transit times, rest periods, and protection from the elements. The regulations also outline requirements for the use of proper containers and vehicles, appropriate space allocation, proper bedding, and medical care for animals in transit.

Our inspectors regard the enforcement of these regulations very seriously. All formally reported incidents of inhumane transportation in Canada are investigated. These investigations often lead to prosecutions and significant fines. As a further incentive for compliance, all successful prosecutions are published and notices are distributed to major print and broadcast media.

Nevertheless, we believe that prevention is ultimately preferable to prosecution, and that the creation of a shared national quality assurance system for the humane transportation of animals is potentially the best long-term tool for ensuring that animals are transported humanely in Canada.

This shared quality assurance system could place Canada among the world's leading countries committed to improving the welfare of farm animals. The animal welfare community in Canada can take a great deal of credit for its support of this initiative, which demonstrates that cooperation to identify and solve problems works better than the rhetoric of isolation and confrontation.

Ms. Harrison quotes a "sympathetic long distance hauler" in the article. An official from our Enforcement and Compliance Division in the British Columbia regional office met with two prominent members of CETFA to provide an opportunity that would have allowed the trucker to speak about his concerns freely with anonymity. We are always

prepared to investigate any verifiable incidents of inhumane transportation.

At Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada we feel that every Canadian who cares about the humane transportation of animals had a role to play in contributing to the creation of the new quality assurance system. I would strongly encourage that the Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals support this cooperative approach.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. N.G. Willis, Director General, Animal and Plant Health Directorate, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

**Tina Harrison replies:** We are grateful to have the opportunity of responding to the letter by N.G. Willis of Agri-Food Canada in which he takes issue with my article on deregulation of farm animal transport in Canada. Since his letter is grossly misleading, it is crucial to examine the facts, one point at a time.

First, the issue of deregulation. In 1987, the federal Minister of Agriculture announced that "the transportation program was identified as one of the programs from which resources were withdrawn as a result of Government's efforts to reduce the budgetary deficit. All resources, including inspection staff dedicated to the enforcement of the transportation program, were therefore moved to other activities."

As a result of widespread criticism, one checkpoint in the entire country—West Hawk Lake in Manitoba—was restored and staffed for inspection purposes. For the rest of Canada, in-transit surveillance of livestock went from a reduction of man-hours, to complete elimination.

Each year the annual statistics of animals dead on arrival at slaughter has escalated in direct proportion to the numbers of animals processed. In 2004, over 3 million animals died in transit to federal abattoirs.

With the erosion of legal protection due to cost-cutting measures, unenforced paper regulations have, in effect, been replaced by Recommended Voluntary Codes of Practice, having no force of law, and administered by user groups that deal with violations privately within the industry.

It is nothing short of ludicrous to claim that all formally reported incidents of inhumane transportation are investigated. In British Columbia alone, there have been exactly two "humane" prosecutions in a full two-year period, which—given the number of dead and "down" casualties—seems hardly adequate!

As for the review process presently underway, it is worth quoting from the Report of the prestigious Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada relative to a review conference which I also attended. The Report reads, "The running of the meeting and its organization gave me the distinct impression that any serious discussion was neither anticipated or encouraged. The committees involved with review of the Codes of Practice are effectively controlled by the industry, and the Ministry has evidently decided to turn over control of the transport of animals to the transport industry itself."

Hardly the mark of a regulated system.

Regarding protecting the identity of the long distance

hauler who regularly reports to CETFA, never at any time has opportunity been provided that would guarantee confidentiality. The “two prominent members of CETFA” provided me with a detailed account of the meeting in question, which took place in Victoria on Jan. 8, 1995. At that time, the official of Agriculture Canada, Mr. John Bouchard, suggested that the trucker could give the information anonymously to Agriculture Canada, although the many horrifying incidents witnessed and reported have not been investigated. It was suggested to Mr. Bouchard that he meet with me, as co-coordinator. He has not done so, nor has he ever made an effort to communicate with us. This hardly builds confidence in the good faith of the bureaucracy to protect a whistle blower within the industry.

It is not the first time that we have had to refute misinformation circulated at taxpayer's expense by defenders of a cruel and exploitive segment of the industry. Unfortunately, it is not the sort of strategy that enhances the credibility of the Canadian government either at home or abroad.

*Tina Harrison, coordinator, Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Food Animals*

*Sources:* Deregulation: Letter of June 22, 1987 (Hon. John Wise, Minister)  
*Statistics:* “Species Found Dead at Registered Canadian Establishments.” (Agriculture Canada)

*Prosecutions:* Agriculture Canada - “Prosecution Bulletins.”

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## Mammoth Pork Factory Goes Belly-Up

Premium Standard Farms (PSF), a giant Missouri factory hog farming concern, has gone bankrupt after defaulting on more than \$325 million of junk-bond debt (see the winter 1996 *AWI Quarterly*)

PSF's failure reflects particularly badly on the Morgan Stanley Group Inc., the New York financial giant that launched the venture. Morgan Stanley put its considerable weight behind PSF's ambitious plan to integrate all aspects of factory hog farming under one roof. It even gave the venture special treatment: *Wall Street Journal* reported in May, “Morgan offered the private placement of junk-bond debt to only a select few of the firm's top accounts.”

Evidently Morgan Stanley's confidence was gravely misplaced. PSF's mass-production approach appears to be economically unsupportable, as well as inhumane and environmentally destructive.

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## Humane Alternatives for Hog Farmers Come to US from Sweden

AWI is helping to import innovative Swedish pig farming methods, which take the animals' natural behaviors into

account and make their welfare paramount, into the United States. Here, pigs are all too often kept confined in crates that restrict their movements and prevent them from exercising or interacting with other pigs. Antibiotics are added to their feed to counteract the effects of close confinement.

The “Västgötamodellen,” however, prescribes communal housing on deep straw beds. The composting action of the straw kills pathogens, enriches soil, keeps pigs warm in winter, and produces little or no offensive odor. This model enables pigs to perform most of their natural behaviors, and eliminates the need for expensive, harsh chemical feed additives to reduce disease and stimulate growth. It is both pig- and human-friendly, cost-efficient, and environmentally benign.

A perennial objection to group housing of pigs is that sows kept in close contact with their piglets will sometimes crush one when lying down to nurse. The conventional solution is to further restrict the movements of the sow and add barriers between her and her piglets. However, new research shows that sows need approximately 7.5 square meters in order to clear a space and lie down to nurse. What is needed, then, is not less room to maneuver, but more when the animals' natural behavior is understood.

Agricultural economist Marlene Halverson, a consultant to Iowa State University, took a group of Minnesota and Iowa farmers to study Swedish farmers' welfare-compatible alternatives (see fall 1994 *AWI Quarterly*). In March 1996, Halverson organized a reciprocal visit of hog farmers and agricultural scientists from Sweden to the United States, under the auspices of AWI and others. The group toured and gave lectures on humane alternatives to intensive confinement, including a stop at the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture's Swine System Options Conference.

The response of American farmers to the alternative model has been favorable and encouraging. After Bo Algiers (a veterinary ethologist with the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences) spoke about the physiological changes that accompany a sow's nesting instinct, one farmer was overheard saying, “In the beginning I thought his ideas were pretty wild and far out, but by the time he finished speaking I saw the sense in what he said.”

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*Pigs housed communally on deep straw at Tomas and Magnus Carlevad's farm in Sweden.*

Marlene Halverson

## Landmark Ordinance Limits Feedlot Size

Rice County, Minn.'s county commissioners have voted to curb the proliferation of massive factory farms by limiting size of feedlots to 500 “animal units” (for example, 1,250 sows). AWI Farm Animal Consultant Diane Halverson noted, “the ordinance, intended to protect public health and welfare and the environment from large factory farms, has been tremendously controversial in the county,” pitting supporters of restrictions on factory farms against hard-line agribusiness.

A moratorium on building new feedlots with more than 500 animal units had been in place for two years while the county worked out the details of the ordinance, which also strictly regulates the size and construction of manure storage lagoons and encourages the use of straw or other bedding. While the new rules will likely be challenged in court, they set an encouraging precedent that factory farming can be successfully challenged at the local level.

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## Sweeping Changes or Sweeping Under the Rug?

BY HENRY SPIRA

Does the recent announcement of sweeping new changes to meat inspection open opportunities to push the farm animal welfare issue onto the national agenda? Harmful bacteria kill more than 4,000 people a year and sicken 5 million. The new policy calls for a more scientific approach to detecting *E. coli* and salmonella in meat and poultry. But just like the old policy, the focus remains on dealing with effects and ignoring causes. It covers up the consequences of the stressful conditions in which this country's farm animals are raised.

Today's endemic disease in farm animals is not the natural order of things. One need only see the filthy and cramped environments in which today's chickens, turkeys, pigs and veal calves are raised to see the reason for the epidemic. When living beings are crammed indoors on a thick bed of fecal waste and forced to spend a lifetime choking on ammonia fumes, is it so surprising that the end result is diseased meat?

As the intensity of confinement has increased, so has the prevalence of food borne diseases. The direct relationship between stress and disease is well documented in humans and other animals.

There's an urgent need to focus on the causes of these illnesses and on prevention. It is universally recognized that prevention is more cost effective and more conducive to promoting well-being than treating diseases after the fact.

Such a prevention campaign could begin by examining the connection between the escalating abuses of intensive confinement systems, the parallel demise of animal health and the increase of food borne illnesses in humans who eat them.

While our ideal is the non-violent dinner table, we recognize that eating habits tend to change slowly. As long

as people continue to consider animals as edibles, we need to relentlessly pressure industry and government to develop, promote and implement humane standards in the rearing, transport and handling of farm animals. Reducing farm animal suffering would benefit both the public and the animals.

There is another critical defect which remains unaddressed in the new procedures. The US Department of Agriculture is mandated, by law, to both assure the safety of meat and at the same time promote the meat industry. The futility of the government taking on conflicting roles was recently demonstrated by the ValuJet disaster, which showed that government cannot be an advocate for food safety while simultaneously promoting the meat industry.

Why the government should spend taxpayer dollars to market meat products for a multi-billion dollar industry defies logic. The health risks associated with a meat centered diet are increasingly well documented. Would government money not be better spent in protecting public health? Current thinking seems to be that the government should get out of the business of promoting the airlines. It doesn't belong in the business of promoting meat either.

*Henry Spira, coordinator of Animal Rights International, was awarded AWI's 1996 Albert Schweitzer Medal.*

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## Toxic “Cell from Hell” Associated with Hog Waste

An extremely toxic microorganism—capable of killing fish by the millions and seriously endangering human health—has been linked to waste from factory hog farms, according to *The New York Times*.

“Like something out of a horror movie, the cell from hell attacks its victims in gruesome ways, frequently changing body form with lightning speed,” wrote William J. Broad in the *Science Times*. “Armed with a voracious appetite and vast reproductive powers, the microscopic animal moves through coastal waters to kill fish and shellfish by the millions and to poison anglers and others, producing pain, narcosis, disorientation, nausea, fatigue, vomiting, memory loss, immune failure and personality changes. Its toxins are so deadly that people who merely inhale its vapors can be badly hurt.”

Algal blooms known as “red tides” are fed by the runoff of nutrients in hog waste from factory farms, and in these blooms this opportunistic, deadly dinoflagellate—*Pfiesteria piscida*—thrives. Fish, shellfish and other marine life are poisoned in droves in coastal areas, sickening humans. Some ecologists believe we are experiencing an epidemic of red tides, especially since, as human development in coastal areas has increased, the added nutrient runoff has caused red tides to proliferate.

A startling number of recent, massive fish kills blamed on *P. piscida* have occurred in the estuaries of the Neuse and Pamlico Rivers in North Carolina, areas which have also seen a meteoric increase in factory hog farms. Manure from the



hogs is stored in often-leaky cesspools, and then sprayed as fertilizer onto fields—also making its way into groundwater and rivers.

When the deadly microorganism was discovered in the 1980s, it was placed in its own, entirely new, family of life. Dr. JoAnn M. Burkholder, an aquatic ecologist at North Carolina University who studies *P. piscida*, told the *Times* that, "It can transform from an amoeba to a toxic zoospore in two minutes." The organism's toxicity is one thousand times that of cyanide. "The toxins can rip a hole through the skin of the fish, causing bleeding sores," according to Burkholder.

Rick Dove, keeper of the Neuse River, said of the rise of the organism's killing sprees that "around the same time, we got big in the hog industry." The political and economic power of that largely unregulated industry will doubtless be brought to bear to prevent anything being done to reduce the runoff of hog waste that is nourishing this toxic threat. Dr. Burkholder, for simply investigating *P. piscida*'s link to hog waste, has received anonymous threatening telephone calls.

### More Pork Industry Notes

Factory pork producers are now trying to gain acceptance for the revolting practice of grinding dead piglets at the factory site and adding them to the open cesspools of liquefied manure. ValAdCo, a large Minnesota intensive-confinement hog farm, takes dead baby pigs—who are not wanted by the renderers who process most pig carcasses—and grinds them up with a sinisterly-named device called the Bioreducer. The resulting liquid (along with some unpulverized piglet carcasses) is mixed with waste and spread onto fields.

Opponents of the practice have raised concerns about disease transmission, public health, and the environment (ValAdCo's land drains into the Minnesota River, one of the most polluted bodies of water in the country). However, the Minnesota Board of Animal Health voted unanimously in December to allow ValAdCo to continue grinding up piglets for fertilizer.

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## Factory Hog Farms Skewered on "60 Minutes"

Revelations on North Carolina's hog factory farms were featured Dec. 22 on CBS's "60 Minutes." Focusing on the enormous growth of the industry and pollution of rivers, air and farmland, the program also showed viewers the cruel suffering of the sows in gestation crates—biting the bars of their intolerable prisons.

Morley Safer, the segment's host, began by stating, "Tobacco, once the number-one crop in North Carolina, has been replaced by something that's causing the state an even bigger headache: hogs. Right now in North Carolina there are more pigs than people. At any given moment, North Carolina houses 10 million hogs this way: in barns as large as football fields on huge industrial farms. These are corporate hogs, bred,

born and raised in these indoor pens. Their future: just 165 days before the slaughter."

Excerpts from the movie *Babe* were shown and Safer continued, "This is more like the way Americans want to think of pigs...pink, cute and cuddly enough to be nominated for Academy Awards." Then the grim conditions inside a hog factory appeared on the screen, and Safer went on to say, "Real-life 'Babes' see no sun in their limited lives and have no hay to lie on, no mud to roll in and do not talk. The sows live in tiny cages, so narrow they can't even turn around. They live over metal grates, and their waste is pushed through slats beneath them and flushed into huge pits. It's the waste that's the problem. Pigs excrete four times as much waste as humans. It's turning North Carolina into one vast toilet."

Here's more from the "60 Minutes" broadcast:

GARY GRANT (concerned citizen): *The smell's so offensive that—on the first whiff, you get a headache. I mean, just, bam!*

DON WEBB (retired hog farmer): *It also causes many people to be nauseous, and some people actually vomit.*

SAFER: *The stench comes from what the industry politely calls 'lagoons.' Retired hog farmer Don Webb calls them something else.*

WEBB: *Cesspools, not lagoons. A lagoon is something a beautiful girl in a South Sea island swims in. A cesspool is something you put feces and urine in.*

SAFER: *But they call them lagoons?*

WEBB: *But they're cesspools.*

SAFER: *Cesspools or lagoons, they're just holding places for the 9 and a half million tons of hog manure that's produced in North Carolina every year. So much manure that the fields of North Carolina cannot absorb it all and it is beginning to poison the groundwater and contaminate drinking wells. And there have been other problems. Lagoons have leaked and overflowed. Lagoon walls have broken, spilling out millions of gallons of hog manure and saturating fields even more. And where does all this hog dung end up? In the streams and rivers of North Carolina, creating a growth in green algae that has closed rivers for swimming and killed thousands upon thousands of fish.*

WEBB: *Uh-oh, they're going to be burying hogs right there. My God! There's gobs of dead hogs.*

SAFER: *Webb accuses the industry of reckless disregard of the law, of illegal dumping when it thinks no one is looking. He's always looking and finding dead animals simply dumped in open pits.*

GRANT: *And they are saying that there will be 410 new farms built in North Carolina by the end of 1997.*

SAFER: *His community of Tillery in Halifax County is poor, black and rural, he says a prime target for hog expansion.*

GRANT: *The thing that people need to remember is that these corporate hog farmers lied to us from day one.*

SAFER: *Have there been threats?*

GRANT: *Well, when we first started there, I would go home evenings and get on my answering machine, and there would be threats like, "Nigger, you're going to get killed," and all of that.*

SAFER: *There is huge money at stake here, more than \$1 billion.*

*North Carolina has gone from the seventh-largest pork producer in the country to the second, with most of the hogs belonging to a few large corporations. It's replaced a declining, even dying industry—tobacco. And it's put the small hog farmer out of business. It's used science to produce millions of carbon-copy pigs: high on pork, low on cost.*

SAFER: *The problem, says [University of North Carolina scientist Larry] Calhoon, is that rural North Carolina depends on well water. The state toxicologist says 30 percent of the wells tested near hog farms are already contaminated.*

SAFER: *In the last three years alone 115 farms have been caught illegally dumping hog waste into waterways, a number of them intentionally, like this one. In one farm there was a massive spill last year when the walls of an eight-acre lagoon collapsed, spewing out 25 million gallons of liquid manure into rivers, onto farms and highways. Someone described it as being bigger than the Exxon Valdez spill up in Alaska.*

SAFER: *Why did it happen? Where was the legislature? Where were the county commissioners?*

WEBB: *The county commissioners—the hog industry was smart enough to get to them real quick. And, also, the legislators here in North Carolina—they all—most all of them have received money from the pork producers.*

SAFER: *In fact, the largest pork producer in the world, Wendell Murphy, who owns this conglomerate, was a North Carolina state senator for 10 years, responsible for creating dozens of laws governing, some would say protecting, the pork industry. And the part owner of this farm is none other than North Carolina's US Senator Lauch Faircloth. He chairs a subcommittee on the environment. He also owns a \$19 million stake in the hog business, and he'll talk to us about neither. That's pork, politics and power in North Carolina.*

WEBB: *That's big-time money. I mean, it's bigger than I realized. You know, you got some of the most powerful companies and corporations in the world involved in this thing, and it's been a real battle for middle-class and poor, grass-roots people to fight these people. But we're not quitters.*

SAFER: *And as Porky Pig would have said, "Th-th-that's all, folks," except it's not. The hog business and its malodorous byproducts are spreading. Four of the nation's biggest companies have banded together to build a two-million-pig factory farm in Utah, and more are planned for Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois to satisfy not just America's hunger for pork, but the world's.*

Action: write, call, fax or email "60 Minutes" to tell them how much you appreciate their broadcast giving the true facts about the cruelty and greed of this industry that treats pigs as if they were insentient cogs in a machine. Contact:

"60 Minutes", 524 West 57th Street

New York, NY 10019

email: 60m@cbs.news.com

phone: (212) 975-2006; fax: (212) 978-9287

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## The Power of Words

BY JOYCE D'SILVA

Near where I live, the local farmer has just harvested his crop. Not a crop of wheat or barley, but of lambs. Yes, he actually refers to them as a "crop." How we delude ourselves with language.

Advertising, labeling—and even children's books—would have us believe that the cow produces milk so that she can nourish us, that hens peck happily in the farmyard and that pigs root contentedly in—the fields.

Yet the truth of the diseased and exhausted dairy cow, worn out before she reaches one quarter of her natural life span, the hen frustrated, de-feathered and brittle-boned and the pig driven to biting its pen-mates in its overcrowded concrete prison, is hidden from us.

Likewise, the centerpiece of the Christmas table is likely to be a bird genetically selected to be so meaty that males can no longer mate naturally and artificial insemination is now routine on turkey farms. So much suffering for a cut-throat, give-away price in our supermarkets.

Words lie—but they are powerful. Our campaign to change the Treaty of Rome is a campaign about words. To have animals recognized as "sentient beings" in the Treaty, not as "agricultural products" or "goods," as at present.

A number of Northern European countries—principally Austria, Germany and the UK—are now backing the idea that a new Article (or Protocol) should be included in the Treaty of Rome committing Europe to high standards of animal welfare.

At present the Treaty—which is the cornerstone of EU law—classifies animals as goods or "agricultural products." IWF is campaigning for them to be given a new Treaty status as "sentient beings." This would recognize that animals should not be viewed as items of trade but as living creatures capable of feeling pain and suffering.

Over the next few months, we have a golden opportunity to win this new status for animals. The 15 EU countries are essentially discussing the next round of Treaty changes at the Inter-governmental Conference—a series of meetings which is likely to come to final decisions next June in Amsterdam.

Of course, actions speak louder than words. But the current Treaty wording debases animals. A change of words could ignite a whole new way of looking at our farm animals. It could be the spark to kindle a wave of new legislation, which would outlaw the cruel systems of the factory farm for good.

The foregoing is adapted from an editorial that appeared in *Agscene*. For subscription information contact:

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## Demonstrators Condemn NPPC's Misuse of Funds

Hundreds of people demonstrated outside the offices of the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) in March to voice support for family farms and opposition to factory farms. Musician and family farm advocate Willie Nelson spoke and performed at the demonstration. At issue is the more than \$45 million a year that NPPC receives in the form of "check off funds," paid by farmers whenever they sell hogs. The NPPC is accused of using those funds to investigate pro-family farm organizations. At the rally, family hog farmers Dwight Ault and Lynn McKinley called for the humane treatment of farm animals, and Roger Allison of the Missouri Rural Crisis Center decried the "unspeakable conditions" in which factory-farm hogs are kept.

The NPPC claims to be impartial and to represent the interests of both small and large hog operations, but—among other instances of factory-farm favoritism on the part of the NPPC—the council paid nearly \$50,000 in 1996 to a consulting firm, Mongoven, Biscoe and Duchin, to monitor grassroots organizations—such as the 300,000-member National Farmers Union and three member groups of the Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment (of which AWI is also a member)—and report back to NPPC on their activities.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) investigated, and in its preliminary audit said that the subject matter of some of Mongoven's reports "fell outside the generally recognized limits on the use of check off funds." The NPPC, which had vacillated over whether the money used had come from check offs, was forced to back down, facing a storm of public outcry and the pressure of the USDA's investigation. In April, it discontinued the consultants' services and returned \$51,300 in check off funds.

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Photos: Diane Halverson

Minnesota farmer Paul Sobocinski holds the slip of paper showing he has paid "checkoff" money while demonstrating at the headquarters of the National Pork Producers Council, which has been accused of misusing these funds.



*Willie Nelson at the demonstration*



*Sign placed by protesters in front of NPPC headquarters in Des Moines*

## The Dairy Debate: Consequences of Bovine Growth Hormone and Rotational Grazing Technologies

Edited by William C. Liebhardt  
University of California  
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

Monsanto's much touted recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) forces cows to use up their own tissue to produce 12 percent more milk than is normal. This book points out that the "agrigenetics market potential" could be \$50 billion to \$100 billion by the year 2000.

The Food and Drug Administration has approved human consumption of milk from rBGH-treated cows, but a leaked "safety report" noted extraordinary use of secondary drugs, many unapproved for lactating cows, to treat mastitis. "The extra-label use of three unapproved antibacterials—Piperacillin, gentamycin and trimethoprim-sulfa—has two implications: 1) mastitis had not responded well to approved drugs, thereby creating the need to try unapproved drugs; and 2) the lack of a specified withholding period, during which contaminated milk is discarded, further burdens screening milk for antibiotics and augments risk to human health. The

latter point has been emphasized by the General Accounting Office (GAO 1992b)."

The unfortunate cows injected with rBGH are much more susceptible to mastitis, the painful infection of the udder. Professor Kronfeld cites a trial in which "22 of 29 new cases of mastitis during rBGH treatment were cultured for *Staphylococcus aureus*, which is less amenable to preventive measures." *Staphylococcus aureus* is the dangerous infection that has spread throughout human hospitals.

From an economic standpoint, the shortened life of the cow argues against use of the growth hormone. Professor Kronfeld draws attention to the "increase in cows culled, averaging twice the usual rate of herd replacement (about 20 to 25 percent per year), due to protracted infertility and refractory disease."

The effect on family farmers is also given attention. William Murphy, Professor of Agronomy at the University of Vermont, writes, "The workload withstood daily by dairy farmers feeding cows year-round in confinement is simply amazing. One farmer, Terry Wright (personal communication, 1984), told us that before switching his cows from year-round confinement feeding to controlled grazing, he would hit the ground running at 4 a.m. and work all day until he fell asleep exhausted at 10 p.m. One day in mid-July, Wright said he was "sweating blue blazes" while chopping forage, hauling it to a silo, blowing it up into the silo, auguring silage out of the bottom of the silo and hauling it to the feed bunks for the cows. He asked himself, "Wouldn't it be easier if the cows did this for themselves?" That was the beginning of the end of year-round confinement feeding on his farm. After Wright switched to pasturing his cows six months of the year, he said the tempo of his farm slowed down and he was able to enjoy life again. Many other farmers who have switched from confinement feeding to grazing livestock on well-managed pasture have experienced similar reductions in work load during the grazing season. They have more time, energy and money to enjoy life. Isn't that what farming is all about?

"Much less equipment and fewer storage facilities are needed with six to ten months of pasture feeding than with year-round confinement.... For example, Terry Wright sold about \$80,000 worth of equipment (silo, tractor, wagons, chopper, blower, planter and sprayer) after he stopped growing corn and began to depend on well-managed pasture in his farm feeding program. It makes us wonder who profits by farmers feeding dairy cows in year-round confinement."

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## Herbivorous Friends

Ina, an orphaned hippopotamus, has found a fast friend in Cow. The two live at a ranch in South Africa, where they refuse to be separated from one another's company.

When Ina's mother was killed by a rhinoceros, says ranch manager Louis Patrick, no one knew how to take care of her. Ina refused to eat at first, but after a stay in a wildlife rehabilitation center, she began to recover.



Patrick fed Ina a mixture of egg yolks, baby food and cream as she grew. "Hippos are social animals," writes Patrick, "and have to have company around them." She was, therefore, introduced to Cow, and the two have been inseparable ever since – a curious but telling example of the basic need for companionship that is shared by all social species.

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## Three Cheers for Ben & Jerry's: Anti-rBGH Label Can Be Used

Just when we feared that the large transnational corporations had co-opted the federal government and quelled the spirit of smaller companies, a press release from Ben and Jerry's arrived. They've won a lawsuit enabling them to label their ice cream with the statement, "We Oppose Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone. The family farmers who supply our milk and cream pledge not to treat their cows with rBGH."

Up to now, this fight has gone against the cows, the family farmers and the consumers, ever since Monsanto persuaded the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve the corporation's "Posilac"—genetically engineered rBGH. The FDA approved it and even refused to require labeling of milk from cows injected with the drug despite studies, some of which reported a 79 percent increase in mastitis (infection of the udder), resulting in greater need for antibiotics, reduced pregnancy rates, cystic ovaries and uterine disorders, digestive disorders and lacerations, enlargements and calluses of the knee.

According to Ben & Jerry's CEO, when the FDA "approved voluntary labeling in 1994 but left regulation of labels to the states, we began contacting each state to get approval for our label. We sued the largest of them, Illinois, in federal court citing the Constitution's First Amendment protection of free speech. We have the right to tell our customers what is and isn't in our ice cream."

Since 1994, Illinois has threatened to seize products having an anti-rBGH label, thereby effectively stopping such



labeling throughout the country because it is not feasible for nationally distributed dairy products to be labeled differently in individual markets. A 1996 poll commissioned by the US Department of Agriculture and performed by researchers at the Universities of Wisconsin and Oregon showed that 94 percent of more than 1,900 respondents surveyed nationwide favored labeling that would allow consumers to distinguish between milk from cows treated with rBGH and milk from untreated cows. Other consumer surveys support this finding.

The FDA issued interim guidelines on voluntary labeling in February 1994, setting forth how labels could be worded so as to be truthful, not misleading, and in compliance with food and labeling law. Most states followed those guidelines, but a handful of states including Illinois refused to permit any anti-rBGH labeling.

Ben and Jerry's CEO said he feels confident the label approved in this settlement with the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago addresses all legitimate concerns that could be raised by any state.

According to the Organic Valley cooperative, which supplies milk and cream to Ben & Jerry's, "The family farmers who make up the Organic Valley Family of Farms are in this business because we love cows. We would not knowingly subject our animals to a drug with side effects that could cause illness, death and create undue stress on the animal. Using genetically engineered product is counter to what we believe in."

From now on, humanitarians will be able to reject dairy products that do not have the anti-rBGH label and stop the spread of these cruel injections into helpless cows. It is a laudable precedent for other efforts to label products whose manufacture is injurious to animals. Legislation on FDA rules regarding labeling is pending in Congress (see page 15).

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## Birth Intervals in Cattle Raised for Meat: Belief and Fact

BY VIKTOR AND ANNIE REINHARDT

It is commonly believed that calves must be artificially weaned so that the cow gives birth at the most frequent possible intervals. We had the unique opportunity to question the justification of this belief by comparing the reproductive performance of 18 cows who were allowed to raise their calves beyond the age of natural weaning with the reproductive performance of 96 other cows who were subjected to the traditional forced weaning management system. Both categories of cows lived on the same ranch, in herds of approximately 50 animals including two mature bulls per herd.

The calves of the "managed" cows were taken away from their mothers at the age of about eight months and raised in separate groups. Shortly thereafter, the mothers were also removed from the original herd and re-grouped in other herds. These artificial disruptions of social relationships were

extremely disturbing for the animals, and it took several days or even weeks until they calmed down again and established new relationships with the members of the new groups. The calves of the "semi-wild" cows were naturally weaned by their mothers: female calves at the age 7 to 12 months, male calves at the age of 9 to 14 months. The weaning did not impair in any way the affectionate bond between mother and calf. In fact, the mother-calf bond was the foundation of the herd's cohesive social structure.

The performance of cattle is usually assessed by calculating the time lapse between two births. This so-called calving interval averaged 388 days in the semi-wild cows, versus 494 days in the managed cows.

The difference of 106 days was statistically significant, indicating that the performance was enhanced when the calves were allowed to stay with their mother rather than when they were artificially weaned by being taken away from the maternal herd.

The better performance of the semi-wild cows could not be attributed to different climatic or nutritional conditions. In contrast to the managed cows, however, the semi-wild cows lived in a stable social environment. It was probably this stability of the social environment that accounted for the animals' better reproductive performance. Artificially breaking not only the bond between mothers and their still nursing calves but also friendship relationships between the mothers and other herd members, apparently, constituted a severe stress situation for the managed cows which resulted in a depression of their reproduction.

Our observations challenge the inertia of tradition, demonstrating that reproduction of beef cattle is enhanced rather than reduced when cows are allowed to wean their calves at the biologically determined age. Interfering in biological processes may satisfy man's ambition to have control over them, but this is bound to have unforeseen repercussions if the biological process is not properly understood. Interfering in the natural weaning process of cattle not only inflicts avoidable emotional pain but it also unnecessarily diminishes the animal's natural reproductive potential.

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## Toxic Veal Drug Brings Heavy Penalties

A federal case involving the smuggling of Clenbuterol, a violently toxic, illegal drug given to veal calves to produce rapid growth, has resulted in encouragingly severe penalties for those involved. Despite food and drug regulations banning its use, the drug was allegedly brought into the United States from Holland, mixed with feed additives and distributed by the Vitek Supply Corporation, a leading feed supplement manufacturer. In calves, Clenbuterol can increase weight as much as 30 percent per day, while causing anemia, pallor and often death. Humans who eat the poisoned meat can experience increased heart rate, muscle tremors, headache, dizziness, nausea, fever and chills.



Humane Farming Association

*Calves for the "gourmet" white veal trade, in the crates in which they are confined for months. They never are allowed to stretch their limbs, avoid their own excrement, or have access to solid food.*

The 1994 investigation has led to several indictments, large fines, and the imprisonment of Vitek's president, Jannes Doppenberg. The company was fined over \$1 million. According to the Humane Farming Association's Gail Eisnitz, it is "the strongest penalty ever handed down against the veal industry." Provimi Veal Corporation—the nation's largest producer of veal—was ordered to pay \$300,000. Eisnitz uncovered Provimi's role in the scandal.

Further, the president of Travis Calf Milk, Inc., a Wisconsin veal formula company, was sentenced to five months in jail and five more of home confinement after pleading guilty to criminal conspiracy to defraud the US government. According to the grand jury, Travis purchased 150,000 pounds of Clenbuterol-laced feed from Vitek. One of the country's largest veal farms, V.I.V., Inc., is also implicated in the case, and its owners face imprisonment and fines on charges of smuggling and conspiracy.

There is still more to be done, however. Dutch businessman Gerard Hoogendijk—owner of Prigor, a feed supplement company based in Oudewater, Holland, was indicted on nine federal offenses and could be fined up to \$2 million and be imprisoned for up to 41 years. Prosecutors say Prigor was "the principal source of black market drugs" to Vitek. He must be extradited to the United States to stand trial. "Until now, Dutch authorities have been very reluctant to pursue this case," said Eisnitz. Now, however—thanks to pressure from HFA supporters and the US government—his extradition is being considered by the courts in Holland.

Action: Please write to Her Excellency W. Sorgdrager, Minister of Justice, c/o Royal Netherlands Embassy, 4200 Linnean Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008, Attn: Political Section. Demand that Gerard Hoogendijk be extradited immediately to face trial for smuggling illegal, toxic drugs into the United States.

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## Astrid Lindgren Wants to Save the Cows

*Astrid Lindgren, the famous author and maker of films for children, wrote a letter to Sweden's principal newspaper, Expressen, September 22, 1985—that still resonates today.*

*"The last chance to save the cows now is a vigorous protest," writes Astrid Lindgren. She thinks that legislation may even be needed to save cows and calves from spending their entire lives in their stalls, and to protect their right to graze freely during the summer. That way, at least one time they can get to see the sun, escape the roaring fans and breathe fresh air.*

Summer is almost over, and it has certainly been lovely, between the rain showers. My favorite summer image, the one I will take with me into the darkness of autumn, is an upland birch grove, the prettiest, most delightful paradise, with green grass and bluebells and daisies, and a lot of wild strawberries here and there. And actually—even one single living, breathing cow. She walked around, grazing, looking pastoral, and I thought, 'Dear Bessie—surely that must be your name—how nice to see you! Here you are, walking about, just one contented Swedish cow. And not doomed to life imprisonment like so many of your sisters, not just another 'production unit' in one of our barns. Maybe you didn't know that—be happy!'

I just want to say that if all the cows and calves and pigs and chickens in this country who have been deprived of their 'human' rights could escape from their animal factories and barns, and organize a kind of animal tribunal, perhaps right here under the birches, what a lamentation of blood would go forth over the land! A lamentation that would crack the windows of the Farmers' Meat Marketing Association! That would hammer the eardrums of the whole Swedish people, so that they might begin to wonder a little, at least. Wonder if it is really right and decent to treat animals the way they are treated in this country, where we are actually so fond of animals.

But an animal tribunal, well, that's something that can only happen in stories. And this subject is really a bitter reality. I'd like to say a little something about that reality.

Yes, indeed, the Swede is a lover of animals. That became very clear to me as I read all the letters that poured in last spring, when I wrote a little snippet in defense of cows.

But people in general don't know enough to get involved, to speak out and say that this is not the way it's going to be! At any rate, one letter writer—we can call her Lena—knew enough—more than enough.

Lena is a veterinary surgeon and a Ph.D. in ruminant medicine. She has seen enough suffering, frightened animals in slaughterhouses and animal factories, enough sick, anxiety-ridden cows and calves and pigs imprisoned for life. And what she feels is a deep disappointment, and an equally deep fury, when confronted by what she calls 'our cruelty to life itself.'

Why is such unfair treatment expanding with every year that passes? Who or what is it that forces animal-loving Swedish farmers to collaborate in this legalized cruelty to animals?



The keyword is profitability! Profitability is what demands such great sacrifices, and wants to achieve higher and higher returns from every "production unit." And of course, Swedish agriculture has to be profitable; that goes without saying. But hasn't it become a question of profitability that has gone mad, and finally turned into its opposite? Isn't it time to look for new methods?

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## **The Price of Meat** by Danny Penman

Victor Gollancz, 1997. 240 pages. ISBN 0-575-06344-0

Danny Penman's clear prose describes everything that people of conscience need to know about farm animals, including the science and technology being loosed on these creatures whose natural origins and natural behavior is disregarded by the industry as inconsequential. Mr. Penman dedicated his book to Jill Phipps, "who died while trying to stop the export of veal calves."

Jill Phipps was the young woman crushed by a truck during a massive protest against the export of calves and sheep to the European continent. Huge demonstrations succeeded in stopping exports by sea. As Penman writes in the introduction, "The battle to stop live exports showed the power of individuals. Welfare groups were occasionally offered seats around the table with the Government but were ignored. The people of Shoreham, Brightlingsea, Coventry and elsewhere pursued their own path through direct action. For this reason, the most effective way of bringing about change is through individual action."

The extraordinary make-up of the demonstrations, which drew their greatest numbers from middle-aged housewives, was quite different from the image industry prefers to project of jobless youths in outlandish garb making animal rights protests.

Each species of farm animal is dealt with in a separate chapter followed by discussion of genetic engineering described as "Redesigning Animals" and conversing such subheads as "Building New Chromosomes," "Sperm Engineering," and "The Future: the Economist and the Engineer." Some of these engineering feats have already caused severe problems. Broiler chickens "already grow too fast for their own legs, and are in constant pain because of it, so a further raising of the growth rate without at least a corresponding increase in leg strength could condemn millions more birds to agony."

A further chapter entitled "Patenting Life" is followed by a chapter entitled "Animals are Worthless: the Traditional View" which examines Descartes' callous philosophy and Jeremy Bentham's famous quote, "The question is not can they reason? Nor can they talk? But can they suffer?" Bentham may have laid the explosives under Descartes' views, but it was Charles Darwin who detonated them. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin argued that mankind was not fundamentally different

from the rest of creation because life evolves through a process of natural selection . . . The differences and similarities between man and beasts are of degree not of kind.

*The Price of Meat* was written shortly before adoption of the new status of animals by the European Union which now has declared them to be "sentient beings." This book should serve as a guide for action by the European Union and to point the way for reforms in the United States.

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## **New Book Shows How Greed and Cruelty Have Subverted Hard-Won Protection for Livestock**

*Slaughterhouse* is an intensively researched expose written by a woman who, virtually single-handed, uncovered the de facto repeal of our country's federal Humane Slaughter Act. Gail Eisnitz's interviews with slaughterhouse workers, inspectors and veterinarians as she pursues the shocking results of deregulation of the meat industry make compelling and completely convincing reading.

The Society for Animal Protective Legislation, AWI's companion organization, was the leader in convincing Congress of the need for the Humane Slaughter Act in 1958. Support was so broad and strong from groups as disparate as the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Butcher Workmen's Union, and newspapers nationwide, that President Eisenhower said if he went by his mail he would think Americans were interested in no other issue. The Livestock and Feed Grains Subcommittee of the House Agricultural Committee visited slaughterhouses to see for themselves the overwhelming need for legislative action. The whole country supported the legislative reform.

But in recent years the industry's passion for the profits that can be made by speeding up the slaughter line wiped out consideration for humans and animals alike. According to a US Department of Agriculture veterinarian quoted in the book, "At every inspection station on the kill floor there's a stop button...if an inspector sees anything wrong, he has the authority to hit that stop button. He's the only one who can give the company permission to turn it on again." But, these days, it hardly ever happens.

And there are a variety of reasons, all related to intimidation, that this basic law enforcement system has been destroyed. For example, an inspector tells the author, "How can you monitor something like that if you're not allowed to leave your station to see what's going on?" A beef-kill knocker tells Eisnitz, "As the foreman speeded up the line, it got harder and harder to knock'em. I have to hit 'em four or five times, see, and even then they sometimes still get up." Describing the air gun, he told her, "they turned the air pressure down and didn't repair the gun when gaskets broke."



open across their nose and stuff."

When Eisnitz asks if he ever complained, he's emphatic: "You bet. To the Foreman, the inspectors, the kill floor superintendent. Even the superintendent over the beef division....I've gotten so mad on some days I'd go pound on the wall because they won't do anything about it."

Anger at the frightful suffering in stark contrast with the cold-hearted indifference of the packing company and the slavish following of outrageous policy by those in authority is exemplified by a sticker's account of his failed efforts at getting the hogs to be stunned as required by the federal Humane Slaughter Act. "We kept telling them we were slaughtering conscious hogs. We asked them to set the stunner voltage high enough to knock the hogs out. We said we could try this, try that. The main foreman would agree to take care of the problems, then just walk away. Five minutes later, when we knew he was in another area, we'd run upstairs to the control room and turn up the voltage. What does management do? Puts a lock on the control room door."

Taking the reader into the confidence of the men hired to do the most menial and dangerous jobs, this incisive book manages to cover all of the horrific abuses-including the pitiful, hideously painful deaths of little children who ate hamburger tainted with e. coli 0157:H7, the result of feces splattered on the meat during traumatic slaughter. Far from degenerating into a litany of horrors, however, Eisnitz's fast-moving



*Recklessly increased slaughter-line speeds (some as fast as one hog every three seconds) have made humane slaughter impossible, Gail Eisnitz reports.*

investigation with each individual described and quoted from tape-recorded conversations creates a broad understanding of the whole intolerable situation.

A fierce, sadistic spirit has taken hold of some of the men, together with alcoholism and domestic violence. The lead pipes used by such slaughterhouse workers are gathered up before consultants hired by the packing company visit. They don't see conscious hogs driven into the scalding tank or hear their screams. Visiting government officials are likewise carefully protected against the possibility of witnessing the routine cruelty documented in *Slaughterhouse*.

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## **Monsanto's Genetically Engineered Products Meet Resistance**

BY RONNIE CUMMINS

Monsanto has suffered a number of technological and public relations "glitches" over the past few years, including the massive marketplace failure of its billion-dollar flagship product, rBGH. After three years on the marketplace, only 4 percent of America's dairy cows are being shot up with the drug. Wall Street analysts told *Business Week* magazine in 1996 that due to farmer and consumer opposition (and the fact that rBGH damages the health of cows) the drug was a total failure, and that in economic terms it should be taken off the market. [Editor's note: rBGH has been reliably linked to health problems that cause extreme suffering to cows, including mastitis, a painful inflammation of the udder. See the Spring/Summer 1997 *AWI Quarterly* for more details.]

In scientific and public health terms, data continues to pile up that significantly increased levels of the human growth hormone factor IGF-1 in genetically engineered milk and dairy products constitute a serious human health risk for increased breast and colon cancer. In addition, scientific studies have recently been brought to the attention of the World Health Organization that injecting mammals with genetically engineered growth hormones very likely increases their susceptibility to deadly, incurable brain-wasting diseases such as BSE, commonly known as Mad Cow Disease, or its human variant, Creutzfeld-Jakob Disease. Consequently the WHO, the European Union, and the Codex Alimentarius are unlikely to ever approve rBGH as a safe drug, leaving the U.S. as the only industrialized nation in the world to have approved rBGH.

Other troubles for Monsanto's genetically engineered products continue to mount: in mid-1996 Monsanto/Calgene's highly-touted "Flavr Savr" tomato was taken off the market, ostensibly because of production failures and genetic glitches; Monsanto's entire Canadian genetically engineered rapeseed or canola crop had to be recalled earlier this year because of unexplained "technical difficulties"; and up to a million acres or 50 percent of Monsanto's Bt Cotton crop in the U.S. were attacked by bollworms in 1996, prompting lawsuits by



outraged cotton growers who claim they were defrauded by Monsanto. Further, dairy cows eating Monsanto's "Roundup Ready" soybeans are producing milk with different chemical characteristics (higher fat levels) than cows who are eating regular soybeans.

Ronnie Cummins is the National Director of the Pure Food Campaign USA. For more information, write to: Pure Food Campaign, 860 Highway 61, Little Marais, Minnesota 55614, or call (800) 253-0681.

### **More on Monsanto**

A German activist who forwarded criticisms of Monsanto to an Internet mailing list found himself the target of the giant chemical corporation's lawyers—and the company lost.

Last winter, Werner Reisberger received a message from a group of protestors who were organizing an anti-Monsanto protest. The protestors called Monsanto "A corporation of poisons, genes and swindle." Reisberger passed the announcement on to an e-mail discussion list called GENESIS, which concerns food technology. The thin-skinned corporation sued Reisberger, even though he was not the author of the message and the discussion list only had 24 members.

"Monsanto claimed that I offended the company with the word 'swindle' and endangered their creditworthiness," Reisberger wrote in Earth Island Journal. "They gave me three days to sign a declaration promising never again to say, 'Monsanto, the corporation of swindle.' Every time I repeated this sentence, I would have to pay Monsanto 100,000 DM (\$66,666)."

Reisberger refused to sign, and a German court rejected all of Monsanto's claims and ordered the company to pay the court costs. Such hypersensitive litigation only serves to make giant companies look silly, as Monsanto should have learned from England's McLibel trial.

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## **"Tamworth Two" Win Fame by Cheating the Butcher**

Two pigs, nicknamed Butch Cassidy and Sundance Pig, were the subject of widespread public sympathy in January when they escaped from a Malmesbury, England abattoir shortly before they were to be slaughtered.

When they saw their brother killed, the nimble, ginger-colored pigs eluded slaughterhouse workers, who chased them for 10 minutes, until Butch wriggled through a hole in the wall and Sundance followed. They then swam across the river Avon to a small wood. They spent six days on the run, during which they caused quite a lot of media and public attention, as well as comical efforts to apprehend them.

They were eventually caught. Butch (actually a female) was cornered in a field, while Sundance was tranquilized by the Royal Society for the Protection of Animals. In light of the

notoriety the porcine escapees had won, their owner changed his mind about having them slaughtered, and they will live out their lives in an animal sanctuary.

### **...But Slaughterhouse Conditions Are No Laughing Matter**

Though the Tamworth Two's story had a happy ending, slaughterhouse conditions are anything but happy. V&G Newman, the slaughterhouse from which the pigs escaped, was among 70 slaughterhouses and meat plants "named and shamed" later in January by British government inspectors for problems with hygiene, food safety and handling.

But conditions in slaughterhouses in the United States, generally, are worse by far than their European counterparts. There is widespread failure to observe or enforce even the most rudimentary provisions of the Humane Slaughter Act, as the Humane Farming Association's Gail Eisnitz revealed in her book, *Slaughterhouse*.

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## **Opposition to Hog Factories is Rising in the West and Midwest**

Though one does not necessarily associate the majestic Rockies with mass-produced pork and the foul smell of hog waste, the expansive lands of Colorado host some of the largest single hog factory farms in existence—several confine 50,000 sows in hideously cramped crates.

A number of Colorado farmers and ranchers have formed an organization called STENCH, which is pushing for a statewide ballot initiative on the mammoth hog farms. It would cap the factories at 5,000 animals, along with placing restrictions on the storage and disposal of manure.

Blocked by a two-year moratorium on new hog factories in manure-soaked North Carolina, the huge corporate operations such as Murphy Family Farms (don't be misled by the "Family" of the corporation's name) are looking for new lands to conquer, and Iowa and Minnesota are in their sights.

In Iowa—fast being taken over by huge hog operations—a new star is rising in the gubernatorial race: candidate Mark McCormick, who has entered the race as an opponent of hog factories. McCormick intends to place stiffer restrictions on pollution of air, water and soil by the factories; empower state inspectors to close substandard operations; and reclassify the factories as industrial, rather than agricultural, businesses—thus preventing them from getting the same tax advantages enjoyed by traditional family farms. McCormick would also repeal the state's notorious File 519, which gives hog factories immunity to lawsuits and to regulation by local counties.

Minnesota, officially known as the "Land of 10,000 Lakes," was quickly satirized as "Land of 10,000 Lagoons" by hog-factory opponents—referring to the gigantic cesspools in which hog waste is stored. In its gubernatorial race (a smorgasbord of political legacies that includes the

sons of Hubert Humphrey, Walter Mondale, and Orville Freeman), three of four candidates are pushing moratoriums on massive hog operations.

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## **Slaughterhouse: Exposé Gains Attention, Corroboration from Inspectors**

Gail Eisnitz's shocking book *Slaughterhouse* (see fall 1997 *AWI Quarterly*) was backed up by the personal stories of current and former US Department of Agriculture (USDA) employees who were charged with enforcing the Humane Slaughter Act—a law that Eisnitz revealed is being routinely ignored in slaughterhouses across the country, at a press conference held at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on April 2.

"I've seen cows with their feet cut off, they've been dehorned, their ears cut off, and their heads have been skinned and their udders have been removed—and they're blinking, they're mooing, they're moving," said Steve Cockerham, an investigator with the USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service.

"Americans need to know what's going on behind the closed doors of federally inspected slaughterhouses," said Eisnitz. "The system is terribly broken and it needs to be fixed." She said that the department's responsibility to enforce the law has been "woefully and shamelessly mismanaged by the people who we trust to manage it."

And the animals—some of whom are dragged to slaughter by chains, their legs broken—are not the only losers. As the plants, in a fanatical rush toward profit, have recklessly increased line speeds (some as fast as one hog every three seconds), inspectors can do none of their jobs properly. The controversies over Mad Cow Disease and e. coli are just the tip of the iceberg: food-borne illnesses have quadrupled in the last 15 years.

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## **Cattlemen Lose in Winfrey Case**

Television personality Oprah Winfrey won her hotly contested lawsuit over "Food Libel" in February. The brash talk show host was targeted by a group of Texas cattlemen because a guest on Winfrey's wildly popular show—vegetarian activist Howard Lyman—speculated that Mad Cow Disease could spread to the United States.

The cattlemen charged that beef sales subsequently plummeted, and that Winfrey and her production company had knowingly aired "false and defamatory" statements about the beef industry in general. Winfrey and Lyman were sued by the cattlemen for \$12 million plus damages. Winfrey's defense

was that Lyman's views were protected as free speech, and the judge in the case agreed, throwing the case out.

Had Winfrey lost, the chilling effect would have been disastrous—the powerful industries that produce our food would be able to crush reasoned inquiry into every aspect of how they operate, from food-safety issues such as Mad Cow Disease, Salmonella and e. coli, to environmental questions such as pollution from hog waste to issues of humaneness such as intensive confinement and slaughterhouse conditions.

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## **"Organic Standards": Government/Industry Whitewash**

In 1990, Congress created the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to determine what foods could legally be certified organic in the United States. The board came up with recommendations that vexed the powerful agribusiness lobby: most tellingly, the board was against cruel factory farming methods like intensive confinement.

Accordingly—against the intent of the Congress—the NOSB's recommendations were swept aside by the Clinton Administration, to make room for a more corporation-friendly definition of "organic" food: bioengineered animals, dining on produce fertilized with toxic sludge, raised in horribly inhumane factory farms.

In addition to ignoring the NOSB's recommendation that farm animals must have outdoor access, the US Department of Agriculture's proposed regulations would prohibit labels such as "humanely raised" and "pesticide-free farms," effectively shutting consumers out of the picture.

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## **A Better Way: Hog Farming that Meets the Animal's Social Instincts**

BY TOM FRANTZEN

Farrowing and finishing hogs have been core activities on the Frantzen farm for over 55 years, spanning my and my father's farming careers. In 1978, I changed the way hogs were housed and raised at our farm. A room in our barn was remodeled to hold 14 steel farrowing crates with slat floors. A small underground pit was dug to catch the pig's waste.

I distinctly remember how those "modern improvements" changed the very nature of our farm. Slat floors and the stagnant watery manure beneath it created a repulsive odor. Any activity that stirred this fecal soup greatly increased the smell. At that time, I thought that this was just a part of being modern. Noxious odors were not the only bad features of the slat floors and crates. For the next 13 years, I would struggle with countless animal health problems associated with slat floors.





Diane Halverson

*This hoophouse sow carries straw into her farrowing hutch, building a nest for her piglets.*

Sows in the crates would slip on the (very expensive) slat flooring, causing various injuries. Little pigs suffered knee abrasions from sleeping on the hard floors. Pneumonia and injury-related health problems were common. The finishing pigs that were closely confined in a slat floored pen, as recommended by modern textbooks on pork production, did gain weight quickly, but they exhibited cannibalistic behavior. Tail biting became a serious problem.

In 1994, my wife Irene and I spent two weeks touring Sweden with a small group from Iowa and Minnesota. The trip was organized and hosted by Marlene Halverson of the Animal Welfare Institute and Mark Honeyman of Iowa State University. The farms we visited were employing deep bedded facilities to provide low stress, humane conditions for their livestock. I was awed by the healthy and content disposition of the stock, and the farm families too!

Every time I observed my old, crowded, slat floor hog barn and the stressed pigs living in it, I too became



Janeen Jackson

*Pigs are all-weather animals, and enjoy snow as well as sunshine.*



Tom Frantzen

*Hogs at the Frantzen farm in their straw-bedded hoophouse. The pigs root through the straw bales, creating their own nests.*

stressed. Their social brutality (tail biting, bar chewing) was caused by failing to meet their basic social instincts. On a hoop building tour, I was told that pigs have three desires: they want to run around, build a nest, and chew on something. This behavior is impossible in a metal pen on a slat floor. Early one September morning, I opened the door of my grower barn to check on the pigs. One of the pens was covered with fresh blood. Their level of stress was so high they became violently aggressive toward each other. I could take no more! I announced with a bit of profanity that my slat floor days were going to end.

Deep-bedded hoop house facilities appeared in the Midwest in the mid 1990s. It was exciting to observe this development. Not since being on the Swedish farms had I observed a humane shelter! More exciting yet, was the promise of an economical and ecologically sound building. In a hoop house or structure, straw-bedded pens replace metal crates and slatted floors. The straw bedding mixes with the hog waste, which is self composting, creates very little odor and no ecological hazards.

Plans were set to build three hoop houses on the farm. By September of 1997, one of the houses was ready for the pigs. I was very anxious to use the new facilities. On moving day, we bedded the new hoop house with fresh straw, and lots of it.



Diane Halverson

*A family farm sow and her piglets.*



Janeen Jackson

*Family games: piglets climb over their mother's head.*



Janeen Jackson

*Sow and piglet snuggle in deep straw.*

One hundred and sixty pigs from the old grower were released into their new home. Boy, did those pigs have fun! In the new hoop building, they have lots of room to run, straw to chew and heaps of bedding to nest in. They ran around all day—and even into the night. The next morning when I went into check on them, I will never forget what I found. As I walked up to the door, it was quiet, very quiet. I peeked into the hoop house to see 160 pigs in one massive straw nest, snoring with great content! I laughed until I cried. Their stress was gone and so was mine.

Our deep bedded buildings are now a year old. We are selling the second group of pigs this fall. We have not observed any social behavior problems. Even when the bedding pack is four foot deep, the odor level is very low. Nutrient losses from rain and snow runoff is nearly nonexistent. Hoop structure housing is the most significant development I have observed in moving agriculture towards practices that really make sense. It took a long time, but our pigs finally have a happy home.

*Tom Frantzen is a fourth generation farmer from Alta Vista, Iowa.*

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## The Cruel Corporate Assault on Family Farmers and Their Pigs

BY TOM GARRETT

*Above gold and silver...more precious than rubies; a race of virtuous and independent farmers; loyal supporters of their country*

—Senator Thomas Hart Benton, 1823

Today, America's system of family farms is in extremis. A succession of economic shocks, beginning in the Eisenhower administration, has so thinned the ranks of family farmers and ranchers that only a beleaguered remnant, aggregating less than 2 percent of the population, remain on the land. Thomas Hart Benton's "race of virtuous and independent farmers" is being replaced by a new feudalism, governed from corporate boardrooms, in which "contract growers" fulfill the role of serfs, and migrant workers the role of slaves.

The corporate takeover of agriculture relies on control and manipulation of markets, and a degree of vertical integration unthought of in manufacturing industries. Its way is being greased by one of the most powerful and unscrupulous lobbies in the nation with corruptive tentacles enmeshing the Congress and federal agencies and penetrating into state governments and legislatures across the country.

Gross abuse of farm animals, on a scale and to a degree unimaginable a generation ago, is the distinguishing feature of industrial agriculture. Its dernier cri is found in the hog factories metastasizing across the farm belt and into the intermountain west where pigs live their brief lives in huge, densely packed buildings suffused with the overpowering stench of liquefied hog manure. Gestating sows stand on naked concrete slats in a space so tiny that they are unable to turn around. During farrowing, the space allotted them is so narrow they must lie on one side, segregated from their piglets by bars spaced widely enough apart that the latter can suckle. The piglets themselves, under "segregated early weaning" are taken from their mothers at only 10 to 14 days of age so that the sows can be re-inseminated without loss of time.

Death losses under such conditions and in an atmosphere laden with hydrogen sulfide and ammonia, are understandably high. Twenty million pounds of antibiotics are fed to farm animals each year. Even with daily, sub-therapeutic doses of antibiotics, without which raising animals in factories would be impossible, vast numbers of piglets fail to survive weaning or fall behind and are "culled." The annual death rate among sows is reported to average 20 percent. Those who survive are "used up" and culled after three or four farrowings. Some of these young sows are unable to even walk to their own deaths. The natural life expectancy of a pig is ten years; sows in factory farms rarely exceed the age of two and one half.

At Seaboard's huge vertically integrated hog complex near Guyman, Ok., the death loss— by the company's own admission—has reached 35,000 animals in a single month. Company officials seem unconcerned. This is not really





B. Miller/Humane Farming Association

Feeder pigs being fattened for slaughter peer out from behind metal bars.



D. Halverson/Humane Farming Association

In gestation crates, sows neurotically bite the bars of their cage.



B. Miller/Humane Farming Association

Sow and piglets imprisoned in a farrowing crate.

“wastage” they argue; the animals are taken to the company’s rendering plant, ground up and fed to the surviving hogs. This is what “closed cycle” evidently means.

Why can’t traditional farms, where there is little death loss and sows remain productive for years, compete with this grotesque system? Given a “level playing field,” they can. But the field is anything but level. The profit or loss of independent farmers depends on the producer price; the price of animals “on the hoof.” But for corporations like Seaboard that maintain their own packing plants, and increasingly sell at retail under their own label, producer prices are irrelevant; the determinants are wholesale and retail prices. The producer price of hogs plummeted from 59.3 cents a pound in July 1996 to 36.3 cents a pound in July 1998. But the wholesale price dropped only 23 percent during the same period, from \$1.22 to 95 cents.

Another way vertical integration allows corporations to muscle aside family farms is to deny them markets altogether. In recent years, most of the sale barns and central markets to which farmers traditionally shipped their hogs have closed down and most independent packing plants—those operating without a “captive supply”—have been forced out of business. Tens of thousands of small farmers have quit raising hogs simply because they cannot sell them.

In the meantime, despite the collapse of Asian markets and consequent glut of hogs, hog factory expansion continues apace. Huge new complexes are planned for points as diverse as southeastern Idaho, northern Texas, the San Luis Valley of Colorado, the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, Fulton County, Ill. and Platte County, Wyo., as the corporations with the deepest pockets take advantage of the price crash to seize additional market share.

But for all their money and political influence, factory farmers are vulnerable. Factory farming does not work economically unless many of its real costs are imposed on others; to sustain such a system requires a high degree of political control. At the federal level, where honest enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act and various environmental laws would unravel the entire system, corporate dominance is hardly challenged. But a citizen’s revolt against hog factories is gaining strength in communities across the country as normally diverse—even antagonistic—constituencies unite against the common enemy.

- In Colorado, where absence of regulation has attracted over 20 large hog factories, a coalition of farmers, environmentalists and humane activists are bringing the issue before the voters in the November election. Initiative 14 would force hog factories to combat stench by enclosing sewage lagoons, require persistent environmental monitoring by both state and county authorities, make the owners fully liable for “remediating” damages and give affected citizens standing to go to court, when necessary, to bring about enforcement. Agribusiness corporations have raised millions of dollars—reportedly including one million dollars from the pharmaceutical giant, Pfizer, to stop the initiative. Industry groups such

as the Farm Bureau Federation and the National Pork Producers Council, are in full hue and cry.

- South Dakota farmers, led by Dakota Rural Action, have placed an initiative on the ballot aimed at forcing agribusiness corporations altogether out of the state. Amendment E, modeled on Nebraska’s anti-corporate law, would ban corporate owned farming operations in South Dakota, including feeding contracts involving corporate-owned animals. This would not prevent privately owned hog factories from operating in South Dakota, but Nebraska’s experience suggests that without pressure from outside investors very few will. The South Dakotans are, once again, facing a flood of corporate money and the Republican Governor Janklow is inveighing against the initiative.
- Western Kansas has become a veritable battleground between corporate investors and citizens. Fortunately, it is possible, under the Kansas constitution, for counties to decide for themselves whether such development is to be allowed. Public initiatives have been held on the question of hog factories in 20 Kansas counties. Only one county, Edwards, voted by 590 to 585 to admit hog factories. 71.6 percent of all the voters participating in the elections voted “No.” In three of the fourteen counties where commissioners granted permission for hog factories to come in, outraged citizens forced them to rescind the decision.
- Iowa has traditionally been a bastion of family farming as well as the largest hog producing state in the United States. It is still first in hogs, but the number of independent hog farmers has plunged from 41,000 to 18,000 in a decade, and most of Iowa’s hog production is now in the hands of corporations. The corporate takeover has degraded Iowa’s environment, created social turmoil, battered the already depressed rural economy. However, the 1995 passage of File 519, eliminating the right of counties to regulate hog factories, and the right of citizens to file suit against hog factories, created an intense backlash. Nine Republican legislators who voted for file 519 were tossed out by the voters in 1996, and Democrats are counting on the issue to regain control of the Iowa legislature this year. In the meantime, the Iowa Supreme Court recently ruled the provision denying citizens the right to file nuisance suits against hog factories to be “blatantly unconstitutional.”
- In Oklahoma, where waste from chicken factories in the eastern part of the state contaminated the Tulsa water supply, citizens finally forced a moderately strong regulatory bill—applying to the state’s hog factories—through the state legislature. Moratoriums on new construction remain in effect in Mississippi and North Carolina. South Carolina, with North Carolina’s ghastly example to guide it, passed a sufficiently severe law to deter development.

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This poor factory farm victim could take no more. Despite efforts from volunteers at the Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary, she died after she was lifted from the truck taking her to the slaughterhouse. Three other pigs were dead on arrival.



AWI’s Tom Garrett and Dale Riffle from PIGS help one of the rescued pigs off the truck.

## Rescue of 171 Pigs Raised in a Factory Farm

What was to be a one way journey to the slaughterhouse turned into a trip to porcine paradise for 167 pigs abandoned in a Washington, D.C. neighborhood. Tightly packed into a huge, three-tiered, 18-wheeled truck trailer, the pigs were being transported from a Rocky Mountain, N.C. factory farm



to Hatfield Quality Meats, a Pennsylvania slaughterhouse. The D.C. Metropolitan police who found the terrified pigs contacted the Washington Humane Society, who had the truck towed to Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary in Poolesville, Md.

The hogs had been on the truck for at least 14 hours before they were finally unloaded. Four of the pigs died of stress while on the truck or shortly after being unloaded. Only 5 to 6 months old, the pigs already averaged a whopping 200 to 250 pounds. Some had unsightly growths and hematomas, most had difficulty walking and all had their tails cut off and large sores on their bruised and swollen legs. It was clear that their short lives on concrete slats had taken a permanent toll.

When the operations manager of Hanor Corporation, Inc. (the company that owned the pigs) arrived at the sanctuary to retrieve the pigs, he was escorted by a Washington lawyer and a bevy of Montgomery County, Md. police officers. Poplar Spring presented the manager from the Hanor factory farm with a bill of \$11,630 for expenses incurred for the pigs' transport, care and feeding. The bill constituted a legal lien in the state of Maryland. After intense negotiation, the manager agreed to write a check to cover the amount. The pigs' lawyer, Laura Nelson of the Animal Legal Defense Fund, called his bluff and demanded the sum be either in cash or a certified check. Unwilling or unable to produce a secured payment for the pigs, the manager ceded the pigs to Poplar Spring.

An interesting footnote: According to police sources, the driver was picked up the next day by Washington, D.C. police for driving under the influence of alcohol. It was also discovered that this had not been the first time the driver had deserted a trailer full of animals.

The hogs will now live out their natural lives as true pigs, in grassy fields with their friends. If you are interested in adopting or sponsoring one of the Poplar Spring pigs, please contact Terry Cummings at Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary, PO Box 507, Poolesville, MD 20837, (301) 428-8128

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*Dead sows discarded by Newsham Hybrid, Inc., a factory farm breeding facility. The sows were dumped all over this path and along a county road in Eads, Colorado.*

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## Update: Rescued Pigs Now Enjoying Life

In the last *AWI Quarterly*, we reported on the valiant rescue of 171 pigs bound for slaughter. Tightly packed into an 18-wheeled truck trailer, the pigs were abandoned by the truck driver in a Washington, D.C. neighborhood. Luckily, fate and dozens of volunteers, intervened and the pigs were rescued. All of the pigs who survived their horrific ordeal have found happy, permanent homes.

Ninety-nine of the pigs call PIGS, a sanctuary, home. Many of the pigs had a difficult time walking when they arrived, as the slatted floors and cramped conditions of the factory farm left them with muscle atrophy and injured legs. Now they romp and root in a large pasture, complete with their own woods.

The forty pigs that went to Farm Sanctuary have settled in, especially enjoying treats of bagels and popcorn given to them by admirers. Twenty-two pigs, including Priscilla (see photo), who is being sponsored by AWI President Christine Stevens, remain at Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary.

Despite previous poor treatment by humans, all of the sanctuaries report that their new charges are very curious about people; every day becoming more trusting and friendly. If you would like to make a donation, or sponsor a pig, please contact one of the following sanctuaries:

PIGS, PO Box 629, Charlestown, WV, 25414, Farm Sanctuary, PO Box 150, Watkins Glen, NY, 14891, or Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary, PO Box 507, Poolesville, MD 20837.

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*Meet Priscilla, one of the pigs rescued from slaughter last October.*



*Formerly imprisoned at a factory farm, these pigs now reside at PIGS, a sanctuary. They now enjoy their own pasture, and behave much like their wild cousins—rooting, scratching and foraging among the trees.*

PIGS

## Voters Reject Factory Farms: Anti-factory Farm Candidates Win, Struggle Against Factory Farms Continues

BY TOM GARRETT

In 1998, the proliferation of hog factories, which has embroiled state legislatures and county commissions for much of the decade, reached center stage as a national issue. On Nov. 3, in the words of Bruce Ingersoll of the Wall Street Journal, "Pig politics became big politics."

In the two states where the hog factories came directly before the people, the verdict was unequivocal. In Colorado, Initiative 14, which places hog factories under moderately severe regulation, was approved by over 60 percent of the electorate. South Dakota Amendment E, which bans corporate farming in the state altogether, gained 59 percent of the popular vote despite a massive infusion of corporate cash and opposition from the state's Republican governor.

Lauch Faircloth was defeated by John Edwards (D-NC). Faircloth, according to *Counterpunch* (Nov. 1 through 15, 1998) was part owner of Coharie Farms, the 30th largest hog producer in the country. Faircloth owned more than \$1 million worth of stock in two slaughterhouses. In Congress, he attended to the interests of the pig men as chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Clean Water, Wetlands, Private Property and Nuclear Safety." Environmentalists and small farmers across the state worked hard to defeat Faircloth. The Sierra Club flooded the airwaves with ads linking Faircloth to water pollution and pfiesteria.

In Iowa, where hog factories have blighted northern counties and driven most of Iowa's traditional hog farmers out of business, the hog issue played heavily in Democrat Tom Vilsack's crushing upset of Republican gubernatorial candidate Jim Lightfoot. In neighboring Minnesota, Reform Party candidate, Jessie "the Mind" Ventura's victory sent a seismic shock through the American political establishment. The governor-elect supports a temporary moratorium on new hog factories.

Factory farming was also a factor in the unexpectedly severe defeat of anti-environmentalist Republican candidate Ellen Sauerbrey by Maryland's incumbent governor, Parris Glendening. Glendening received high marks for his crackdown on Maryland's huge chicken farms following the 1997 pfiesteria outbreak in the Chesapeake Bay area. Environmental protection was a defining issue in the campaign.

Despite political setbacks, the industry blitzkrieg shows no sign of abating. With the producer price of hogs in Iowa as 9 cents a pound—the same price it was in the Depression Era—the last of America's family hog farmers are being driven from the business, while corporations are engaged in a brutal battle for control of the hog market. In the meantime, thousands of citizens, from the New Melloray Monastery in Iowa to



*Progress or Retrogression? Above: A relaxed group of pigs photographed on a family farm almost a hundred years ago. Below: Sows in a present-day factory farm. They can't even turn around in their 22-inch-wide gestation stalls. They express their desperation by attacking the bars that imprison them.*



Diane Halverson/AWI

Owyhee County, Idaho, are threatened by the insensate drive for more, and still more, hog factories.

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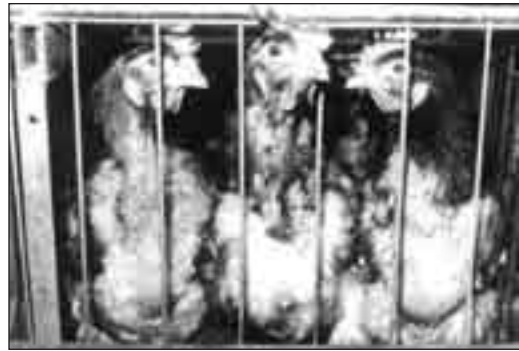
## Animals as Units of Production: Industrial Agribusiness and Sentient Beings

BY KEN MIDKIFF

Traditional farming operations treated animals as individuals. A farmer knew the personalities of his milk cows as well as he did those of neighboring farmers. I knew which of my sows liked to have her back and ears scratched—and which one would try to viciously bite if approached. When ewes rejected their lambs, we brought them into the house and fed them from a bottle. As a small child, I knew which of the old roosters would attack me (some roosters are just damned mean) and which could be carried around in my red wagon.

Somewhere between my childhood in the 1940s and the 1970s, something went terribly wrong in food production. Schools of agriculture and the US Department of Agriculture, taking their marching orders from agribusiness implement and chemical companies started preaching the adoption of the Industrial Model. Get big or get out. Volume of production is more important than quality.





United Poultry Concerns

**Above:** Laying hens are confined to battery cages so small they can't even spread their wings. The ends of their beaks are painfully cut off but they still peck the feathers off their cage mates for lack of any natural vegetation. **Below:** Sows are confined to cramped stalls they can't so much as turn around in. Biting the bars of their prisons is their only occupation.



Cathy Liss

A diversified, sustainable system of integrated crops and animal production was abandoned in favor of monocultures. Farmers became specialists. Some grew only corn and soybeans. Others developed huge dairy or beef feedlot operations. This move had nothing at all to do with needing to feed the world, and everything to do with concentration of food production and profits into the hands of a few large corporations. Market control was the goal. Not many more hogs or chickens are being grown today than in the past—only the methods have changed.

Poultry was the first to totally convert to the industrial model. Today there are almost no independent poultry growers, all are either owned by or under contract with large corporations. The hog industry is going the same direction.

So what? Well, animals are now raised in huge confinement structures, crammed in small pens or cages, given antibiotics to combat diseases (that can run rampant in such stressful conditions). One conveyor brings in food, another system transports out excrement. From a rather idyllic existence on the family farm to a unit of production, packed in with thousands of other units of production, animals are now treated as only a product—much as any other industrial product. Just widgets.

Chickens raised for broilers for mass consumption are now grown in confinement structures that contain up to 22,000 birds. Hatching to slaughter is only eight weeks. Those drumsticks at Kentucky Fried Chicken are from a two-month old chicken. The methods of production are nasty, brutish, and short.

Hogs are raised in arguably worse conditions. Mortality rates are very high. Sows in gestation stalls and farrowing crates cannot turn around. In the “finishing houses” where pigs are fed from around 55 pounds to slaughter size, there are from 1,200 to 2,500 hogs in a building. Emissions of hydrogen sulfide and ammonia from excrement and urine are so strong that large exhaust fans must run constantly to remove the toxic gases from the houses. If the fans shut off for more than 15 minutes, hogs begin succumbing to the gases.

In the heat of summer, the overcrowded conditions in poultry operations lead to massive die-offs. During the record-breaking heat-wave last year in Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas, millions and millions of hens and broilers suffocated in their packed cages. All the media focused on was the monetary losses to the owners and growers, not to the miserable deaths of millions of living creatures,

Chickens also suffer from the misfortunes of their owners or growers. In southwest Missouri, a bankrupt poultry house owner walked away and left 12,000 hens to starve and die. Two years later, the skeletons of thousands of hens remain packed in their little cages in a crumbling poultry house overgrown with weeds. A horror story in the best Stephen King tradition—and one that pretty much sums up industrial-strength hog, chicken and egg production.

*Ken Midkiff, formerly a hog farmer, is now the director of the Missouri Sierra Club.*

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## Fighting the “New Feudal Rulers”

“It’s ironic when you think about our heritage in South Dakota,” said Johnson, 41, who took over the family farm when his father had a stroke in 1981. “Our ancestors left the landlords and kings in Europe to come here for their economic freedom, and now we’re making the big corporations the new feudal rulers...Sometimes I think nobody is paying attention while the big corporations are just taking over the whole farm economy and destroying an American way of life.” [Charlie Johnson is a farmer from Madison, S.D.]

The article quotes another farmer:

“The feed comes from out of state, the hogs come from out of state and the hogs are shipped out of state for slaughter,” said Don Hoogestraat, who turned his third-generation family farm over to his son eight years ago. “That leaves us with nothing but the manure, and the farmer becomes a hired hand on his own farm.”

Hoogestraat, a former president of the South Dakota Pork Producers Council who is now critical of the council’s support of corporate-backed farming, accused big hog-producers of engaging in “planned overproduction” to temporarily drive pork prices down and force more family farms into contract feeding agreements. Earlier this month, the price of hogs dropped to a 27-year low of 15 cents a pound in Sioux Falls—half of what it cost to produce—and in some parts of the country prices have dropped to less than 10 cents a pound.

US Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman has announced a series of crisis measures, including a moratorium on government loans for new pork production plants...

*Excerpted from the Jan. 3, 1999 Washington Post article by William Clairborne*

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## A Call for Strong Enforcement of the Federal Humane Slaughter Act

In 1958, following overwhelming public support, the Humane Slaughter Act was adopted. In 1978, the Federal Meat Inspection Act was amended to empower US Department of Agriculture inspectors to stop the slaughter line on the spot if any cruelty is observed. Once the line has stopped, slaughter may not legally recommence until deficiencies, whether of equipment, or of abuses by personnel, are corrected. Since that time the public has assumed that the law has been enforced. Gail Eisnitz’s 1997 book, *Slaughterhouse* (see fall 1997 *AWI Quarterly*), was a rude awakening to the fact that deregulation had caused enormous speed-ups in the slaughter line so that animals were no longer being slaughtered in conformity with the law. On the contrary, the book revealed that fully conscious pigs and cows were being beaten, strangled, scalded, skinned and dismembered in the nation’s slaughterhouses.

Two government reports, “Survey of Stunning and Handling in Federally Inspected Beef, Veal, Pork, and Sheep Slaughter Plants” (Jan. 7, 1997) and “Special Survey on Humane Slaughter and Ante-Mortem Inspection” (March 1998) provide further documentation of the failure of slaughter plants to handle and kill animals humanely. Many apparent violations of federal law were found, despite the fact that these inspections of slaughter plants were announced in advance, providing ample opportunity for plant managers to cover-up.

The 1997 report documented excessive use of electric prods, slippery floors and hazardous ramps, citing 64 percent of the slaughter plants visited for ineffective use of captive bolt stunners to render animals unconscious and insensible. The 1998 report noted that “it is considered inhumane to allow an animal to regain consciousness after the stunning procedure, so the bleeding should be done as quickly as possible after stunning.” Yet, 57.6 percent of the plants permitted a lengthy period of time between stunning and bleeding. The report concludes that 28 percent of the plants visited have “serious problems.”

A detailed resolution calling for strong enforcement of the Humane Slaughter Act was presented to the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Animal Welfare Committee by AWI Director Cathy Liss. The USAHA represents federal and state regulatory veterinarians throughout the nation and has done so since its founding in 1897. Seeking to quash attention to this issue, a

representative of the Livestock Marketing Association objected to virtually all of the text claiming it could not be substantiated. The industry representative even objected to text cited from the two government studies, claiming that these studies, too, could not be substantiated. In the interest of obtaining the necessary votes to adopt a resolution in support of the Humane Slaughter Act, a compromise version was agreed. The final resolution, which appears below, was adopted by the Animal Welfare Committee of the USAHA. On the following day, it was adopted by the full board of the association.

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### RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE OCTOBER 1998 USAHA MEETING

The United States Animal Health Association encourages strong enforcement of the Federal Humane Slaughter act by USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service to prevent abuses to animals protected under the Act.

(The mission of USAHA is to be a forum for communication and coordination among state and federal governments, universities, industry and other groups on issues of animal health and disease control, animal welfare, food safety and public health.)

## Factory Farms Deemed Not Organic

Controversy over the labeling of organic animal products was resolved by a Jan. 14, 1999 decision of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). By early spring, stores will have USDA-certified products. The organic label means that animals have not been confined to the dreadful factory farms where they are virtually immobilized in tiny cages and stalls during their entire lives of painful imprisonment. Instead, the animals must have access to pastures, fresh air and sunshine and not be given growth hormones or sub-therapeutic antibiotics.

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## Astrid Lindgren Establishes Foundation for Farm Animals

A wonderful new foundation with a delightful name—Foundation for Better Animal Protection: My Cow Wants to Have Fun—has been established by world-renowned author and animal activist, Astrid Lindgren.

The foundation strives to bring humans and animals together in a way that allows both to enjoy a full and rich life. Hoping to improve the daily existence of farm animals by educating people about their living conditions, the foundation teaches how everyone can prevent animal



suffering.' Also as part of its mission, the foundation will fund research that examines how animals are affected by human beings and the ways which animal social structure influences conditions for an animal's well-being.

In 1988, Mrs. Lindgren was awarded AWI's Albert Schweitzer Medal for her magnificent achievement in obtaining the enactment of the Swedish Animal Protection Ordinance. Her commentaries and articles published in the Swedish newspaper *Expressen* (1985-1989) brought the horrible plight of factory-farmed animals to the attention of the Swedish public. Sweden now boasts the world's most comprehensive law against cruel factory farming practices, banning the sub-therapeutic use of antibiotics, cramped housing conditions and electrical prods. The law requires animals be allowed to behave in ways natural to their species and prevents those who have been found to have neglected or abused an animal from keeping animals again.

Mrs. Lindgren is also the author of many children's stories which are classic, not only in Swedish literature, but also in translation throughout the world. Her beloved, colorful characters include Pippi Longstocking, her horse named Horse, and monkey companion, Mr. Nilsson.

To find out more about My Cow Wants to Have Fun, contact AWI or visit the foundation's website at [www.astridlindgren.com](http://www.astridlindgren.com)

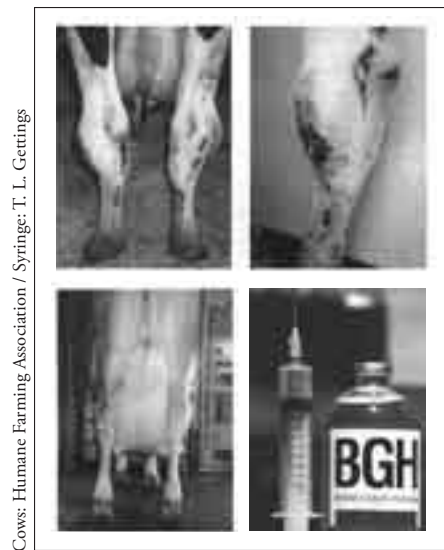
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## rBGH Ruled Unsafe for Canadian and European People and Cows

Canada and the European Union have banned the use of Bovine Recombinant Growth Hormone (rBGH), citing its toxicity to both cows and humans, but the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved rBGH use for US dairy cows.

rBGH, a genetically engineered synthetic hormone, mimics a naturally occurring hormone released when a cow is pregnant, which allows the cow to produce milk for her calf. Nutritional energy that is supposed to sustain the entire cow becomes almost entirely dedicated to milk production. Vital nutrients are leached from other parts of her body, causing painful udder infections and crippling lameness. In addition, rBGH injected cows are much more likely to suffer infertility and gastrointestinal disorders. Because rBGH use increases the incidence of disease, an rBGH-injected cow requires greater amounts of antibiotics than an rBGH-free cow. Increased antibiotic usage may lead to resistance to antimicrobials, having dire consequences for the health of both humans and cows.

After more than nine years of study that took into account the findings of two independent advisory panels, Health Canada (the FDA's Canadian counterpart) made the decision to ban the hormone, citing greatly increased health risks to



Cows: Humane Farming Association / Syringe: T. L. Gettings

*rBGH causes painful and debilitation swelling of a cow's legs and udder. rBGH use increases the incidence of IGF-1 (Insulin-like Growth Factor 1) in milk, which is linked to breast, colon and prostate cancer in humans.*

cows and potential health risks for humans exposed to rBGH. Canadian researchers reported that "long-term toxicology studies to ascertain human safety" must be conducted, as their research indicated that rBGH may cause "sterility, infertility, birth defects, cancer and immunological derangements" in humans. Other recent studies, as reported in the journals *Science* (1/23/98) and *The Lancet* (5/9/98) have linked IGF-1 (Insulin-like Growth Factor), high levels of which are present in milk produced with rBGH, to much increased incidence of prostate and breast cancer.

The European Union has enacted an rBGH moratorium, due to expire in 2000, based on European studies that concurred with Health Canada's findings. In addition, a recent European Commission on Consumer Health and Protection study concluded that rBGH should not be used in dairy cows, as its use seriously compromises a cow's health and well-being.

Why the United States needs to increase milk production is puzzling. Every year since the mid-1950s, the United States has produced far more milk than its citizens can consume. According to *Ecologist* (vol. 28, no. 5), since 1980 the US government has spent a whopping \$18 billion sopping up America's milk surplus in order to prevent milk prices from plummeting.

How and why approval of rBGH occurred and is being upheld seems not so much a question answered by sound science or interest in the public's welfare, but by corporate patronage. If rBGH's approval were to be rescinded, the Monsanto corporation stands to lose \$300 to \$500 million a year in sales of its rBGH product, Posilac. Upper echelons of Monsanto and FDA management are constantly interchanged. Many of Monsanto's top brass were once employed by the FDA, and vice versa. For example, Margaret Miller, the FDA's Director of Food Safety, is now "reviewing" her own rBGH research done while she was a Monsanto employee. Monsanto attorney Michael Taylor was hired by the FDA to fast-track rBGH through the approval process.

In order to approve the growth hormone, the FDA

violated its own guidelines on several occasions. According to FDA literature, approval of a drug "requires pharmaceutical companies to submit all studies they conducted [and] all the raw data form the basis of the approval of the product...". The FDA never reviewed all of Monsanto's data, disregarded the Canadian ban decision, and approved rBGH based solely on information presented in Monsanto's own project summary.

The FDA website states that the "elimination of violative residues in meat and milk" is of utmost importance. By ignoring warnings from both Europe and Canada, the FDA endangers the well-being of Americans and their dairy cows.

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## How You Can Be rBGH-Free

Betsy Lydon, consumer representative on the National Organic Standards Board and Program Director at Mothers & Others, an organization educating consumers about safe and ecologically sustainable buying choices, has a few simple, yet effective recommendations to avoid rBGH-tainted products.

Read the label. If your milk carton doesn't say organic or rBGH-free on the label, then the milk inside isn't rBGH-free. At a conventional milk processing plant, milk is collected from individual dairies and then taken to a centralized "creamery" where milk from rBGH-injected cows is mixed with milk produced without the synthetic growth hormone, tainting the entire batch of milk. All products certified organic are labeled as such and do not contain milk produced from rBGH injected cows. Although an organic label is the only guarantee that a dairy item is rBGH-free, a few larger companies, such as Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream and Stonyfield Farms Yogurt have long standing policies of only buying milk from dairies that pledge not to use rBGH. Labels on their product certify their foods are rBGH-free.

Buy local or buy imported. Many small, producer-owned dairy cooperatives do not use growth hormones in their cows, so check around home for a good local dairy that certifies its milk as rBGH-free. Because rBGH is banned in Canada and the European Union, dairy products imported from either place do not contain the growth hormone.

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Humane Farming Association

*This dairy cow was found covered in mud and nearly starved when she was rescued from a North Carolina dairy. She now leads a rBGH-free life at The Humane Farming Association's Suwanna Ranch—a farm animal refuge.*

## How Our Food is Produced Matters: Animal Factories and Their Impact

BY CHRIS BEDFORD

Our food supply is undergoing fundamental change, with serious consequences for animals, our water, our health and our nation's family farms. Today, a small group of giant agribusiness corporations control most of our nation's poultry, beef and pork production. To maximize profits, these corporations have imposed factory production processes on animals, family farmers, consumers and the environment.

### The Animal Factory System

**Standardization.** Animal factories seek to produce a uniform product with predictable costs. To this end, animals are bred to be genetically similar and to produce as much meat, as fast as possible at as low a cost as possible. For instance, most broiler chickens come from only seven different genetic lines. This lack of genetic diversity makes virtually the entire nation's poultry supply vulnerable to an epidemic. Overbreeding also produces chickens with breasts so large that sometimes they can't stand up, causing painful blisters and ultimately death through starvation.

**Concentration and confinement.** Animal factories concentrate thousands, sometimes tens of thousands, of animals into multiple industrial barns. Large animals, like hogs, are kept in tight metal cages throughout their entire lives. Industrial hog barns are often windowless and contain as many as 4,000 hogs, confined in metal pens built over slatted concrete floors. Factory-farmed poultry are crowded into long industrial houses containing as many as 25,000 birds. Hundreds of thousands of egg-laying hens spend their lives in tiny battery cages, which give each hen space no bigger than the piece of paper this article is printed on, stacked high in giant barns.

**Contract system.** Under the factory system, most farmers do not own the animals they raise. Instead, local family farmers raise animals under a contract which requires them to provide their labor, pay the energy and water costs and borrow the funds to build the industrial barns and other facilities. The giant agribusiness corporations supply the animals, the feed and additives. A handful of very large corporations control the animal market. These "Big-Ag" corporations squeeze every last bit of profit from contract growers and the animals, forcing farmers to raise more animals for less pay, under increasingly dangerous working conditions.

### Poisoning Our Water

One hog produces as much feces as four humans. North Carolina's 7,000,000 factory raised hogs create four times as much waste-stored in reeking, open cesspools-as the state's 6.5 million people. The Delmarva peninsula's 600 million chickens produce 400,000 tons of manure a year; manure that contains





Humane Farming Association

*These young sows face a lifetime behind iron bars so closely spaced that these active creatures can't even turn around. From gestation crates to farrowing crates their incarceration never ceases.*

as much phosphorus as the waste from a city the size of Los Angeles, and as much nitrogen as the waste from a city the size of New York. When this manure is inappropriately applied to land as fertilizer, as it often is, nutrients run off into waterways, poisoning whole watersheds with excess amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus. Run-off from poultry and swine manure has been implicated in the outbreak of *Pfiesteria piscicida*, a tiny but deadly organism which has sickened humans and killed billions of fish along Atlantic coastal bays.

Animal factory manure may also contain environmental estrogens. These estrogens bio-accumulate and drain into waterways, interfering with aquatic reproductive cycles. In Israel, this run-off has been implicated in the mass sterilization of fish in the Sea of Galilee.

### **Risking Our Health**

The animal factory system adds antibiotics and heavy metals, like arsenic and copper, to animal feed to promote rapid growth and prevent epidemic levels of disease among confined animals. Routine use of antibiotics can breed drug-resistant bacteria which enter our water and our food chain, threatening human health.

Young children and the elderly are particularly at risk from these resistant bacteria. Currently, poultry and hog corporations feed their animals sub-therapeutic levels of the latest generation of antibiotics, leaving human populations potentially vulnerable as a result. The US Food and Drug Administration is trying, against strong industry resistance, to ban much of animal factory antibiotic use. Such use is already restricted in the European Union.

Animal factory production is inherently inhumane. It represents a fundamental violation of nature, with broad consequences for our physical and spiritual health. How our food is raised, matters. When living creatures are brutally transformed into factory units of production it desensitizes the human consciousness to the environment and all of its inhabitants—further alienating us from the natural processes upon which our lives depend.

We simply must abolish animal factories and pursue more sustainable, humane ways to raise our food.

*Chris Bedford is the chair of the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club.*

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## **Niman Ranch: AWI Approved. Good for the Pigs, the Family Farmer and the Community**

BY DIANE HALVERSON

To help end mistreatment of farm animals, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) is supporting the Niman Ranch Company and its network of family hog farmers who follow humane husbandry criteria developed by the Animal Welfare Institute. AWI's criteria require that all animals be allowed to behave naturally. Unlike the crated sows on factory farms, the sows in the Niman Ranch program have freedom of movement, allowing them to fulfill their instinctive desire to build a nest when they are about to give birth. Unlike the factory farm pigs housed on concrete slats over manure pits, Niman Ranch pigs are raised on pasture or in barns with bedding where they can live in accord with their natures, rooting for food, playing and socializing. AWI's criteria require that the participants in the program be independent family farmers, that is, the farmer must own the animals, depend on the farm for a livelihood and be involved in the day to day physical labor of managing the pigs. This requirement helps to ensure that pigs are raised in modest numbers, making it easier to know and manage the animals as individuals.

Niman Ranch, which buys the pigs and markets the meat, also forbids feeding or otherwise administering hormones or antibiotics and prohibits the feeding of animal by-products. Unlike factory farmers, humane farmers in the Niman Ranch program do not rely on antibiotics to mask clinical manifestations of disease or to promote growth; therefore, they do not contribute to the devastating problem of antibiotic resistance among humans.



*Paul Willis' farm: Where pigs enjoy being pigs—not production units.*

Paul Willis, the farmer who inspired AWI's involvement in the program, keeps 200 sows and their offspring on pasture or in barns bedded with straw on his Midwest farm. Niman Ranch rewards Willis, and farmers like him, by paying them a premium price. Niman Ranch products are available at 200 fine restaurants in California, at Trader Joe's stores in the West, at Whole Foods stores in northern California, and through the Williams-Sonoma mail order catalogue. Additional markets are being developed nationwide. In a 1995 Opinion Research Corporation survey, 93 percent of the adults surveyed believed that animals should be treated humanely, even when being raised for human consumption, and three-fourths opposed confining sows in crates, laying hens in battery cages and veal calves in crates. The Niman Ranch program gives a growing number of such consumers an opportunity to reject meat derived from pigs raised in animal factories and assists in the preservation of humane family farms, thereby helping to set a humane standard in raising of animals for food.

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## **State Makes Sweetheart Deal With PSF**

On July 29, declining to join forces with the Department of Justice, the Environmental Protection Agency and a Missouri citizen's group, Missouri's Attorney General filed a consent judgment settling all of the state's claims against Continental Grain-Premium Standard Farms, including a July 28 spill which dumped over 12,000 gallons of hog manure into a local stream.

The sweetheart deal allows Continental Grain-Premium Standard Farm to pollute without penalty for the next three to five years while it spends \$12.5 to \$25 million to research, develop and adopt unspecified "technology" to "reduce or eliminate" its pollution problems. The settlement does not set water or air quality standards to be met by the company.

A federal judge is expected to rule shortly on the July 22 Department of Justice motion to intervene on behalf of Environmental Protection Agency in the pending suit by Citizens Legal Environmental Action Network against Premium Standard Farms.

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## **Court Defeat for Corporate Factory Farm**

A St. Louis Circuit Court jury recently awarded \$5.2 million in damages to 52 rural citizens subjected to odors, flies and waste spills from Continental Grain Company's sprawling northern Missouri hog operations. The lawsuit, in which the jury deemed Continental's facilities a "continuing public nuisance," is one of the first in the nation where farmers and rural residents have legally and successfully held a corporate hog factory giant accountable for its degradation of property values and rural quality of life.

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## **Polish Delegation Investigates American Agribusiness, Repudiates Factory Farming**

BY TOM GARRETT

### **The New Breed and the Rise of Smithfield Foods**

During the 1970s and 80s, US meat packing was taken over by a "new breed" of ruthless entrepreneurs who broke the power of the unions, reduced real wages to a third of their previous level and replaced a stable, American-born workforce with a shifting population of Hispanic and Asian immigrants. Under this regime, workplace injuries have soared making meat packing the most dangerous industry in America. Deaths from food poisoning, with contaminated meat the primary culprit, have risen five fold to 9,000 annually. The Humane Slaughter Act because of the subjugation of the Food Safety and Inspection Service by the industry and a 2 to 300 percent increase in "line speed"—the speed of the conveyor on which animals are hung to be stunned and killed—is no longer enforced. Once unthinkable atrocities, such as dumping conscious hogs into "scalding tanks," are now commonplace.

While the packing industry was being "reformed," a parallel trend gathered force in production of hogs. During the 1970s, investors in Duplin County, N.C. began raising hogs in buildings with slatted floors, which can be cleaned by hosing the manure through the slats and flushing it into open cesspools. This technology grew rapidly during the 1980s. Hundreds of metal buildings containing a thousand or more hogs each and open cesspools filled with liquefied hog manure sprouted across North Carolina's coastal plain.

In 1991, Smithfield Foods of Smithfield, Va. opened the world's largest slaughterhouse, 800 acres in extent, on the Cape Fear River in Bladen County, N.C. With the opening of the Tarheel plant, which is capable of killing in excess of 24,000 animals a day, hog factory development, no longer held back by a shortage of killing capacity, exploded. By 1996, one of every five hogs raised in the United States came from North Carolina and, Smithfield Foods was propelled from the status of a regional piranha to that of a dominant player in the industry. As the North Carolina technology spread beyond the state, and hog factories metastasized through the mid-west, Smithfield expanded with them, buying up dozens of competing slaughterhouses. In 1997, Smithfield edged out IBP as the world's largest hog butcher.

At the same time Smithfield moved toward "vertical integration" (a system that eliminates competition by controlling the raising, slaughtering and marketing of pigs). Late in 1998, taking advantage of the unprecedented crash in the price of live hogs, Smithfield purchased North Carolina based Carroll's Foods, America's second-largest hog factory operator and a major turkey producer as well. In the fall of



1999, Smithfield announced the purchase of the world's biggest hog production company, Murphy Farms. These acquisitions have left Smithfield as the owner of 675,000 sows, four times as many as its closest remaining competitor and enough to produce nearly 10 million pigs for slaughter each year. Around 23 percent of the pigs slaughtered in the United States in 1999 were killed in Smithfield plants. In the year 2000, Smithfield will raise six of every 10 pigs killed in its slaughterhouses.

Smithfield's multi-billion-dollar takeover in America has been matched by aggressive expansion overseas. In 1998, it gained control of Schneider's, Canada's second largest packing company, bought two French meat processing firms, entered a joint venture with Mexican investors for a hog production complex in Hermosillo, Sonora and invested \$100 million in hog factories in the Brazilian state of Matto Grosso.

### **The Polish Connection**

Smithfield's most ambitious initiative fueled by a \$400 million line of credit with Chase Manhattan and a group of German, Dutch and Japanese banks, has been directed at Poland. In March 1999, Smithfield acquired 67 percent of the capitol stock in Animex S.A., Poland's largest meat and poultry processing company, for only \$43 million. Exulting over having acquired the company at "a fraction of the hundreds of millions that it would take to build that same infrastructure today," Smithfield CEO Joseph W. Luter made no secret of his intention to take over pork production in Poland. "The pork industry in Poland is, in many ways, similar to the US pork industry of 30 years ago," Luter concluded. "We believe the strategies and practices we have followed in the US will work equally well, perhaps even better in Poland and Europe." In July, it was learned that Smithfield was planning as many as four large hog factory complexes in western Poland including one near Poznan with a rumored capacity of 900,000 animals.

Luter's assessment of Poland as easy prey may, however, prove egregiously wrong. Poland's sturdy peasants staved off attempts at collectivization and emerged from communism with 80 percent of farmland still in private hands. Poland has two million farms with an average size of only 21 acres. A quarter of Poland's people still live on farms and an additional 15 percent live in rural villages and towns. Having survived communism, Polish peasants show no disposition to submit gently to the pressures of the global market. Last winter, in response to a flood of subsidized EU imports and the same ruinous crash in farm commodity prices that has driven tens of thousands more American farm families off the land, Polish farmers blockaded roads, high ways, railroad bridges and border crossings all over Poland. With public opinion, even in the cities, favoring the farmers, the Polish government was forced to relieve the situation by buying commodities and raising tariffs against imports.

When trade journals reported in February 1999 that the spear point of Smithfield's invasion of Europe was to be Poland, AWI worked to "get the word out" to Polish humane and environmental groups. In June, AWI President Christine Stevens gave the green light to my idea of bringing Polish

activists to the United States to see for themselves exactly what Joe Luter meant in promising to "replicate" Smithfield's American success in Poland. The project gained force when Agnes Van Volkenburgh, a brilliant third year veterinary student at the University of Illinois who had volunteered to translate, spoke directly on the phone with Andrzej Lepper, head of Poland's *Samoobrona* (self-defense) farmers' union. Lepper, catapulted into prominence by his leadership of the blockades and ranking high in the polls despite press efforts to demonize him, eventually accepted AWI's invitation.

On Sept. 7, Agnes, AWI Farm Animal Specialist Diane Halverson, and I went to Dulles Airport to greet a Polish delegation that included not only Lepper and his deputy Janusz Malewicz, but Roman Wierzbicki head of Rural Solidarity of Independent Farmers and co-leader of the blockades and Marek Kaczynski, chairman of Poland's Parliamentary Commission on Agriculture. Arriving with them were humane activists Ewa Gebert and Zbigniew Jaskolski, ecologists Dr. Kazimierz Raszyn and Malgorzata Jernak, *Samoobrona* deputy Janusz Malewicz, and two journalists Harald Kittel and Igor Parnas. At dinner hosted by AWI's senior diplomat, John Gleiber, I sat between the two farm leaders. Courteous, well informed, insightful, they bore absolutely no resemblance to the crude demagogues portrayed by the Warsaw press.

Sept. 8 began with breakfast for the Polish delegates at the Washington Headquarters of International Union for Food with officials from the Food Allied Service Trades (FAST) and Food and Commercial Workers Union at the table. The subject was Smithfield's "union busting" activities with myriad instances of intimidation, bullying, bribery and other thuggish acts designed to keep company workers free of union influence. The Poles, from a nation liberated from communism by grass roots unionism and where trade unions are at the core of both major political blocs, seemed genuinely shocked.

The next stop was a meeting hall near the little town of Tillery, North Carolina that serves as the headquarters of the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association (BFAA). Here we sat down for a lunch cooked by the black families who had come from miles around and waited patiently for our arrival. Then BFAA President Gary Grant and his associates, with Agnes translating, recounted the stark fate of black farmers in America. In 1920, there were 926,000 black farmers in America; in 1992 fewer than 19,000 remained. Almost half of black operated farms are smaller than 50 acres. The black land base is evaporating week by week. For example, in 1950 black farmers owned 1.2 million acres of land in North Carolina; today they own 200,000 acres.

Why had the disaster engulfing family farmers descended with such particular vengeance on those who are black? One obvious reason is that black farmers have been systematically denied credit. And nowhere, as Gary Grant showed, has the bias been more extreme than in the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). In 1984-5, for example, of 16,000 farmers who received USDA loans only 209 were black. In 1998, USDA agreed to settle a lawsuit filed against USDA by BFAA by dispensing \$1.2 billion to black farmers victimized

by discriminatory policies. Thus far, however, not a dime has been dispensed.

Floyd Hawkins, one of the only remaining family hog farmers in the region, described how Smithfield has destroyed traditional hog farmers in North Carolina by forcing small slaughterhouses out of business and then refusing to buy small lots of hogs on the grounds that they "lack uniformity."

The Poles, with a sense of injustice honed by decades of oppression and conflict, were clearly moved by what they heard. Driving southeast on secondary roads toward New Bern, on the central coast we passed hundreds of abandoned farmhouses and crumbling barns, depressing visual confirmation of Gary Grant's statistics.

Arriving in New Bern at dusk, the delegation was welcomed, in fluent Polish, by John Dove, the 93-year-old Polish-American father of the Neuse Riverkeeper, retired Marine Corps Colonel Rick Dove. On September 9, Col. Dove, who is hired by the Neuse River Foundation to try to protect the river, opened a half-day seminar on the Neuse ecosystem. He began with an extraordinary video, assembled from years of patiently acquired footage that chronicled the decline of the beautiful and productive Neuse River during a period coinciding with the explosion of hog factories in its watershed. Much of the footage dealt with the toxic dinoflagellate *Pfiesteriapiscicida*, the "cell from hell" which has killed billions of fish in North Carolina rivers and estuaries over the past decade. This appalling organism, with one of the most complex life cycles observed, can kill fish at a concentration of only 300 per milliliter. Dove filmed many thousands of dead, dying and suffering fish all displaying the ghastly, ulcerative lesions that are the mark of *Pfiesteria*.

The video then shifted to the sources of the nutrient overload that has stimulated blooms of algae and led to toxic concentrations of *Pfiesteria* in North Carolina's rivers and estuaries. Aerial footage showed sewage from open cesspools being sprayed on reclaimed marshland crossed with drainage ditches that lead directly to the Neuse and even sprayed on fields partially inundated from heavy rains. Close up shots showed the same effluent leaching—sometimes pouring—into the river. Viewers were then taken inside the hog factories where sows spend their entire lives, never smelling the earth or seeing the sky, in steel cages so small that they cannot even turn around. Many were chewing the bars in a repetitive motion called stereotypies typical of animals deprived of normal sensory stimulation. This was followed by utterly sickening scenes from an undercover video taken by a member of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) member working in a North Carolina hog factory which document a pattern of vicious, deliberate cruelty, especially against sows whose time has come to be "culled."

A battery of scientific experts then took the floor. Dr. Larry Cahoon from the University of North Carolina discussed the pollution of North Carolina's rivers and estuaries and explained what scientists do, and do not, know about *Pfiesteria* and other toxic algae and dinoflagellates. Dr. Lynn Grattan, Director of the Neuropsychology Program at the



*Feeding sows and boars on the Willis Free Range Pig Farm on a crisp winter morning.*

Paul Willis

University of Maryland, described the effects of *Pfiesteria* on humans, hundreds of whom—fishermen, tourists, commercial watermen, even children playing in the water—have become victims. The ugly lesions and ulcerations appearing on victims' bodies are by no means the only results of exposure. *Pfiesteria* emits a potent neurotoxin, which leaves persons subjected to repeated exposures mumbling like punch-drunk fighters, unable to concentrate or even to count or perform simple tasks. Fortunately, after a sufficiently long period of non-exposure, most victims appear to recover. Dr. Melva Okuni from the North Carolina School of Public Health then described her research on the long-term impact of hog factories on the health of those who live nearby and are unable to escape the stench and disruption. One common response, said Dr. Okuni, is severe depression.

The seminar ended with presentations by two veterans of North Carolina's hog wars, Tom Mattison and Don Webb. In 1996, Mattison, Riverkeeper of the smaller New River, faced what—to that time—had been the world's largest hog spill, an estimated 20 million gallons of raw hog waste flowing directly into the river. For days, Mattison told us, state officials, rather than take measures to protect public health, tried to cover up the spill and deny that it existed. Ex-hog farmer Don Webb, a big man with a voice to match, described how Smithfield and the hog barons had driven traditional hog farmers (whose numbers in North Carolina plummeted from 27,000 to fewer than 5,000 in barely over a decade) out of business and dwelled on the political corruption that facilitated the corporate takeover.

By this time, the Poles had heard enough to respond. Ewa Gebert reminded everyone that cruelty to animals and cruelty to children and other humans are part of the same syndrome. The leaders of the two powerful farm unions stated simply and bluntly that hog factories will not be permitted in Poland. Asked by reporter Penny Round if the unions would employ "aggressive means" to prevent Smithfield from building hog factories in their country, Rural Solidarity head Roman Wierzbicki replied "We will do whatever we have to do to stop them." "These are concentration camps for hogs," said Andrzej Lepper. "We had concentration camps in Poland before. We will not allow them again."



Lepper made a remark which was to prove prophetic: "Learning of this situation, I am reminded of a Polish proverb," he said, "God forgives always. Man forgives sometimes. Nature never forgives."

During the afternoon, Rick Dove mobilized his "air force," three light aircraft flown by ex-military pilots, and each of us had an opportunity to view the crop of hog factories, sown thickly across the Neuse floodplain, from the air. The installations look very much alike, a neat row of long metal sheds with one, and sometimes two open cesspools, bilious green in color, positioned nearby. Several units were often visible at the same time and even in a comparatively short flight we over flew dozens. A striking feature was the proximity of cesspools to watercourse, which could be easily identified by the lines of trees bordering them. It appeared that the designers had deliberately positioned cesspools on low ground.

### **The Heart of Darkness**

On Sept. 10, the delegation drove to Duplin County, the Pandora's box where the spreading plague of hog factories finds its origin. In John and Becky Lancaster's immaculate living room, the Poles listened to local residents explain how the hog industry had changed their lives. While the previous night's rain had cleared the air, said Mrs. Lancaster, many days the atmosphere around her house was quite literally nauseating. Visitors held their noses hurrying from their cars to the house; the children couldn't go outside to play. An emaciated woman stood up to say that her doctor had urged her to move out of the county because the ammonia from hog cesspools aggravated her asthma. "But how can I?" she asked. "Everything I own is here. Who would buy my house?" Others mentioned water pollution. "Blue baby syndrome" traced to nitrites in drinking water is common in the county. A man said his children had been chronically ill until he began buying bottled water. "The worst thing of all," said former county commissioner Darrel Walker, with others nodding, "is the complete takeover of this county by the hog industry. They bought everyone who can be bought, and bullied and intimidated most who can't be. At this point they simply own the county government."

We set off with our friends, for a tour of a county that has abandoned itself land and soul, to industrial agriculture. Ordinary agricultural pursuits seem to have been forgotten. Most farms are unoccupied; fields are often overgrown, farm



Paul Willis

*Expectant mothers in winter housing area on the Willis Free Range Pig Farm. Composting in the deep bedding keeps the pigs warm.*

equipment often left to rust. Fine two story farmhouses stand empty and weathering while imported laborers live in trailer houses propped on cinder blocks. One is rarely out of sight of the telltale glint of metal buildings housing hog factories. We stopped at a sign proclaiming "Hog Hell," and turned up a narrow dirt road to an open field. On every side were hog factories; in the center was a small house. The stench, although not overpowering, was pervasive. "This is a good day," said Mr. Johnson, who had stayed home from work and stood waiting, among a small multitude of dogs, to greet us. "You should be around when they spray or when it settles in. There are five cesspools—they call 'em lagoons—in half a mile." He explained that he owned only five acres and the right of way along the road. As for his 26 dogs: "They're about all strays" he said. "I don't know how they know to come here, but they do. They've got a right to live too. If they can stand the stink, and the others will let 'em eat, they're welcome. I feed a sack of dog food a day."

Several of us walked down the road to a hog factory, a row of metal sheds and an open cesspool, that we had passed on the way in. Soon, the party followed and the Poles began peering in the buildings. A feed truck approached and a young man got out, looking worried. "This ain't good," he said. "The Boss is comin' and he ain't gonna like this." He had no sooner spoken than a pickup truck appeared, jouncing at high speed up the uneven road. The driver leaped out. "This here's private property! Who the hell are them people?" he shouted. "You brought 'em, did ya? Who the hell are you? Show me some identification."

"Show me your badge and I'll be glad to" I said. "I ain't got a badge, he said, "but I damn sure know somebody who has." Then, apparently finding me menacing, he locked the doors of his pickup and began dialing a cell phone "He's callin' the Sheriff," the young man advised, "you better git them people out real quick."

"Welcome to Duplin County," said John Lancaster after the delegation was safely loaded. "We've got our own little police state right here." He had another reminder when we reached a cafeteria for a farewell meal. "Take off that anti-hog button before we go in. Remember where you are."

En route back to D.C., we reached the town of Smithfield, Va., and motored past the cavernous slaughterhouse from which Smithfield Foods earned a 12.6 million dollar fine, the largest ever imposed under the Clean Water Act, for over 6,900 illegal discharges into the Pagan River. Up river is Smithfield's new corporate headquarters, with Joe Luter's yacht anchored nearby.

### **Journey to Middle America**

September 13 began with an early morning flight from National Airport to Kansas City. There, we boarded vans and drove to Unionville, Mo. for a rendezvous with Terry Spence, a leader in the struggle against Premium Standard Farms (PSF, now owned by Continental Grain) which is the second largest hog factory operator in the United States. Northern Missouri is an area of rolling hills with numerous creeks and

live oak thickets. The only disquieting feature of this bucolic landscape is the extraordinary number of derelict farmhouses; a mute commentary on the tragedy that has overtaken Rural America.

After meeting Spence, we entered an area absolutely dominated by hog factories. There are 22 "units" in this cluster of hog factories Spence told us, totaling 198 sheds in which 218,000 feeder pigs are confined. We stopped at one unit, consisting of nine metal sheds, each containing 1,100 hogs. A pickup truck containing PSF security men, which had been tailing us, parked 100 yards away to keep the delegation under surveillance.

As we drove on (always with one or two "units" in sight) we noticed silo like structures built at the edge of low hills. These are repositories for dead pigs. The "dead truck", which visits each shed daily, backs up to the top of the silo and disgorges its cargo. When the silo is full, a larger truck backs under the bottom of it, a trap door is opened and the carcasses cascade down and are hauled to the PSF rendering plant. There they are processed and fed to the surviving pigs.

Once safely off PSF land we drove to the Spence farm. The yard was already full of pickup trucks; 30 or so local farmers had come in to meet the Poles. It was a clear, warm evening amid the rolling Missouri hills. Fortunately, the wind was in the right direction to clear away the scent of hog factories.

After supper, the farmers stood up, with painful earnestness to tell about their trouble with Premium Standard Farms. We tried to work within the system, they said. But the system betrayed us. Even now, after purported legal victories, we are nowhere. They are still here and they are slowly destroying us. What can we do?

The two Polish farm leaders responded. Even across the language barrier they were eloquent and forceful, and the farmers, listening intently, broke into clapping again and again. The Poles described the tactics they had been forced to use when the government ignored their problems, how they had occupied buildings, sometimes local offices, sometimes entire ministries in Warsaw. They told how they set up roadblocks, turning back trucks but allowing ordinary traffic to go around and how they had resisted the police when attacked. In these cases they had often set fire to rows of old tires to deter the police charges. They also equipped themselves with numerous buckets of liquefied hog manure, which they mixed and sealed in their barnyards before setting out. The police, said Lepper, were very sensitive to being doused with liquid hog manure because it is almost impossible to get the smell out of their woolen uniforms.

When Kaczynski, taking exception to his colleagues, urged the Americans to operate strictly within the rules, Scott Dye, the deep voiced Sierra Club staffer whose mother lives downwind of PSF hog factories, had an answer. "Been there! Done that!" he said. "We went to our legislators. The company bought them. We went to our state officials. The company bought them. We went to the courts. It goes from appeal to appeal. The Feds are supposed to be on our side. So far that has meant nothing." Terry Spence stood up to say that if he

had known what he now knows, he would have taken direct action at the beginning and either stopped PSF or "gone down fighting."

Wierzbicki had the last word. "My friends," he said, "Listen to me. If you take direct action, plan an action that you have a real chance of winning. If you undertake something you can't win, the farmers may become discouraged and give up. Conversely, a win - even if it is a small win - will encourage them and they will continue to fight."

On Sept. 15, we drove through the variegated southern Iowa landscape for a noon press conference in Des Moines, arranged by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. After lunch, we continued north to the town of Clear Lake. Northern Iowa is much flatter than the southern part of the state and has fewer streams and lakes. The farmland here is so valuable that instead of being left derelict, as in North Carolina and Missouri, abandoned farmsteads are bulldozed away. This has been the fate not only of countless farms in the region, but of churches, country schoolhouses and even villages. One sees fields of corn or soybeans stretching, almost without interruption, to the horizon.

That evening, the delegation attended another seminar, which included hog farmers down from Minnesota to tell how they had been victimized by the John Morrell Company owned by Smithfield. The following morning, clear, windless and warm, with the first scents of autumn in the air, we visited farms raising hogs for Niman Ranch according to the humane husbandry protocols developed by AWI's Diane Halverson.

Our first stops were at adjoining farms owned by the Menke brothers. We began at Paul Menke's farm, walking through a cornfield to a couple of small—perhaps one acre—enclosures bordered by elm trees. Each contained three or four sows with 30 or so piglets a few weeks old. The piglets would approach curiously, with big eyes, then suddenly take fright and run to the other end of the pen. In a moment they would return, the bold ones leading, the timid ones hanging back, to repeat the process until some of us captured their interest by tossing out ears of corn from the adjoining field.

Then we skirted the cornfield to a much larger compound, a miniature pig city full of farrowing huts of every type and state of repair, watering troughs, feeding troughs, "creep feeders" (designed so piglets can enter but sows cannot) even an old school bus body for shade. Each sow had her hut, big enough to accommodate her and her piglets and provide shelter for them during rainy spells. Paul told us that all of the corn he raised on his farm was ground up and fed to pigs and that once he had harvested a field he turned the pigs on it to graze. "They glean every kernel," he said.

Paul explained that the pigs have separate summering and wintering quarters. In late spring, summer and early fall, the pigs live in field compounds; in late fall and winter they live in "hoop houses" piled deeply with straw or cornstalks. After each summer season, the entire hog city, school bus and all, is moved to another tract. Paul waits five years before returning with his pigs to the same piece of ground. "Hopefully five years is enough time for the soil to rid itself of pathogens," he

said. "So far, I've had almost no disease."

Pat Menke's operation is similar to his brother's but with the refinement of a spray system rigged so pigs can stand under it in hot weather and get cooled down. Pat, who also follows a five-year cycle, stresses the soil building features of his system. "I had pigs on that piece of ground last year," he said, pointing to a cornfield next to his compound. "I expect to get 200 bushels without a pound of fertilizer."

Paul Willis' operation is similar in principle to the others, but on a grander scale with a full 20 acres for the pigs to roam in. On the Willis property we had a look at some hoop houses which were opened up and used by the pigs for shade. The frames were covered with heavy, plasticized canvas, which, absent a severe hailstorm, can be expected to last at least six years. I asked Willis about tail biting. "For the most part we are free of it," he said. "But from time to time a female—always a female—starts to bite tails. There is nothing to do, once you identify her, but to segregate her from the others."

We examined one more farm, where weaner pigs lived in barns on deep straw and exercised in adjacent lots. Then we said goodbye to our friends, including anti-corporate activists, Jim and Pamela Braun, and turned toward Chicago.

The last night, before a final press conference and reception in Polish Chicago, was spent at the Sinsinawa Visitor's Center, a Catholic retreat across the Mississippi from Dubuque, Iowa. There we awoke to an extraordinary view: to the east the red sun rising through a caul of mist over the hill country of northern Illinois, to the south and west the great river hidden by a slowly ascending blanket of fog. The scene from the dining hall, fully glassed for 120 degrees, was especially panoramic. We sat at our own table among a couple of hundred sweetly smiling nuns, eating breakfast and gazing at a sight most of us are unlikely to see again.

### **Nature Never Forgives**

Even as the tour came to an end, the truth of the Polish saying "Nature never forgives" was borne out as floodwaters from Hurricane Floyd poured across North Carolina's coastal plain. The flood waters inundated scores, probably hundreds, of hog factories in North Carolina and southeastern Virginia drowning—by USDA estimates—at least half a million pigs trapped in their stalls as well as millions of chickens and turkeys. Most of the installations the delegation viewed from the air were submerged.

Vast quantities perhaps, as much as a quarter billion gallons of liquefied hog waste, were released by the floods. Satellite images showed a brown plume of waste filling Albemarle and Pimlico Sounds and moving out to sea. Persons returning to flooded homes found their belongings coated with a fecal scum; tens of thousands of water wells were contaminated. Despite frantic efforts of North Carolina officials and the hog barons to cover up the magnitude of the disaster, its impact on fishing and tourism can be hardly short of calamitous. Beaches will eventually stop stinking, but no one knows how long it may take fragile coastal ecosystems to recover.

In the meantime, having been exposed to the realities of

American agribusiness, the heads of Poland's powerful farm unions have stated publicly and unequivocally in Polish media that they will not allow Smithfield to build hog factories in Poland. Andrzej Lepper has addressed an ultimatum to Smithfield CEO Joe Luter telling him that *Samoobrona* cannot be bought and that "if Smithfield does not heed *Samoobrona's* warning it will feel *Samoobrona's* fists."

Lepper has invited AWI to assemble a delegation of US activists for a tour of Poland at *Samoobrona's* expense. Two other farm unions, Rural Solidarity and Farmer's Circle have asked to co-host.

The unions and public interest groups are anxious to enter cooperative projects, such as setting up a model farm to demonstrate the humane husbandry techniques observed in Iowa. Lepper has asked for American help in applying the river keeper's concept as a means of protecting Polish rivers.

One of the most gratifying effects of the Polish tour was seen in the United States. During the tour, as though a fairy godmother had waved her wand, the words "cruelty" and "animal welfare" ceased to be taboo. Rick Dove set the tone by showing excerpts from the PETA video. The Poles, one and all, attacked hog factories for their cruelty. American speakers, as though it was no longer "sissy" to speak what had been in their minds all the time, picked up the theme.

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## **The Thoughts of Andrzej Lepper: President of *Samoobrona* (Self-Defense), A Major Polish Farmers' Union**

These provocative ideas came to Mr. Lepper during the course of the AWI-sponsored invitational tour for Polish leaders designed to show them the enormous contrast between humane family farms and the appalling hog factories in the



*Photo above, from left to right: Gary Grant, President, Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association, Andrzej Lepper, President of *Samoobrona* and L. C. Cooper, Chapter President, Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association.*

United States.

### **Ecological Farming and How to Interpret It**

Ecology is an area of interest and activism in modern society that calls for preserving the natural environment: building new relations between humankind and nature and determining a new role for mankind as "guardians" of the world.

In other words, it is a philosophy of creating a new order, a new way of life in harmony with the laws of nature and socioeconomic progress, in which humankind and respect for all forms of life are the greatest values.

Ecology means order (logos) in our homes, in accord with the laws of nature, and by home I mean the family home, the country, the world and the cosmos.

A new style of life in harmony with nature, a new style of progress of civilization and respect for all life, not only human, wise and conscientious use of natural resources introducing harmony of life between humankind and nature—all of this constitutes ecological development.

We define humankind as the greatest player in this development and respecting laws of nature as its greatest value. In reaffirming and broadening the concept of "humaneness" we create a new philosophy for humankind as co-creators of evolution, as thoughtful caretakers who shape the environment, without abusing it, without devastating nature and inflicting suffering in the world on non-human animals.

No one is as entrenched in the issues of the environment as farmers. The country is their natural environment, a sanctuary from the pollution produced by large cities and industry. The majority of the public is not aware of these facts. The public does not acknowledge the arguments for maintaining a natural balance in the environment, nor the need to clean up the environment at the cost of all of society, for all of society's health.

Farmers and the rural community are not only the "guardians" of natural resources, they also must produce adequate amounts of healthy food. Ecologically appropriate technological methods need to be employed in raising crops as well as livestock.

Healthy food is most readily produced in conditions afforded by family farms.

The well being of all humankind is at stake. Healthy food consists in many kinds of products of plant and animal origin. The concept of healthy food does not include chemically contaminated products of animal factories, rather it necessitates natural farming and Polish farming is natural farming.

Along with the majority of Polish farmers, I am a Catholic, so here are my moral and religious impressions on this issue. I think humankind, the highest form of life, received (as the Bible tells us) a concession from God, to use nature and living beings for our benefit. But we have violated the planet; we have violated the biological balance; we have polluted the air and waters: not to keep alive, but for material gain, to amass riches, to live in luxury and beyond our needs. We have misunderstood the Bible's directions. We have enslaved the earth and all its

life; we have disturbed the natural order instead of accepting it. We have failed to be good stewards of the earth that God has given us. We should love the earth that sustains our life, and thoughtfully use her goods and resources. Today, as intelligent beings, we must be fully aware of our responsibility to use that intelligence. The fact that nature has allowed us to expand and harness its power doesn't mean we should fulfill our unnatural whims at the price of the environment and the fundamental natural order. We should not create situations which may prove to be globally disastrous.

Farming must take on a new obligation: keeping the country ecologically safe. Accepting this obligation requires proper knowledge and training from the scientific community—we do not have that. This lack of training is not viewed as important by some politicians and economists who focus on financial gain.

Ecological humaneness requires the rural economy to adopt humane attitudes towards farm animals. These are living beings who have emotions, who feel and experience suffering and have natural instincts which need to be expressed.

It is essential, therefore, to do everything to allow the animals on farms an opportunity to live happy lives, to treat them with respect and empathy. A broadened concept of humaneness and regard for all forms of life should motivate us to respect the natural laws of the animal world, in the same way we respect the human right to dignity. The right to live with dignity in the case of animals is a life without suffering and without taking away their natural environment. The life of any being is a great mystery and a natural phenomenon deserving of the greatest reverence and care.

Problems of ecologically preserving the environment and humaneness toward life of all species is becoming a global concern. Europeans still care what happens to the rain forests of the Amazon, the waters of the oceans, the ice of Antarctica. The inhabitants of the Americas care about the rivers and mountains of Eastern Europe. As well as international coordination of environmental activism even international jurisdiction over violations of nature and its devastation.

Society, just like the environment, is subject to damage by pathological factors, economical and political. This pollution is evident in Poland.

There is a need to introduce a new order and harmony into our lives and our society. It is a problem in human ecology, as mentioned by Pope John Paul II, the moral postulate of "love thy neighbor," the practice of which is often so difficult. Let's remember this when we take a stance on international issues, like the current topic of ecology.

### **Is Poland's Private Farming in Danger?**

During my visit to the United States, sponsored by AWI, I saw industrial "hog factory" farms and poultry farms, much the same as the ones that existed in Poland during the communist times. Many of those are still in existence today.

Smithfield Foods Inc., with the permission from the



US government, with no regard for animal welfare or the environment, built hundreds of farms that produce millions of hogs. Smithfield led to the destruction of countless private farms. If we idly stand by and watch the expansion of this company in our country, the same fate awaits our farmers. That is why we appeal to everyone, farmers and local governments—Do not allow the construction of factory farms for hogs, poultry or cattle, not only by Smithfield, but by any other companies as well! By blocking the construction of factory farms we are saving our beautiful environment, we are protecting animals from being raised in inhumane conditions but most of all we are saving our family farms.

American farmers were tricked, they woke up too late. Let us not make the same mistake! Let's act before it is too late, not after!

The president of Smithfield Foods, Inc., Joe Luter, has announced that he will conquer Poland, and has received permission to do so from anti-Polish, anti-farmer successive governments of Poland.

The construction of factory farms must be stopped! Let us not allow Poland to be invaded by this cancer, which we already experienced during the communist times! It is our duty! Future generations of Poles will not forgive us the sin of idly standing by.

### North Carolina Flooding

Sept. 28, 1999

Since the factory farms were destroyed by the flood and given the amount of destruction they have brought to the environment and to private farmers, it is clear that they should not be rebuilt. There is a saying in Poland: "God forgives always, man sometimes, nature never." Sooner or later, Nature avenges human interference with its laws. The North Carolina disaster is just one example of Nature's "ecological payback bomb," many of which have been exploding in different parts of the globe.

If the US government is considering giving money for the rebuilding of destroyed farms, that money should go to the thousands of private farmers whose farms were destroyed by the corporate factory farming system. Private family farms are the ones we need to rebuild!



Hogs desperately trying to save themselves from the cruel flood waters.

## Farming Humanely

BY DWIGHT AULT

To introduce myself, I am a 69-year-old sustainable and organic farmer from southern Minnesota. I have farmed nearly 40 years and am more excited about the art of farming than ever. Wendell Berry says that good farming is an art. He is right.

My strong suit, labor and income-wise, is raising pigs from birth to market. I, along with a dozen or so hog raisers, mostly from Iowa, came into the Washington D.C. area in early September as guests of Niman Ranch Pork. It is through Niman Ranch that we market our top-notch pork. Our first responsibility was to be farmer ambassadors in the Fresh Fields/Whole Food stores in the Washington area. All in all, it was a wonderful experience as we met many interested and supportive customers most who had never met a guaranteed, honest to goodness, hog farmer from the Midwest. When they viewed our many pictures of our farm, they were quite impressed with the care of the animals.

For you readers who are not "up to speed" with the Animal Welfare Institute's efforts concerning what has gone on with our domestic critter friends, the pigs, let me tell you. In order to be eligible to sell to Niman Ranch Pork, one must not give any form of antibiotics to the pigs from birth to market, must not cut off tails, must always give the pigs deep straw in which to bed or have them on green pasture, must not use animal byproducts in feed. Niman Ranch further requests its pork to be tested for tenderness, taste and color.

The reaction from customers was fun for us to hear. Two couples said, after hearing our explanation, that they were going to buy pork right then and there. They had not purchased pork for several years because of the reputation of the present factory-produced pork formerly sold in Whole Food stores. The meat counter employees were continually saying that they were pleased with the number of customers which we were sending to their counter. Many asked, "Can we find this meat brand in other stores also?" and we would, of course, tell them that no other stores



Dwight Ault at AWI's reception at the Capitol for the Polish delegation. Agnes Van Volkenburgh translated his remarks into Polish.

presently carry it other than Whole Foods. In short, they were very pleased to have access to this quality meat. I soon realized that I did not expect this reaction as we had been led to believe that, in general, the urban consumer did not much care where and in what conditions the pigs were raised. Not true at all! They very much cared regardless of whether or not they were consumers.

I think that they were impressed that we producers cared that much and that we could produce pork under the protocol set up by AWI. It was simply a wonderful experience for the consumer and producer. I, for one, must ever be thankful to AWI for its tireless efforts in establishing and promoting this decent movement. If I were to have to produce pork as I did a few years back, I would get out of the business. My son, Grant, who will carry on the farm and who now farms with me, agrees. I look back and realize that without the gentle persuasions of the Halverson sisters (Diane and Marlene), I no doubt would never have made the switch to a system based on caring and ethics. Well-cared for pigs, in short, bring joy to their owners, and to my way of thinking allow pigs to know joy in return. Technical progress has brought terrible consequences to the main part of livestock production as far as animal care is concerned. There is a statement which says that "out of agony comes true beauty." I hope this will be so in pork production.

I think AWI's concern for the Polish farmer is terribly important. My wife and I had the opportunity to meet these people while in Washington and understand their dilemma. If they are not successful in protecting their farmers and pork production system, then we all end up being victims of large factory systems based on the "ethics of the dollar." May our Creator give the strength necessary to the Polish farmers to do what they must do in order to protect decency and their way of life. This is the obligation of us all.

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## Death and Disintegration of Truck Driver in Murphy Farms: Hog Factory Cesspool

Excerpts from The Daily & Sunday Oklahoman, Copyright, 1999 Oklahoma Publishing Company.

The body of the man still missing in a 25-foot-deep hog lagoon after two weeks is "extremely, badly decomposed by this time," said Ray Blakeney, director of the state medical examiner's office, on Tuesday.

Blakeney said if Murphy Farms, owner of the lagoon, is using a bacterial process to break down the hog manure, it would contribute even more to the decomposition of the body of Jack Plain, 58.

On the night of Dec. 1, Plain was driving the bobtail truck that was backed into the lagoon when it missed wheel blocks, submerging the truck in the lagoon...

Calls to Murphy Farms spokeswoman Darra Johnson

were not returned Tuesday.

Ellis County Sheriff Dewayne Miller returned a call to The Oklahoman. Miller did not want to talk about the incident over a cellular phone.

Members of the Plain's family have continually questioned why the hog company doesn't drain the lagoon, but Darra Johnson said Monday that there's too much effluent to spread it anywhere...

Miller said if these recovery efforts don't work, a next step would be to drain the lagoon.

- Mick Hinton, dated December 15, 1999

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## The Day I Saw a Full-Grown Pig Gambol in Frenzied Delight

This event was witnessed by Louise van der Merwe (founder of Animal Voice) when a South African hog factory boar was allowed a brief interval of freedom.

"We let these boars out for 10 minutes every day to keep them healthy," the farmer told me.

"Really?" My face lightened. "Do they enjoy it?"

The farmer asked a nearby laborer to let one of the boars out while we went to wait outside. The boar's big body emerged from the shed door and he trotted heavily on his short legs along a narrow cement passageway leading to an enclosed strip of sand that ran along the back of the shed.

As his front trotters reached the sand, he suddenly broke into a frenzy of excitement, maneuvering his big, bulky body back and forth and up and down like a bucking bronco. He stopped momentarily to dig his snout as deep as possible into the sand, and then began to frolic and gambol once more.

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## In Monstrous 20,000 Cow-Factory Farms, Hormone Injections Are Given Regularly: Abnormal Amounts of Milk are the Goal

BY CHRIS BEDFORD

American's small family dairy farms face extinction. The farm gate price of milk has dropped to below 1978 levels, as a result of market manipulation by large dairy cooperatives which function like giant agribusiness corporations.

As a consequence, many family dairy farmers may be forced into bankruptcy this year. The US Department of Labor predicts farm employment losses will exceed 175,000 in the next five years. And this estimate was released before the current crisis. The impacts from this potential loss for rural communities, the environment and animal welfare





Four year old April Donnon milking April, a cow named after her, on her father's farm in *Rising Sun*, Maryland. Mr. Donnon owns 75 cows.

are devastating.

The same industrialization of food production that has transformed poultry and hog raising is rapidly transforming dairy production. In dairy factory operations, farmers become factory workers, environmentally destructive amounts of manure are produced, animals are confined for most of their lives and output is pushed through processes that can damage human and animal health. Milk production is artificially stimulated through injections of a recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) also known as Bovine Somatotropin (BST). BST use can painfully injure lactating cows by draining calcium from bones and tissues, causing ulcers along their backbone and disfiguring swelling of leg joints (see page 6 of *AWI Quarterly*, Vol 48 No 2). BST has also been implicated in human health problems by causing increased production of another bovine hormone called IGF-1 (Insulin Growth Factor 1). IGF-1 has been proven to increase risk for uterine and breast cancer and heart disease in women. Both BST and IGF-1 are not destroyed by the 15-second pasteurization process used on most commercial milk. FDA approval of Monsanto's version of BST, known by the trade name of Posilac, was based on pasteurization tests of 30 minutes or more, not 15 seconds.

Traditionally, milk has been produced by small, family dairy farms milking 30 to 100 cows at any one time. Although many of these small farmers experimented in the mid-1990s with (BST) they abandoned the product after seeing what it did to their cows.

"It just wore my neighbors' cows out," said dairy farmer George Donnon of *Rising Sun*, Md., who never used Posilac. "It increased production some during the first lactation. But it didn't work after that. And it caused some serious physical problems for the animals." The dairy factory operations are the principal consumers of Posilac/BST. Heifers are given the drug during their first lactation—forcing them to produce milk for two years or more—increasing per cow output by

approximately 15 percent. After this first artificially extended lactation, the cows are so worn out that they have to be sold for meat. Small family dairy farmers typically keep their cows for five or six lactations.

"Use of BST divides the large operations from the small family farmer," said Eddie Boyer, a dairy farmer from New Oxford, Penn. "A family farmer cares about his cows. He calls them to the milking parlor by name. He wants to extend their productive lives as long as he can." Ironically, BST use and the expansion of dairy factory operations is behind much of the current crisis facing small family dairy farms. The construction of giant BST-dependent dairy factories, milking 20,000 cows or more, in the desert areas of California, Arizona and Idaho has produced large amounts of cheese at artificially low prices. These new dairy factories create environmental problems/disasters wherever they operate—often spilling millions of gallons of manure into scarce and vulnerable arid land water supplies. Since dairy factories externalize so much of the real environmental impacts, production costs are lower than on family farms. Cheese produced by these dairy factory operations is unloading large dairy cooperatives like Dairy Farmers of America and Land O'Lakes on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Cheese traded on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange sets the price of all milk sold in the United States through a series of Milk Marketing Orders issued by the federal government. By dumping subsidized, dairy factory produced cheese in Chicago, large dairy cooperatives can drive down the farm gate price of milk — reaping huge windfall profits while impoverishing the small farmers who are members of the coops. In 1978, when farm gate milk prices were higher than they are now, consumers paid a \$1.20 for a gallon of fresh milk. Today that same gallon of milk costs almost \$3.

"Someone is making money producing milk," said Fred LeClair, a dairy farmer from Watertown, N.Y. "It's just not us. Right now, I lose about \$6 for every hundred pounds of milk I produce (11.6 gallons = 100 lbs.). I don't know any business that can operate long at these kinds of prices."

Some believe the current low prices are an effort by large cooperatives to "rationalize" milk production, make it more "efficient," by driving small producers out-of-business. Large dairy factory operations are protected through special premiums paid by processors and by low-interest loans unavailable to small dairy farmers. "It is time to draw a line between small farmers like myself and large corporate operations," said George Donnon. "Our interests are different. I want to maintain our way of life without having to get bigger. If I get a higher price for my milk, I will milk fewer cows, not more. And that's good for me and the environment, and the cows."

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## The Polish Resistance

BY TOM GARRETT

John Steinbeck once wrote that family farmers are the "soul and the guts of this nation or of any other nation." This can



Above and below: Palace of Culture and Science where Tom Garrett, Agnes Van Volkenburgh and Gail Eisnitz spoke to 3,000 attendees of the *Samoobrona* Congress.



Photos: Gail Eisnitz/HFA

be nowhere truer than in Poland. Since Polish peasants armed with scythes overran Russian artillery at Raclawice during the Kosciuszko uprising of 1793, Poland's most stubborn defenders have been found in the countryside. In the 19th century, under leaders such as Jacob Szulic, the Polish peasantry threw off serfdom. Their obdurate resistance halted Stalinist attempts, between 1949-54, to consolidate Polish agriculture into state farms. Poland emerged from Communism in 1990, with 80 percent of its farmland still in private hands and well over a quarter of the population engaged in farming.

Today, having survived Communism, Poland's peasants, standing athwart the juggernaut of corporate globalization, face a far more implacable enemy. The worldwide crash in grain and hog prices, compounded by a flood of cheap imports from the European Union's highly subsidized agriculture, has left Poland's farmers in a desperate plight, creating what Andrew Nagorski, writing in *Newsweek*, calls "a bumper crop of despair." Far from coming to Polish farmers' defense, the country's deeply unpopular coalition government has capitulated to EU demands to "modernize" Polish agriculture as a price for admission. Agricultural Minister Artur Balasz has announced that the number of Polish farms, in accordance with EU requirements, must be reduced from two million to 800,000 by 2003. How will 1.2 million farm families be removed from the land in three years? The answer, beyond

the screen of persiflage, seems brutally simple: To maintain an economic climate in which "weaker" farmers cannot survive economically.

As Polish farms suffer what farm wife Ewa Blieska, quoted in *Newsweek*, calls a "slow death," the great transnational agribusiness corporations, like vultures settling beside a wounded animal, are entering the country. Chicken factories similar to those that swept the United States in the 1960s are taking root in western Poland, pushing out peasant producers. Early last year (see *AWI Quarterly*, Vol 48/49 No 4/1) the world's largest "pork production" company began a drive to take over pork production in Poland. Ignoring warnings by the farm unions, Smithfield is moving aggressively to bring the vertically integrated system that has destroyed family agriculture in states such as Virginia (where Smithfield now owns 95 percent of all hogs raised) and North Carolina, to Poland. Smithfield Chief counsel Richard Poulson, predicts that Animex, Smithfield's Polish subsidiary, will become Europe's largest pork production company with sales in excess of \$1 billion annually.

In Poland, where virtually every farm—no matter how small—raises a few pigs, the corporate drive poises a dagger at the heart of private farming. For pigs, and for the cause of animal welfare, the implications are horrifying. Today, most of Poland's 18 million pigs are raised in the traditional, relatively humane way, in pastures or on straw, able to interact socially and carry out normal motor patterns. If corporate hog factories supplant family farms, the lives of sows, imprisoned wretchedly in steel crates, will become a parabola of misery and the ghastly American syndrome—miasmatic "lagoons," dumpsters overflowing with bloated carcasses will spread across eastern and central Europe. If it cannot be stopped in Poland, there is no chance of stopping it in countries like Belarus (where Smithfield is rumored to be negotiating) and the Ukraine.

On Jan. 17, Agnes Van Volkenburgh, *Slaughterhouse* author Gail Eisnitz and I arrived in Warsaw for the Congress of Peasant-National Bloc, an alliance of *Samoobrona* with independent trade unions and small political parties, and for the opening of Andrzej Lepper's counterattack against Smithfield. The following morning, we walked through a gathering crowd into the monumental Kongressa Hall of Warsaw's huge, Stalinist-era Palace of Culture and Science



Protestors at the Animex Press Conference.



and were seated in the front row. While folk troupes from the Carpathian and Bieszczady Mountains performed on the stage, thousands of delegates to the Congress—peasants from across Poland, coal miners in black uniforms, pensioners, military veterans aligned with General Tadeuzs Wilicki's National Front—took their seats. We stood for the Polish National Anthem, which begins "While we live Poland shall not die." Then Lepper rose to speak. After a blistering attack on economic policies that have led to 14 percent unemployment and a fire sale of state owned assets to foreigners, he turned to the plight of Poland's peasants. He dwelled movingly on animal welfare, contrasting peasant farming where each farm animal is named and newborn young are brought into family homes in cold weather, with the mass, mindless cruelty of industrial agriculture. Our turn came after a recess. Agnes spoke briefly and eloquently, gaining thunderous applause. With Agnes translating, I explained what has happened to family farming in America and what lies in store for Poland if Smithfield is allowed to take over. Gail then recounted the appalling situation in American slaughterhouses.

We spent Jan. 19 in Warsaw, meeting government officials and environmentalists. Before dawn on the 20th, we joined Andrzej Lepper for a trip to northwestern Poland, lunching with agricultural bankers and touring a small slaughterhouse en route. In Czuchow, the town's meeting hall was packed with hundreds of farmers waiting for Lepper. The farmers heard Lepper out. Then, for two hours, angry, desperate, sometimes despairing, they poured forth their troubles. There was much talk about hog factories since a Danish firm, Poldanor, has a permit to build a 300,000 feeder pig complex not far away.

Jan. 21 dawned with snow and sleet. We drove westward on roads lined with Lombardy poplar through a part of Poland that was once German territory and had witnessed still another trail of tears when the German population was driven out in 1945. In late morning, we reached the ancient city of Szczecin on the Odra River, which forms today's German border and pulled up in front of the Smithfield owned AGRYF slaughterhouse. Farmers carrying *Samoobrona* signs were waiting, the press had arrived. Lepper led us to the entrance where a row of faces peered through the glass. At this point, the manager, acting out his own version of Polish bravado, came outside without a coat and stood for an hour in the bitter wind, shivering violently and arguing, before the press, with the infuriated farmers. The problem, it seemed, was that AGRYF, true to the attitude of its corporate masters, was refusing to buy small lots of hogs because they "lacked uniformity". Lepper finally heard enough. "Listen well" he said. "If there is any more of this I am coming back to shut you down."

The next stop was in downtown Szczecin where we met with the local farmers cooperative (which has a minority interest in the Agury plant) to discuss the Smithfield takeover. Then, in a cold, sleeting rain, we went to see a hog factory left over from Communist times at a state farm 20 miles or so outside the city. We passed the workers' quarters, a five story apartment building positioned, incongruously, in a muddy

field. But when we reached the hog factory the gates were padlocked and the sole person in attendance was the office manager. Word had come earlier in the day, she said, for the crew to lock everything and leave. The basic operational features, open cesspools and spray fields, seemed similar to US hog factories. "In the summertime the smell hereabout is almost unendurable" one of the farmers said. "As for dead hogs, they dump them in a sump in the woods. The flies practically darken the sun." The last stop in Szczecin was to call on Marian Jurczyk, a towering figure of the anti-communist resistance and bitter rival of Lech Walesa, at the twilight of his political career. Jurczyk, receiving us in his imposing office, announced that he would resign as Mayor of Szczecin the following week.

Six inches of snow fell in the night. We left before dawn, driving south through a hushed and peaceful countryside. Morning revealed the Odra valley and a sweep of marshlands and floodplain forests. The tracts of forest and open space in northwestern Poland, contrasting with the patchwork of small farms often found elsewhere, are a legacy of numerous landed estates which, with the expulsion of their German owners, remained intact as state farms. We stopped for lunch at an ecotourism resort maintained by one of Lepper's supporters. Hours of tortuous night driving on snow-packed roads brought us to Warsaw, and at noon of the 22nd, after a harried morning of press interviews and meetings with environmentalists, we said goodbye to our friends and returned to the United States.

What has AWI accomplished thus far? Three thousand copies of a 40-minute video developed by Diane Halverson and narrated in Polish by Agnes Van Volkenburgh were delivered to *Samoobrona* and other Polish NGOs. The tapes are based around the Polish September tour, but they contain additional footage from hog factories and aerial coverage of the North Carolina floods. Along with written material, translated by Agnes, they have been distributed across Poland providing the sinew for a press and media campaign. Excerpts from the tapes have appeared on two Polish cable channels and numerous television stations. The March 10 issue of *Nie* (circulation 800,000) contains a scathing attack on Smithfield quoting AWI extensively. A similar article appeared in the daily paper *Nasz Dziennik*. The breakthroughs on radio, which is more important in Poland than in the U.S., have been dramatic. Agnes and Lepper were featured on TOK FM, Poland's main talk radio station. Appearing on Radio Zet, which is the most listened to station in the country, Agriculture Minister Artur Balasz was asked whether he supported Lepper or Smithfield in the battle over pig factories. In a startling turnaround, Balasz announced that he supported Lepper and that pig factories cannot be tolerated in Poland.

In the Polish countryside, *Samoobrona's* campaign against Smithfield and other multinationals is gaining force. On Feb. 8, for example, 2,000 farmers gathered to protest Cargill's failure to pay farmers on time for deliveries of grain. Concurrently, a campaign led by Rural Solidarity head, Roman Wierbicki, has succeeded in blocking a giveaway of Poland's sugar processing capacity to foreign companies. On

March 6, farmers will "send a message" by blockading roads and highways for three hours all across Poland. Meantime, an alliance is coalescing between the peasants and the Polish environmentalists. It will have its first test when humane and environmental groups from throughout Poland send cadres to Warsaw to participate in *Samoobrona*-led protests at German, Danish and US embassies on March 14.

The Polish campaign has opened the door for AWI to carry its message, that mass abuse of animals is the core evil of industrial agriculture, to an ever wider audience. Agnes and I were invited to address a Congress of Peasant Parties from 10 eastern and central European nations in Prague on March 11. On March 26, we will address the World Congress of Trade Unions in New Delhi, India. In attendance will be the leaders of India's 30 million member peasant unions who have given the agribusiness giant, Monsanto, vector of "genetically modified" seeds, an ultimatum to leave India.

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## rBGH Reconsidered

BY CHRIS BEDFORD

Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) was the first genetically engineered food product to be sold in the United States. Approved for use by the Food and Drug Administration on Nov. 5, 1994, rBGH has played a significant role in the industrialization of dairy production that has serious implications for animal welfare and poses a serious health threat to consumers. In the last year, new information has come to light on rBGH which raises important questions about the efficacy and the ethics of the FDA approval process itself.

### What it does

rBGH, also known as BST (for Bovine Somatotropin) and Posilac (Monsanto's product name), is injected by needle into cows every two weeks to increase individual animal milk production (by weight) from 10 to 15 percent. rBGH can extend lactation periods for up to three times their normal length. The current rBGH record is 1,374 days of milk production during a single lactation.

Bovine growth hormone (BGH) is a normal product of the pituitary gland of cows. rBGH, a synthetic version of BGH, is produced by snipping a piece of cow DNA that carries the code for (r)BGH and inserting it into the DNA of *e-coli* bacteria.

The unnatural extension of lactation produced by rBGH severely affects the cow by doubling the metabolic stress from the onset of lactation and draining her of needed nutrients, particularly calcium. Use of rBGH also stimulates production of another bovine hormone, Insulin Growth Factor-1 (IGF-1) by up to 80 percent. In turn, IGF-1 is secreted into the milk in increased levels.

The increased stress combined with the presence of IGF-1 increases the frequency of clinical mastitis, a very painful condition of the cow's udder. The warning label on Monsanto's



Linda Knutson

*rBGH makes cows extremely susceptible to mastitis infections. Note the enormously enlarged udder and the cow's depressed demeanor.*

Posilac explicitly states, "Cows injected with Posilac are at increased risk for clinical mastitis." Increased incidence of mastitis, in turn, necessitates increased use of antibiotics which can pass through to the milk. Currently, only four out of 82 commercially used antibiotics are tested for on a regular basis. A *Wall Street Journal* investigation found 20 percent of milk tested had illegal antibiotics present. Other studies have found 38 percent higher levels. These antibiotics can contribute to antibiotic resistance in human consumers.

The increased stress combined with IGF-1, a known human health hazard, is at the center of the new information. The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) approval is based on an assertion that BST and IGF-1 is destroyed by the pasteurization process.

But normal pasteurization heats milk to 168 degrees for 15 seconds to destroy bacteria and other contaminants. The FDA approval study, conducted by a Canadian undergraduate named Paul Groenewegen from Guelph, Canada, cooked the milk for 30 minutes, one hundred and twenty times longer than commercial production practice. According to Groenewegen, only 19 percent of the rBGH and IGF-1 were destroyed in the FDA study's extended pasteurization process, not the 90 percent claimed by the agency.

In addition, activist Robert Cohen has uncovered information that suggests that Monsanto's rBGH formula approved and tested by the FDA was different from the one now on the market. If this is true, it makes the entire FDA approval process invalid. Small family dairy farmers, animal welfare activists, environmentalists, consumers and others have focused on this improper approval process in an effort to have Posilac withdrawn from the market.

### rBGH in the European Union

In November 1999, the European Commission (EC) adopted a measure that would permanently ban the use of rBGH in Europe. This action, announced by Commissioner David Byrne before a European Parliament hearing on Nov. 24, 1999, represents the final act of a six-year struggle over rBGH use.

On Dec. 20, 1994, the European Commission prohibited the marketing and use of rBGH, also in the European Union until Dec. 31, 1999. The prohibition was enacted to give two



EC scientific advisory bodies time to study the impact of rBGH use on animal welfare and public health. One of those committees, the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare, examined the effects of rBGH use on (1) the incidence of mastitis and other disorders in dairy cows and (2) the overall effect of rBGH use on dairy production.

On March 10, 1999, the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare issued a 90-page report that concluded, "BST (rBGH) use causes a substantial increase in levels of foot problems and mastitis and leads to injection site reactions in dairy cows. These conditions, especially the first two, are painful and debilitating, leading to significantly poorer welfare in the treated animals. Therefore from the point of view of animal welfare, including health, the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare is of the opinion that BST should not be used in dairy cows."

Monsanto, with support from the US government, sought to counter these European actions by having the rBGH ban declared an illegal restraint of trade under GATT. But before such a charge could be brought under the treaty, international standards for rBGH use had to be established. On June 30, 1999, the Codex Alimentarius Commission, meeting in Rome, Italy failed to agree on an international standard for the Maximum Residue Level (MRL) for rBGH in milk. This ruling effectively stopped the GATT complaint by the United States and gave a green light to bans on rBGH by individual countries and the European Union.

Right now, rBGH is licensed for use only in Mexico, the United States and South Africa.

*AWI Quarterly Summer 00 Vol 49 No 3*

## Two AWI Missions to Central Europe

BY TOM GARRETT

On March 10, Agnes Van Volkenburgh and I traveled to the ancient Czech city of Prague with *Samoobrona* Chairman Andrzej Lepper for a meeting of farm unions and agrarian parties from the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Cyprus and Estonia. The meeting, catalyzed by a European Union ultimatum that countries seeking EU membership "modernize" their "agriculture sectors" by eliminating peasant farmers, began at Prague University on the 11th. By the end of the day the participants had agreed to strengthen farmers' defenses by forming a European Democratic Rural Union (EDRU) of agrarian parties.

On the following morning, a committee convened to draft the guiding principles of the proposed alliance. Lepper, preoccupied with events in Poland, assigned Agnes (who is his animal welfare consultant) to negotiate for *Samoobrona*. I was seated as her "adviser" and we brought the session to an impasse by proposing language on environmental protection, animal welfare and clean food. The Czechs objected with particular vehemence. But when Lepper, with his indefinable

sense of force, came to the table to ask what the problem was, opposition disintegrated. The final language of the memorandum has the EDRU striving for "preservation of natural environment in the broadest possible sense, increasing production of natural food supply and promoting humane farming methods."

Whether this rather startling victory will survive the formal inauguration of the new union (probably in October) remains to be seen. Farm animal welfare has never before appeared in a central European political platform.

On March 15, Agnes and I joined Lepper in Warsaw for two more defining events. One, which put to the test our effort to form a peasant-ecologist alliance, was a *Samoobrona*-led demonstration at the US and German embassies protesting foreign takeover of Polish assets. Fortunately, by the time we reached the main gate of the US Embassy, "locked down" and guarded by scores of Interior Ministry troops wearing black ski masks and carrying sub-machineguns, parties of ecologists had arrived and hoisted their banners. Later, at a boisterous AWI sponsored luncheon of farmers and ecologists, Lepper sat with Green Federation head Olaf Swolkien and other ecologists to hammer out a working alliance. The cover of the latest *Green Brigades* journal pictures Swolkien and Lepper standing beneath a Green Federation banner.

We also met with Adam Tanski, head of the State Farm Property Agency (AWRS), the agency established to privatize the 20 percent of Polish farmland that was incorporated into state farms. Tanski came quickly to the point. "I have seen in your video how you raise hogs in Iowa," Tanski said. "I would like to begin this kind of husbandry on state farms. If you can provide the technical expertise we need to convert to your system, and help us to establish markets, I can supply the land, the buildings and the people. We have 40,000 unemployed former state farm workers who need something to do." We assured Tanski that we would bring a team of experts to Poland as soon as possible.

On May 15, Agnes flew to Warsaw to complete arrangements for a small AWI sponsored peasant-ecologist conference. She was joined on the 18th by AWI Farm Animal Advisor Diane Halverson, Iowa farmer and Niman Ranch coordinator Paul Willis, Minnesota farmer Dwight Ault, AWI Greek International committee member Dr. Theo Antikas, and Ionos Tsironis, the head of the Greek Hog Farmers Union.

The conference, on May 19 and 20, attracted not only farmers and ecologists, but a substantial cadre of Polish veterinarians. After hearing a powerful presentation by American Riverkeepers' Kevin Madonna on the hog factory disaster in North Carolina, Dr. Bartosz Winiecki, President of the Polish Veterinary Chamber, denounced industrial hog raising and pledged to mobilize Polish veterinarians against a Smithfield takeover. Winiecki praised the AWI/Niman Ranch system and said that he wants to bring a delegation of Polish vets to the United States to see it first hand.

Unfortunately, the AWI team's arrival in Poland coincided with an acute crisis within Poland's unstable

governing coalition. While we were able to tour state farms in northeastern and central Poland, the planned "nuts and bolts" session with Tanski did not eventuate. Tanski, like other government politicians, was caught up in the scramble trying to keep the foundering coalition afloat. It was not until after the rest of us had returned home that Agnes, who remained in Poland an additional week, was able to meet Mr. Perycz, Tanski's deputy, and learn what the AWRS now has in mind.

"If AWI will prepare and translate a brochure with text and pictures explaining what must be done to qualify for the program and why it is profitable to raise pigs in that way," Perycz told Agnes, "AWRS will bear the costs of printing it. We will distribute it to existing state farms and to everyone who is raising pigs on land being leased from us. Then we will collect the names of farmers who are interested in converting and transmit them to you. If you can then investigate on a case by case basis and prepare a blueprint for converting each farm, we will bear the costs of conversion." Perycz made it clear, however, that his agency would only approve conversions if humanely raised pork could be effectively marketed.

In a last minute blitz, Agnes traveled to Poznan with Andrzej Lepper, spoke at a press conference and visited a private farmer—already raising pigs humanely on deep straw—who is anxious to convert to the AWI system. The *Samoobrona* office in Poznan has received numerous inquiries from farmers who have seen the AWI video and want to adopt the AWI system. On her final day in Warsaw, Agnes attended a meeting of the Polish Ecological Farming Association, which is involved in marketing Polish organic produce. Its president, Professor Gorny, immediately volunteered to help set up channels for distributing humanely raised pork. It devolved that Gorny was already in conflict with Animex, but that he did not realize that it had been taken over by Smithfield and was being used as the bridgehead for a full-scale invasion.

The next step for AWI is to complete the brochure requested by AWRS. Agnes has already arranged for it to be distributed by *Samoobrona* and by the Polish Federation of Agricultural Employees as well as AWRS and to be reprinted in *Trzoda Chlewna*, the Polish pig raisers journal. In the meantime, Mr. Tsironis has decided to set up a demonstration project conforming to AWI standards on his property in Greece and has suggested that the brochure be translated into Greek for distribution by his union. As an example of the serendipity inherent in international gatherings, Tsironis has resolved to set up a peasants self defense network, modeled on *Samoobrona*, in Greece, Cyprus and Macedonia.

*AWI Quarterly Summer 00 Vol 49 No 3*

## Join the Fight to End Abuse of Laying Hens

Millions of laying hens are subjected to three shameful cruelties: forced molting, debeaking and battery cages. At last, the industry is listening to the sharp criticism of its routine



*Above: Rescued battery hens view the natural world for the first time.*

*Below: The same hens a few weeks later!*



practices. Now is the time to write to the head of the United Egg Producers with a strong protest against this unnecessary pain and suffering inflicted on the innocent and helpless birds.

1) Forced molting is induced by denying all food and in some cases water, to the caged hens. For five to 14 days all sustenance is withheld. The industry does this to induce a molt. The hen loses her feathers, and when finally given food and water again, the survivors lay bigger eggs.

2) Debeaking requires the hen's beak to be cut through so she can't peck the other hens jammed into a cramped battery cage in which four or five hens are forced to exist. Scientific studies have shown that the cut beak causes permanent pain to the hens.

3) Battery cages are so small that none of the victimized hens can even spread their wings. Their claws sometimes grow around the wires of the cage floor, causing more pain and distress. Hens have a strong urge to dust bathe, to run about and eat natural foods, and to build and lay their eggs in a nest where the chicks can hatch—but every pleasure is denied them, all for the sake of commercial gain.

The United Egg Producers (UEP) is at last realizing that it is being seriously criticized. United Poultry Concerns' Karen Davis and Veterinarians for Animal Rights' Ned Buyukmihci and Teri Barnato have led the fight. Both Karen and Ned have doctorate degrees, and their words carry weight with publications as diverse as *The Washington Post* and *Feedstuffs*, the big agribusiness trade journal. On May 1, *Feedstuffs* told its readers that UEP "recently named an advisory committee to reconsider the guidelines in view of new scientific and social trends."

On April 30, Marc Kaufman's article "Cracks in the Egg Industry" appeared on the front page of *The Washington Post*. He quoted the author of a bill in the California Assembly to



outlaw forced molting, Ted Lempert, who said, "I was first shocked by the practice because of the horrible cruelty, but the health issues really demand attention." Kaufman's article states, "Federal statistics show salmonella in eggs was associated with 28,644 illnesses and 79 deaths from 1985 to 1998. Several studies concluded that there was also a link between the stress of forced molting of hens and salmonella in them and their eggs."

UEP has decided, after receiving thousands of critical letters, that it needed to appoint an animal welfare advisory committee to revise UEP's current guidelines.

**ACTION:** Please write to the president of the United Egg Producers and tell him you don't want to eat eggs that come from hens who have been de-beaked and are in cramped battery cages. Tell him you are appalled that hens are starved for five to 14 days in an effort to increase their production. You might mention that you are shocked to learn that hens are starved and deprived of water to save a mere 4 cents on a dozen eggs. Please tell him that you will never eat eggs again unless they come from happy hens on humanely operated farms.

He may be addressed:

Mr. Albert E. Pope, President, UEP  
1303 Hightower Trail, #200  
Atlanta, Georgia 30350  
telephone: (770) 587-5871, fax: (770) 587-0041  
email: alpope@mindspring.com  
www.unitedegg.org

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## A Winnable Fight...

The first conference on the dangerous artificial hormone rBGH was held June 17th in Washington, DC. Corporate giant, Monsanto, rBGH's manufacturer and promoter, hates to admit that rBGH is a hormone so it has given it the bland name, "Posilac," and has sold more and more of the big industrial dairies on injecting it. Chris Bedford of the Maryland Sierra Club organized the meeting, bringing together highly qualified scientists, family dairy farmers, environmental and humane workers.

Starting with an overview of milk production industrialization, dairy farmers graphically described the effects of repeated rBGH injections on their cows: severe mastitis requiring treatment with antibiotics, traces of which remain in the milk, huge swellings in feet, legs, and udders, plus chronic lameness. All the farmers present had tried and rejected rBGH injections of their cows. Delegates from the Community Association for the Restoration of the Environment described community destruction caused by industrial dairy operations. Michael Hansen, a Consumers Union scientist, discussed the link between human cancer and Insulin-like Growth Factor-1, a secondary hormone produced in cows injected with rBGH. He reviewed FDA's and the National Institutes of Health's approval of rBGH, concluding that it was approved despite the fact that mandatory long-term toxicology tests were not conducted. Author Robert Cohen drew attention to the

number of ex-Monsanto employees who went to work for FDA before rBGH was approved.

Presidential candidate Ralph Nader emphasized the effectiveness of grassroots efforts; he suggested a good demonstration in front of FDA and letters to Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services, to whom FDA reports. For as distinguished scientist and long-time watchdog, Sidney Wolfe said, "FDA has never been worse."

Ask for the manager of your local supermarket, Nader urged the Conferees, and say that you want milk products only from cows not injected with rBGH, and you want them labeled so you'll know the difference. For your business, they'll accede to your reasonable request. "This is a winnable fight," he told the Conference.

The day concluded with a well-documented summary of how Canada outlawed rBGH despite Monsanto's attempts to conceal its health threats. In the US we must make much more vigorous efforts to fight rBGH—it must be banned in the US as it has been in other countries. This is a winnable fight indeed!

*AWT Quarterly Fall 2000 Vol. 49 No. 4*

## Cutting the Gordian Knot A Simple Solution to the Slaughterhouse Disaster: The slaughter line must be slowed, 300 animals cannot be rendered unconscious in a single hour.

BY TOM GARRETT

In 1905, publication of Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle* describing the abominable state of American slaughterhouses set off a storm of public protest. Meat sales across the country dropped by one third and on July 30, 1906, Congress passed the Meat Inspection Act, mandating that any meat entering interstate commerce must be inspected and approved for purity by federal meat inspectors.

In 1958, another major reform, driven by a national campaign in which the Animal Welfare Institute was deeply involved, came to America's slaughterhouses. This was the



*"You know they're alive because they are breathing real hard, they make noise, they kick the other cows, and it moves the whole chain."*

—excerpt from affidavit of slaughterhouse employee

federal Humane Slaughter Act which requires that the animal be rendered "insensible to pain" by a "rapid and effective" means before being "shackled" to the conveyor chain, or "line," upon which they are hung by a hind leg, where their throats are cut and where they are skinned and dismembered. Federal meat inspectors are empowered to enforce the Humane Slaughter Act by shutting down the line if animals are being killed "not in accordance" with the Act. Because shutting down the line for even a few minutes costs a packing house thousands of dollars in lost production, this is a potentially powerful enforcement tool.

The Humane Slaughter Act was enthusiastically supported by the unions because improperly stunned animals cause worker injuries. While the unions were strong, the Act appeared to work well. During the '80s and '90s, however, disquieting reports began seeping from behind the closed gates of America's slaughterhouses. The publication of Gail Eisnitz's blockbuster book *Slaughterhouse* in 1997 (*AWT Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No. 4), the product of years of painstaking and often dangerous investigation, revealed a situation on the killing floors far worse than any outsider could have imagined. For chapter after chapter, Eisnitz documents horrors almost beyond imagination, not in a few isolated cases, but from North Carolina to Washington State. The Humane Slaughter Act, she found, is entirely unenforced; most workmen—apparently even some inspectors—never heard of it. Living cattle, fully conscious and struggling, are shackled to the line to be skinned and dismembered. Live hogs are routinely dumped into scalding vats. "There's no way these animals can bleed out in the time it takes to get up the ramp" workmen told Eisnitz. "By the time they hit the scalding tank they're still conscious and squealing. Happens all the time."

For those who must see to believe, a video of conscious cattle being skinned and dismembered alive at IBP's (formally Iowa Beef Processors) huge Wallula, Washington slaughterhouse was shown recently on Seattle television (see *Barbaric Butchery of Cows*, page 79). Workers at the plant, who have defied one of America's most sinister corporations to tell the truth about conditions under which they labor, have sworn in affidavits that up to 30 percent of the animals going up the line are still alive.

How has an industry gained such dominance that it can ignore not only the Humane Slaughter Act but a whole spectrum of laws designed to guarantee food safety, safeguard workers, protect the environment, prevent control and manipulation of markets and prevent illegal immigration? What can be done?

To answer the first question one must turn to the history of meat packing and the takeover of the industry during the '70s and '80s by the ruthless entrepreneurs who now control it. In a startlingly brief time these men broke the power of the unions, replaced a longstanding American-born workforce with legal and illegal immigrants, subjugated federal and state regulators and eliminated independent competitors to gain control of the market. How they did it—by "union busting,"

in deals suffuse with the cloying redolence of corruption—has yet to be fully told.

But if the answer to the first question is complex and shrouded, the answer to the second is not complex at all. Although it required the elimination of active unions and the "neutralization" of government officials before it could be applied, the primary "reform" introduced to "increase efficiency" was brutally simple. This was to increase the speed of the line, or chain, upon which victims are hung and butchered, by 200 to 300 percent. It is from this single operational change that the disastrous situation in American slaughterhouses chiefly derives. Conscious animals are carried, struggling and vocalizing, down the line because those assigned to kill the victims do not have time to perform the task correctly. Those who dismember live animals do so because they will be fired if they do not. The appalling injury rate among slaughterhouse workers—characterized by Gail Eisnitz as "walking wounded"—is equally a function of excessive line speeds. Struggling animals cause innumerable injuries. But even absent this, workers are driven to such dangerous haste that accidents are inevitable.

Additionally, line speeds have played a major role in the dramatic—by some estimates 500 percent—increase in food poisoning experienced since meat packing "reforms" began in 1970. It is physically impossible for a line inspector to properly inspect the current output of 100 cattle and from 600 to 1000 hogs each hour! As line speeds accelerated, inspections became more and more cursory. The situation was immeasurably worsened in 1998 when USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), once again yielding to industry wishes, introduced a system it calls Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) that allows companies to devise their own methods of guaranteeing food safety. The practical effect of HACCP has been to remove inspectors from the line, thus eliminating any possibility that the Humane Slaughter Act might be enforced, and to replace systematic carcass inspection with "random spot checks" for bacteria. Fortunately the Court of Appeals ruled HACCP violates the plain language of the Meat Inspection Act which requires that federal inspectors must "carefully examine" each carcass before approving it\* (see *Court Says No to Self Regulation*, page 78). But the decision does not alter the fact that it is not possible, given the ratio of carcasses to inspectors, to perform careful examinations.

The answer to the second question is therefore obvious. Atrocities against animals can be brought to an end, worker injuries reduced to a modest fraction of the present rate, and meat contamination substantially relieved by a simple corrective. That is to reduce line speeds in slaughterhouses to 1970 levels or around 40 percent of current velocities.

For those who say this is not "administratively feasible" or would require "excessive bureaucracy" there is, once more, a simple answer. It can hardly be beyond human ingenuity to devise tamperproof governors to fix the maximum velocity of the line and to prevent managers who believe that

“minimally stunned” animals “bleed better” from reducing the lethality of stunning devices. At the same time, sealed video cameras should be installed to keep the killing floor under constant surveillance.

The economic effects of an enforced slowdown of line speeds would be little short of revolutionary. Dominant packers have used accelerated line speeds to help them to force smaller plants out of business and gain control of the market. A slowdown would reverse the process by compelling the industry to bring its large, unused capacity back on line.

Some idled plants, such as IBP's huge Council Bluffs, Iowa slaughterhouse which was closed in 1998 (apparently to help create a processing bottleneck and depress the price of live hogs) belong to dominant packers. But there are hundreds of small plants, driven from business, that might still be restored. Once assured that a line speed reduction really would be enforced, investors would rush to bring idled plants back into production and break ground for new ones. The percentage of packing capacity controlled by the dominant packers would drop dramatically. Their ability to repress producer prices with “captive supply” and artificial bottlenecks would be lessened accordingly.

Vertical integration, which has very nearly destroyed independent hog farmers in the US, would be jolted hard by a slowdown in line speeds. It would take years and massive investment in processing facilities for companies such as Seaboard and Continental Grain to regain their “fully integrated” status. The allure of vertical integration might wind up considerably less appealing.

In the meantime, as small slaughterhouses come back on line across rural America, the free (cash) market would begin to re-establish itself. Small sale barns would re-open. Tens of thousands of family hog farmers who quit raising hogs because they lacked feasible markets, would gain the option of returning. Many doubtless would.

How about labor? Reduced line speeds would open up tens of thousands of new jobs. How do we answer industry's assertion that unless INS waived all restrictions (an INS raid on the slaughterhouse in Gibbon, Nebraska exposed 68 percent of the workers as “non-documented Hispanics”) a slowdown would create an acute labor shortage?

In the US twenty-five years ago, (and until quite recently in Canada), slaughterhouses were operated by well paid unionized workers who often spent their entire working lives in the same plant. They did not leave voluntarily. They were driven out and replaced by a shifting population of immigrants (average time on the job today is little more than a year) desperate enough to tolerate bad treatment and dangerous conditions for as little as a third the hourly wage paid under union contract. Reduction of line speeds would open the way to re-Americanizing the work force. Packers would be forced to compete for labor by offering higher wages and benefits. Less dangerous conditions would make the work less unattractive to non-immigrants. Small packers resuming business would seek out former employees still living in the community.

A slaughterhouse, under the best of conditions, is a grim

and terrible place. That can never change. But slowing line speeds to 1970 levels would greatly reduce the atrocities now committed against helpless animals. It would avoid thousands of worker injuries every year. It would reduce public exposure to meat borne pathogens that are the chief cause of up to 9,000 food poisoning deaths in the US each year. A substantial percentage of these victims are young children. A forced line speed reduction would also do a great deal to open a closed, monstrously rigged system to the workings of the free market. And it would hasten the day when instead of using a captive workforce that can be exploited, bullied, maimed and discarded with complete impunity, packing companies will have to compete for US workers on the US labor market.

\*The federal Centers for Disease Control currently estimate that food contamination causes 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths in the US each year. The earlier CDC estimate of deaths, which some authorities continue to use, was 9,000. Illnesses such as Crohns Disease, closely related to bovine paratuberculosis, and viral lymphoma which statistical studies link to hamburger consumption, are not considered.

### **Excerpts from affidavit of slaughterhouse employee**

“...there are accidents because the cows are still alive. At the back hoof, the cow was kicking and it cut off one worker's three fingers. The cows are kicking and jumping and everything. And the company didn't save the fingers, so the worker lost them....”

“...the meat is all green and all dirty from the manure. The meat gets dirty with manure because the skin is dirty and the cows are kicking.”

“You know they're alive because they are breathing real hard, they make noise, they kick the other cows, and it moves the whole chain.”

“Sometimes the supervisor comes and works on the live cows. They don't want workers to stop the chain, when the live cows are really active, workers are supposed to honk the horn and the supervisor will come to help them skin the live cow...I would estimate that one out of ten cows is still alive when it's bled and skinned.”

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### **Court Says “No” to Self Regulation**

In an ongoing attempt to abdicate its responsibility of inspecting meat and poultry production, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) initiated an experimental inspection program that allows the industry to regulate itself. Under the pilot project, slaughterhouse employees replace USDA inspectors in performing on-line meat and poultry inspections.

The experimental program was tested at about 30 of the nation's 6,000 plants, including Gold Kist, Inc. of Guntersville, Alabama. Inspection records that the government tried to keep secret confirm that Gold Kist passed thousands of pounds of chicken with tumors, pus, sores and scabs on to unsuspecting consumers. Chicken from Gold Kist supply nuggets for

school lunch programs in 31 states. By the government's own accounting methods, 40 percent of the samples taken from October 1999 to February 2000 were diseased or unwholesome.

Shockingly, USDA considers the experimental program a tremendous success. Thomas J. Billy, the head of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, issued a press release in response to the concerns about the Alabama plant saying, “We have no reason to believe products leaving these Gold Kist plants is anything other than safe and wholesome.”

But the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (Judge A. Raymond Randolph, Judge Merrick B. Garland and Chief Judge Harry T. Edwards) disagreed, ruling unanimously against USDA's experimental program. The court concluded that under federal laws, government meat inspectors must retain their traditional roles of personally examining every cow, chicken and pig in slaughterhouses and processing plants. The court said it is illegal for the USDA to allow company workers to replace government employees in inspecting products at meat and poultry plants, and explained that the experimental inspection system “provides the industry with complete control over production decisions and execution.”

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### **Congressman Brown Speaks Out Against “Skyrocketing” Line Speeds**

George Brown, the distinguished California Congressman who was elected for the first time in 1963, led the long fight for justice for animals. Brown, who died on July 15, 1999, was a particularly outspoken advocate for farm animals. In a 1998 letter to the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, Brown wrote that he was “deeply troubled” that the USDA was not properly enforcing the Humane Slaughter Act (HSA), resulting in “additional suffering to millions of farm animals who otherwise would have been assured more humane treatment.”

Brown specifically referred to stimulated line speeds in the slaughterhouses: “With fewer slaughterhouses killing a growing number of animals, slaughter ‘line speeds’ have skyrocketed.” Brown continued: “Today, as workers struggle to kill as many as 1,100 animals per hour, or one animal every three seconds, they often find themselves resorting to unbelievable brutality to keep the production line running uninterrupted. Workers in these operations describe the common practice of pounding away at cows' heads with ineffective stunning equipment; of ‘piping’ or beating disabled animals to death with lead pipes. They report the standard practice of ripping frozen animals from truck walls, after transport in winter months, leaving chunks of flesh behind; sawing off the legs of live cattle to extricate them when caught between planks on unloading docks. In short, slaughter workers admit to routinely strangling,

beating, scalding, skinning, and dismembering fully conscious animals in violation of the HSA.”

Congressman Brown's leadership for farm animals, laboratory animals, animals trapped for their fur, and animals killed painfully as predators will be sorely missed.

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### **Barbaric Butchery of Cows**

“I estimate that 30 percent of the cows are not properly knocked [stunned] and get to the first legger alive...To still be alive at the second legger the cows have gone alive from the knocker to the sticker to the belly ripper (he cuts the hide down the center of the cow's abdomen) to the tail ripper (he opens the [rectum]) to the first legger (he skins a back leg and then cuts off the foot) to the first butter (he skins from the breast to the belly and a little bit on the back) to the worker who cuts off both front feet. Those cows then go to a worker who sticks a hook into the joint where the first legger took off the foot and the cows are hung from the trolley hook. I can tell that these cows are alive because they're holding their heads up and a lot of times they make noise.” This is an excerpt from the affidavit of a worker at the IBP, Inc. cattle slaughtering plant in Wallula, Washington.

Seventeen employees of the plant have provided affidavits to Gail Eisnitz of the Humane Farming Association (HFA), who recently completed an investigation of the slaughter facility. Her findings are appalling. Apparent violations of the law include torture of cows and failure to stun and kill them humanely, hazardous conditions for the workers, and contamination of the meat intended for human consumption. The Animal Welfare Institute joined HFA and a coalition of other animal protection, consumer and human rights organizations in petitioning the Attorney General of Washington State to initiate enforcement action against the slaughter facility.

In an ongoing effort to raise the profit margin, slaughter plants are increasing the “line speed,” which is the rate animals are moved through the stunning, killing and dismembering process at slaughter facilities. The workers simply cannot keep up, and are unable to put the time and attention into ensuring the humane slaughter of livestock. Workers have described lines that move so fast that cows are being skinned alive, with their limbs flailing, their heads turning, and their eyes blinking. Workers' affidavits indicate the line speed at the IBP plant increased from 105 cows per hour in 1980 to a current total of more than 300 cows per hour!

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### **Lamb on the Lam**

A runaway lamb, thought to have escaped from a slaughterhouse, recently achieved something many New Yorkers dream of but few accomplish—he moved fast on the FDR Drive on Manhattan's East Side during a busy time of the day. Two cops on routine patrol on Second Avenue at 120th Street, a very





Budd Williams/The Daily News

*Franklin, the wayward lamb thought to have escaped from a slaughterhouse, calms down at ASPCA shelter after a wild chase in Manhattan. His run ended on the FDR Drive, when a driver cut him off at the pass, enabling an ASPCA agent to lasso him.*

urban neighborhood, first spotted him heading downtown at a brisk trot. At 96th Street, he veered left and got on FDR Drive (we're talking about rush hour traffic here). Danger was somewhat averted when New York's finest halted traffic. As the lamb hopped the divider several times and continued towards Brooklyn, though obviously flagging, an unidentified civilian (one of several who tried to help) angled his car in the animal's path bringing the chase to a safe conclusion.

A very tired lamb, now named Franklin, is resting (and eating) at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) Bergh Memorial Hospital. Soon a sanctuary will find a spot for him and the youngster—still an adolescent—can look forward to a comfortable life. Lots of cheers for the police, and warm-hearted civilians, but most of all for the plucky Franklin who won his freedom the hard way—in Manhattan traffic.

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## A Tribute to Ruth Harrison

BY ANN COTTRELL FREE

When you think of Ruth Harrison, who died at age 79 on June 13 at her London home, your immediate thought would be of her long crusade against factory farming. But you could also think of Henry Salt, Mahatma Gandhi, George Bernard Shaw, Rachel Carson and Richard Ryder—movers and shakers, all.

Ruth Harrison was one of them and together they ushered in the modern era of animal protection—call it what you will: “welfare” or “rights” (Ruth preferred the former, even though she is thought of in the context of “rights”).

She was catapulted into that league of reformers with her 1964 book, *Animal Machines*, a faultlessly documented and indignant assault on the excruciatingly intensive housing of veal calves, chickens and pigs. When she learned that no one else was speaking out against these atrocities, she dropped everything and began her book. She was following Rachel Carson's path in writing *Silent Spring* because no one else wanted to expose pesticide dangers.

She visited these heart-breaking prisons, especially those of crated, infant, male dairy calves taken from their mothers

soon after birth, tethered in small, dark stalls, not allowed to suckle anything, given little water, fed antibiotics and iron deficient artificial milk to fatten them and keep them anaemic so they could be killed at 12 weeks to fill the plates and satisfy the palates of customer-preferred, tender, white meat. She also described in detail the overcrowding of caged laying hens, broilers and pigs.

Ruth pointed to the economic forces behind it all. “Life in the factory farm,” she wrote, “revolves entirely around profits, and animals are accessed purely for their ability to convert food into flesh or ‘saleable products.’” She also reported on the feeding of antibiotics, growth stimulants, hormones and tranquilizers with no regard to the consequences to the human consumer.

She sent her completed manuscript to Rachel Carson, whom she had never met, and asked her to write the foreword. So stunned by what she read, Rachel asked a mutual friend, Christine Stevens, “could it be true?” Christine replied, “Indeed, it is true” and encouraged her to write the foreword. In it, Rachel expressed hope that the book would “provoke feelings of dismay, revulsion and outrage” and called for a consumers’ revolt.

Carson's endorsement, a good publisher, her husband's graphic photos and serialization in a London newspaper helped to spread the word. The public reaction was so intense that the Ministry of Agriculture ordered an investigation chaired by Professor F.W.R. Brambell. The Brambell Report led to an Act of Parliament governing farm animal welfare. It wasn't long before the veal crates were abolished and better conditions were provided for chickens and pigs.

Despite her modest manner, Ruth was a genuine “whistle blower.” But she never dreamed that her “radical” efforts would be rewarded by inclusion in the 1986 Queen's Order of the British Empire honor's list. In her youth, she had dreamed, however, of a career in the theatre. That dream was interrupted by World War II hospital service in the Friends Ambulance Corps post-war service in Germany. But soon thereafter she graduated from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Her career as an actress and director was on its way—helped by coaching from a neighbor, George Bernard Shaw. Also, she absorbed his views on a hypocritical society, especially when it came to fox hunting and meat eating.

Her father, Stephen Winsten, was a friend of Shaw's and authored three books about his life. Both men—like Gandhi—looked to animals' greatest unsung champion: iconoclast, vegetarian, author of *Animals Rights*, Henry Salt (1851-1939). (Gandhi was inspired by Salt and Henry Thoreau in throwing off the British Rule of India. Gandhi entered Ruth's life when her mother, Clare Winsten, painted his portrait.)

Her promising theatrical career met a roadblock when she received a leaflet on the plight of veal calves. Not only did that permanent detour lead to reforms in England, but in many other European countries. (Her book was published in seven countries and was the inspiration for the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes.)

*Animal Machines* also lit the fuse for greater animal advocacy when a group of British scholars in 1971 wrote *Animals, Men and Morals: An Enquiry into the Maltreatment of Non-humans*. Ruth's essay opened the book which also included a chapter by Richard Ryder who coined the term “speciesism.”

Up until her death from cancer she was deeply involved in the development and acceptance of alternative methods of raising meat animals. Helping her in this were several animal behaviorists, as well as Diane Halverson, AWI Farm Animal Advisor and her sister Marlene of Northfield, Minnesota.

Her honors, numerous affiliations and many contributions to animal welfare—such as blowing the whistle on the cruel electrocution methods of euthanasia unknowingly used by a large shelter for dogs, which was quickly changed when it learned the electric current must pass through the brain—are too many to list but her never-ending dedication and focus on helping factory farm animals, hopefully will spur long overdue reforms in the US.

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## A Sport Most Foul

A trio of stories from *The New York Times* in June 2000 reveals that brutal brawls between fighting birds are alive and well in the United States—not only in rural America, but also in enclaves of inner cities. Busts in two New York City boroughs, Brooklyn and the Bronx, resulted in hundreds of charges against individuals who breed gamecocks to fight and those who witness the fights and wager on them.

In a dilapidated Bronx movie theater, 36 people were arrested and charged with “animal fighting,” a felony in New York. Another 154 were charged with a misdemeanor for watching the fights. By the time police rammed through the theater doors, sending gambling patrons scattering in all directions, including up to the theater roof, eight birds were already dead.

Days later, armed agents with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals raided a Brooklyn pet store, charging its owners, Jermias Nieves and his son David, with animal fighting and animal cruelty. The agents discovered a padded training room where roosters were trained to fight, breeding hens, thousands of dollars, and the barbaric weapons of battle. All of the live animals confiscated during these raids were euthanized.

According to one *Times* story, a representative with the United Gamefowl Breeders Association estimates that cockfighting generates “hundreds of millions of dollars a year in sales of birds, medicines, feed, and breeding and fighting gear.” “Fighting gear” includes knives and sharp metal spurs affixed to the roosters' claws to maximize injuries, including punctured lungs, broken bones, pierced eyes and a variety of fatal lacerations. “Medicines” include drugs such as “Strychly Speed” (strychnine) and “Pure Aggression,” stimulants used to enhance the birds' fighting prowess.

Only three states still allow legal cockfighting: Louisiana,

New Mexico, and Oklahoma. Pending federal legislation would close a loophole that allows fighting birds to be transported to states where cockfighting is legal (see *AWI Quarterly*, Spring 1999, “Anti-Cockfighting Bill Introduced in Congress”). Colorado Senator Wayne Allard authored the Senate bill, S. 345, which has amassed 58 cosponsors. It was approved in Committee on March 2, 2000 and awaits floor consideration. The House companion bill, H.R. 1275, has 185 cosponsors.

But, according to *The Washington Post*, further consideration of the bill by the full Senate will be difficult, despite widespread bipartisan support. Two former Senators, Steve Symms of Idaho and J. Bennett Johnston of Louisiana, are receiving as much as \$185,000 to lobby against the bill. According to the *Post*, both “have close ties to powerful lawmakers such as Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott.” Perhaps consideration of the cockfighting bill would help define whether or not this Congress is truly compassionate.

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## European Community's Efforts to Improve Animal Welfare

The European Community (EC) Proposal on Animal Welfare and Trade in Agriculture, submitted to the WTO Committee on Agriculture on June 28, 2000, states, “In Practice, our concerns with animal welfare are most acute in relation to highly-intensive and industrialized production methods for certain species, in particular poultry and pigs. This type of production is most often found in developed rather than developing and least developed countries.

“...it is important to secure the right of those WTO members that apply high animal welfare standards to maintain them.

“...The EC's work on animal welfare is continuing, and the EC reserves its right to make further submissions in the light of developments.”

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## Rescue of Battery Hens in Tasmania

According to a release from the Australian Action Animal Rescue Team a seven-member team broke into PURE FOODS, Tasmania's largest battery hen producer on July 8, 2000. The ammonia and noxious fumes overpowered the team when entering the buildings, causing burning eyes, sore throats and difficulty in breathing. The hens all had severely mutilated beaks, making it very difficult for them to eat.

Later that same day the rescuers approached a supposedly free-range egg-producing operation southwest of Hobart, owned by the same company. This operation had somehow gained approval by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). The rescue team and the media were refused permission to view the hens, who had been de-





Patry Mark / Action Magazine

*A debeaked hen not only has a difficult time eating, she is also in constant pain due to the drastic procedure.*

beaked by the same contractor. The hens themselves were confined to a big warehouse type shed with small popholes leading to a yard, which looked unused.

The intensive media attention revealing the horrible conditions in which these hens are kept put the authorities under pressure. A meeting of Government, industry and certain representatives of animal welfare groups was called, but no initiatives were added that would make any noticeable difference to the millions of hens that are enduring so much suffering in their tiny cages. Banning battery cages was not even considered. The executive director for the Australian Egg Industry Association, Hugh McMaster, and RSPCA President, Hugh Wirth, drew up a draft agreement on hen housing, proposing to phase out certain cages and increase the floor space of a standard cage by 20 percent at some future time. The plight of the laying hens continues unabated.

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## National Gathering Calls for Humane, Sustainable Hog Farming

On January 11, 800 people from across the US and Canada packed the New Bern, North Carolina Riverfront Convention Center to discuss strategies for combating pig factories and promoting humaneness and sustainability in pig farming.

The "Summit for Sustainable Hog Farming" was organized by Nicolette Hahn, Senior Attorney for the Water Keeper Alliance, Rick Dove, Board Member of the Water Keeper Alliance and Gary Grant, Chair of the North Carolina Hog Roundtable. The day-long event included presentations from fishermen, environmentalists, religious and labor leaders, family farmers, scientists, public officials, attorneys, community activists, and animal welfare advocates.

Poignantly, neighbors to industrial pig operations described from personal experience how pig factories fouled their houses and backyards with stench and toxic gases so



*Pigs on industrial farms are confined to metal crates so small they cannot even turn around. Unnatural conditions in the factory thwart a pig's natural instincts, and stereotypies, repetitive behaviors such as bar-biting shown above, are common.*

intense they became ill. In chilling testimonials, they detailed incidents of intimidation, even threats of violence and death, which they received from pig factory owners or operators.

The Summit's animal welfare discussion featured presentations by Paul Willis and Sue and Kelly Ryan, family farmers who allow the pigs they raise to behave naturally, in accordance with the Animal Welfare Institute's Humane On-Farm Pig Husbandry Standards. A video prepared by the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) in cooperation with the Water Keeper Alliance showed the Ryan family farm and emphasized the value of preserving the culture of humane family farm husbandry that is being decimated by animal factories. Mike McConnell, Chairman of Niman Ranch, urged attendees not only to fight against the growth and pollution of pig factories but also to press their grocers to carry meat from humane, sustainable family farms rather than factories. Niman Ranch is the first marketing company to require that farmers whose hogs they purchase follow AWI's humane husbandry standards. Actress Rosemary Harris, winner of a Tony, an Emmy and a Golden Globe award and an Academy Award

*The Water Keeper Alliance is the umbrella organization for the fifty-eight River, Sound and Bay Keepers located throughout North and Central America and Europe. The Water Keeper Alliance protects and restores waterways—including those ravaged by pollution from animal factories—using a variety of methods, including litigation. To learn more about the Water Keeper Alliance or to view presentations delivered at the Summit, visit the organization's website at [www.keeper.org](http://www.keeper.org).*

*The North Carolina Hog Roundtable is a coalition of state-wide, community, and neighborhood organizations, with over 65,000 members collectively, that are working toward reform of corporate pig raising. The Roundtable focuses on pig factories' threats to public health, the environment and property values and has a particular concern for the disproportionate impact of industrial pig operations on poor and minority communities.*

nominee, spoke on behalf of animals in a video presentation recorded in Los Angeles where Ms. Harris was filming the movie "Spiderman." Ms. Harris called on consumers to insist on meat from humane, family farms, saying that it is the plight of the sows confined to crates, unable to walk or turn around, that moves her most. A North Carolinian herself, Ms. Harris urged North Carolinians to take the lead in prohibiting animal factory practices, just as Sweden has done in Europe. Marlene Halverson, humane farming consultant to AWI, described the long history of ethical approaches to farming with animals in Sweden and their potential for serving as models for humane, sustainable farming in the US. AWI's Farm Animal Advisor, Diane Halverson, showed how factory production of pigs violates the nature of pigs, and how this leads, inevitably, to environmental and human health catastrophes. The suffering of animals in factories was also addressed in Rick Dove's video

presentation which included footage of gross cruelty to pigs in a North Carolina factory, where workers beat and dismembered conscious sows. In Mr. Dove's words, "If we solve all of the environmental problems dealing with industrial hog raising, including stopping pollution, gaining restitution for pollution and solving the neighborhood odor and health problems, but we don't solve the issue of humane treatment of animals, then we haven't solved the problem of hog factories."

A captivating keynote address was given by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. who, in addressing the extreme confinement and physical abuse suffered by pigs in factories, said: "The way that we treat animals—somebody at sometime is going to be punished for that—we as a nation or somebody. Because you can't treat another work of the Creator with the kind of indignity that we are allowing to go on in this state or others without there being some kind of karmic retribution at some point in history. I think all of us understand that, and particularly the family farmers here who understand the notion of stewardship and how an animal should be treated with dignity if we want dignity for ourselves."

The Metropolitan AME Zion Church Choir, Washington, N.C. opened the Interfaith Prayer Service that followed Mr. Kennedy's address. Sister Evelyn Mattern of the North Carolina Council of Churches led the crowd in this prayer by St. Basil the Great (329-379): "O God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things, even our brothers and sisters the animals, to whom you have given the earth as their home in common with us. We remember with shame that in the past we have exercised our high dominion with ruthless cruelty so that the voice of the earth, which should have gone up to you in song, has been a groan of pain. May we realize that they live, not for us alone, but for themselves and for you, and that they love the sweetness of life."

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*Attendees included attorneys fighting the hog producers and representatives of organizations supporting the legal battle. Among others pictured here: Sue Jarrett, Global Resource Action Center for the Environment; Scott Dye, Sierra Club; Terry Spence, CLEAN; Leland Swenson, National Farmers' Union; and Brother David Andrews, NCRLC.*



## The Water Keeper Alliance Institutes Legal Attack on Pig Factories

On December 6, 2000, at press conferences in Washington, D.C. and Raleigh, North Carolina, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., President of the Water Keeper Alliance announced the launch of a broad legal assault against America's large pig factories. The Water Keeper Alliance and a coalition of supporters have turned to private attorneys and law firms to pursue enforcement of environmental protection regulations. This is necessary, said Kennedy, since "Federal environmental prosecution against the meat industry has effectively ceased because Congress has eviscerated the Environmental Protection Agency's enforcement budget while the political clout of powerful pork producers has trumped state enforcement efforts. This collapse of environmental enforcement has allowed corporate hog factories to proliferate with huge pollution-based profits."

The plaintiffs are seeking enforcement of state and federal laws, including the federal Clean Water Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and Clean Air Act. Kennedy added: "What we are dealing with here is a crime...And they should have to stop today so we can get back to the family farmers and the tried and true way of preserving America's landscape and waterways." Describing the confinement of sows in crates so small they cannot walk or turn around, Kennedy called pig factories "extraordinarily cruel." Jan Schlichtmann, a renowned environmental attorney, referred to modern hog factories as "animal concentration camps."

Attorneys who are committed to "civilizing" industrial hog operations stood with Mr. Kennedy and coalition members at the press conference. Coalition members and press conference speakers included family farmers Terry Spence and Rolf Christen of Citizens Legal Environmental Action Network (CLEAN), Sierra Club representative Scott Dye, Leland Swenson, President of National Farmers' Union, Brother David Andrews of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference (NCRLC) and Diane Halverson, Farm Animal Advisor of the Animal Welfare Institute.

Following are excerpts from the statement made by Diane Halverson. "Industrial hog producers have driven independent farm families out of business, and in doing so, have decimated the culture of humane husbandry that once characterized American farming. Traditionally, farm families took joy in good stockmanship and pride in the robust health of their herds. Industrial agriculture, on the other hand, calls animals into existence, and before it kills them, makes them suffer.

"For the corporate investor the animal is not a sentient creature, but a 'production unit.' The corporation is intent on three things: maximizing the number of 'production units' in each building; eliminating the need for husbandry skills among workers; and minimizing the number of workers. To do this, sows on the industrial farm are permanently confined in coffin-like crates, unable to walk or even turn around. All

pigs are denied bedding in order that their manure can be liquefied for easy handling; this liquefaction makes it possible to concentrate huge numbers of animals on one site. Liquefied manure, running into streams, seeping into groundwater and emitting toxic gases, causes the environmental and public health problems discussed today. It is inevitable that a system which grossly violates the biology of the animals inside the factory will wreak havoc on everyone and everything outside of the factory.

"Sow deaths are common inside factory sow operations. The death rate of some herds is as high as 20 percent. The factory system is characterized by widespread routine application of antibiotics to promote growth of piglets, promote sow productivity and to prevent outbreaks of disease in the hostile conditions of the factory. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified the routine, subtherapeutic use of antibiotics in agriculture as a major contributor to antibiotic resistance in humans. WHO recommends switching from industrial management of animals to more extensive, enriched housing methods to reduce the distress caused to the animals and thereby reduce the need for antibiotics.

"AWI is proud to support the effort announced today, to expose and rein in an industry characterized by callous disregard for society, our environment and animals."

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## The Kingdom of the Pigs

BY VANGELIS STOYANNIS

The traveller heading from the city of Trikala towards the Pindos mountain range (Southern Alps) sees the imposing passage of the "Gate" opening in front of him. Through this passage—which looks like a wound opened by the sword of a Giant during the mythical times—Lethe, the river of Oblivion, flows towards the plain which emerged from the bottom of the inner sea. Through this Gate, 13 centuries before Christ, the servants of Aesculapius passed, bringing the miraculous mountain herbs to the father of Medicine. Through this Gate nations and civilizations, merchants and invaders passed towards the plain. In the 11th century B.C. the Doric Nation, and in the 2nd century B.C. the Roman Legions passed, heading towards Pidna for the battle which determined the fate of the Macedonian King Perseus.

The mountains, the Gate and the plain. The cradle of the 32 greek nations, their passage towards history and the place where the discovery of agriculture and stockbreeding gave birth to civilization. The Gate, of legends and history, is a place of rare beauty, imposing and ancient which, when you get closer, makes you feel the unbearable burden of history on your shoulders. The Gate leads also to the ancient kingdoms of the farmers, who cultivated wheat for the first time, and the stockbreeders who utilized the acorns, chestnuts and the rich mountain grasslands in order to feed their herds of goats, sheep, pigs and small cows. People still cultivate wheat in the plain and still pasture their animals on the mountains.

November 2000. A few kilometers on the right of the



*A wild boar with four domestic free-range pigs on a mountain-top pasture.*

Gate, on the mountain roots, on the line where the short mountain range of Hasia connects Pindos with Olympus and marks the plain towards the north, there lie the stockbreeders' villages: Pialia, Megarhi, Oihalia, Diasselo, Eleftherohori.

Since the ancient times, Pialia has been a village of pig breeders and shepherds. Each family owns about 30 female pigs and 200 sheep or goats. The village of Pialia is a place where the 21st century meets the 13th century B.C. Today the village, built on the foot of the mountain, lives simultaneously in two ages. The families living at the side of the plain breed their pigs in small, industrial-type farms. The families living at the side of the mountain, breed free ranging pigs in the forest. Their farms are simply small, wooden constructions, under ancient walls (possibly the walls of the ancient kingdom). There, they enclose the female pigs when they give birth in order to keep the newborns safe from wolves and bears until they are a month old. Then, the young pigs and their mothers are freed into the forest. Apart from some corn that they give to the animals in order to get them used to returning to the farm at night, the animals feed on what they find in the ancient forest: roots, acorns, chestnuts, and mushrooms.

Those are strange pigs, not like those bred in the industrial farms. Their owners crossbreed pigs of ancient races with wild boars they catch on the mountain, the result being that almost every farm breeds its own race of animals. Their productivity and output are extremely close to the output of improved hogs which are bred at the industrial farms of the plain. The health level of those animals could produce a nervous breakdown of the veterinarians and antibiotic salesmen of the 21st century.

These are stockbreeders who live in two ages. Their houses have the comforts of a 21st century house, they themselves use mobile phones and go to their farms in modern pick-up trucks. They still bake their bread, however, on woods according to the ancient way and throw coins in the coffins of the dead, in order for them to be able to pay the ferryman who will take them to the other world.

The answer to the question of the contemporary traveller, how those people survive together with their animals in the

age of industrial stockbreeding, is simple.

They base their survival on memory. Here come the inhabitants of the near villages, those who insist stubbornly to cultivate wheat in 4 hectare fields, in order to buy pigs, sausages and pork meat for their Christmas table. From here the families of the plain buy small pigs which they will breed at their houses for Christmas. Ancient people, keeping still alive the ancient tradition. The pig-fatlings in December, to honour the Goddess of Agriculture Demetra, survived through the Christian age together with the Christmas customs of the Greeks. The stockbreeders of free ranging pigs survived as well. It is not by chance that such stockbreeding farms still survive at the ancient places: in Pialia, at the ancient kingdom of hogbreeders; at the foot of Olympus, the mountain of the Gods; in Arcadia, at the mythical kingdom of Lycaon; in Thrace, at the ancient kingdom of Diomedes; at Vermion, the cradle of the ancient Macedonians. That is, where memory still transforms the places into ways.

Perhaps such places show us the solution to the tragic dead-ends of the contemporary industrial stockbreeding, with the inhuman breeding conditions, the antibiotics and the products of dubious quality. Perhaps the solution for our modern problematic societies also lies here, through the activation of people's memory.

In the 13th century B.C., when Ulysses returned to Ithaca after his 10 years of wandering, he couldn't go to his palace. The King's palace was invaded by suitors who wanted to kill him in order to marry his wife and change things in his kingdom. Homer, the blind poet, says that the King found shelter at the house of Eumeos, his loyal pig shepherd, where he prepared his strategy.

Is this just a coincidence or does the blind poet give a lesson, 33 centuries after his era? Perhaps, after all, the voyages and adventures Ulysses suffered because he defied the Gods is a symbol of contemporary corporate man who, confused, breaks natural laws.

Is returning a solution? Nobody knows. The fact is that in Greece, at the place which once was a way, the descendants of Eumeos, the loyal pig shepherd, still survives.

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## European Commission Proposes Improvements in Welfare Conditions of Pigs

The European Commission approved, on January 16, a proposal which will, if accepted, prohibit the confinement of 6 million pigs during "most of their pregnancy to individual stalls which severely restrict their freedom of movement." The proposal also sets out rules to improve the living environment of pigs and piglets in general, setting requirements for living spaces, floor surfaces, and proper feeding systems. New requirements for training of pig handlers are also introduced. In addition, the Commission is proposing tougher regulation of noise and light levels, access to food and materials for



rooting, timing of weaning of piglets, flooring surfaces, and the prohibition of the worst types of routine mutilations.

"The new rules will be introduced gradually over a more than 10 year period to allow industry time to adjust buildings to higher pig welfare standards. The rules are proposed to come into force in 2012, while some key provisions will apply to new holdings as of the first of January 2002."

Quotes are from Europa, the European Union's website. For the full text of the report on intensive pig farming and the 1997 scientific opinion on it, visit [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/oldcomm4/out17\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/oldcomm4/out17_en.html).

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## Mother Nature Exposes the Cruelty Inside Factory Farms

BY WENDY SWANN

Who does not like to think that the food we eat is from the idyllic farms portrayed in children's books? Unfortunately, the reality is that the majority of animals used for food are raised using intensive husbandry practices. Of the more than



**Top:** Over a million hens trapped inside tiny wire cages in what was left of tornado damaged buildings. **Bottom:** Free at last! The rescued hens enjoy the pasture at Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm. At night they go into the straw bedded barns for warmth and safety.

8 billion animals killed for food in the US in 1997, 300 million were laying hens, and when a tornado ripped through Croton, Ohio on September 20, the public received a unique opportunity to see firsthand the intensive and cruel practices of industrial egg production. The tornado struck Buckeye Egg Farm, one of the world's largest egg factories. The company's 15 million hens produce over 2.4 billion eggs a year.

Twelve of the company's 150 warehouse-type buildings, some as long as two football fields, were damaged. Each building holds 80,000-100,000 hens packed into battery cages. Each cage is half the size of a newspaper and holds six hens. Hens in factories cannot express their natural repertoire of behaviors, and as if the painful debeaking, eye and foot trauma, ammonia fumes, light deprivation and other atrocities of the factory farm are not cruel enough, after the tornado hit Buckeye over one million birds were either crushed in the wreckage or trapped and suffered slow deaths from starvation, dehydration or exposure to the elements.

More than 600,000 hens trapped in the destruction were dumped alive into containers. Many suffocated or were crushed to death when load after load of chickens were piled on top of each other. Those that survived the initial dump were euthanized with carbon dioxide. Eventually they were all sent to rendering plants. The remaining mix of twisted metal, building debris and close to 300,000 bird carcasses was discarded at a county landfill.

Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm, a farm animal sanctuary near Pittsburgh, and Protect Our Earth's Treasures (POET), in Columbus, Ohio, were instrumental in the intensive rescue and relocation of over 3,000 hens. Cayce Mell, Jason Tracy, along with their six-month-old son Aidan, and other Ooh-Mah-Nee staff repeatedly drove to Ohio. Aidan peacefully supervised the rescue and allowed his parents to save as many birds as possible. Cayce negotiated with Buckeye executives on behalf of the hens, and now Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm is the permanent home for 1,500 of the "liberated ladies."

Convicted of cruelty to animals in Germany, the owner of Buckeye Egg Farm, Anton Pohlmann, is banned for life from owning animals and operating there. With the purchase of Ohio farmland in 1980, Pohlmann brought his deplorable record of inhumane treatment of animals and environmental degradation to the US. In Ohio, Buckeye's environmental violations include contamination of waterways with manure and fuel oil resulting in fish kills. Legal violations include exceeding the allowed number of hens and constructing facilities without authorization. The company was fined for poor worker conditions, and a federal raid revealed 36 undocumented workers. In January 2001, Buckeye was fined \$1 million—to be paid over six years—by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency for pollution and fly-infestation problems.

Pohlmann plans to rebuild the structures destroyed by the tornado, sell or lease his factories in Ohio and start a new operation in Eastern Europe. His son Stefan is starting a poultry operation in the Czech Republic.

Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm is completing a documentary

on the rescue which will be available to interested parties. To contact Ooh-Mah-Nee, call 724-925-2241 or e-mail [oohmahneefarm@aol.com](mailto:oohmahneefarm@aol.com).

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## Transit Fowl Up

Why did the chicken cross the road? To get to the bus stop, of course. When a Transit Authority bus driver discovered an early morning rider who had not paid her fare was a hen, enlisted the help of a handy kennel worker to deliver her to a most desirable destination, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

Like many of us on an early morning bus, Henrietta (newly named) was "stressed, undernourished and unkempt in appearance" according to press reports. Her mutilated beak indicates an unhappy home life in an egg factory, where beaks are cut to lessen pecking of other hens tightly crammed into the battery cages.

Dr. Arnold Plotnick, ASPCA veterinarian, declared Henrietta, uncaged and happy on a fattening regimen, to be a "nice chicken.. calm, quiet and mellow." To which we will add intelligent. In the grid of a complex public transportation system which some of us riders never quite figure out,



Ron Antonelli/New York Daily News

Henrietta is held by Dr. Arnold Plotnick of the ASPCA in Manhattan. Henrietta was found by a bus driver and brought to the ASPCA.

Henrietta found the correct bus route and a compassionate driver. Adoption procedures for Henrietta, who presented Dr. Plotnick with a thank you egg, have now been finalized.

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## AWI Helps Consumers Reject The Products of Pig Factories

BY DIANE HALVERSON

It is spring on a farm in Iowa. The pigs have left behind their winter quarters in bedded barns and snow-covered yards. Now they are relishing fields of fresh grass and alfalfa and earth



AWI standards require that sows be able to build nests at farrowing.



To maximize the number of sows per building, eliminate the need for husbandry skills among hired workers and minimize labor, pig factories continuously confine sows in crates so small they are unable to walk or even turn around. Pigs in factories never get to feel the warmth of the sun or take a breath of fresh air.

that is still moist from ample winter snows and spring rains. At my post outside their pasture it is possible to observe their behavior undisturbed by human activity. The sows, with their piglets trotting close by, are moving to and fro through their "village" of tin huts with an apparent sense of purpose. One is headed to the water tank, one to investigate what is happening in another sow's hut, and another has moved to separate two piglets who are locked in playful but intense combat. The sow parts the contenders and then moves on. Before long, the piglets pick up where they left off. Other sows are grazing, with their piglets rooting for food nearby; some are nursing their litters or lying at rest in their huts with piglets asleep in the straw beside them.

In the next paddock the pregnant sows are due to deliver soon. For one sow, farrowing is imminent, and she is absorbed in moving straw from one uninhabited hut to her own well-





Family farm photos by D. Halverson

*Sows on Paul Willis' farm are comfortable with people. A remnant of farm families is preserving a culture of humane animal husbandry and distinguishing themselves from cruel and environmentally unsound animal factories.*



*Various types of structures provide shelter to small groups of pigs on pasture. Both farmer and pig have techniques to protect the pigs from rain and extreme heat. Pastures provide constant opportunities for expression of instinctive behavior.*



*In this spacious barn, pigs have opportunities to escape from more aggressive herd mates and are given straw with which to carry out natural exploratory and foodsearching behavior.*



*Like her wild ancestors, the domestic sow is driven by instinct to isolate herself and build a nest when it is time to give birth. In pasture keeping, each sow has access to an individual hut in which she can prepare for farrowing and nurse her piglets.*



*Pigs living in a biologically sound environment and experiencing respectful handling exhibit good health and growth rates so routine antibiotic use is unnecessary.*



Factory photos by M. Halverson

*Restrained in crates, sows on industrial operations instinctively but vainly go through the motions of nest building on floors of perforated plastic or wire.*



*Above and Below: In factories, piglets, sows and breeding boars exist on slatted floors and are confined without bedding so that the massive quantity of manure they produce can be liquefied for ease of handling. Liquefied manure contaminates America's ground water, rivers and the air we breathe.*



bedded hut to enhance the nest in which she will give birth.

The air is balmy but breezes temper the heat. Even when the sun begins to blaze overhead or the rain moves in or the night temperature drops, these animals can cope, aided by the farmer who fashions a mudhole or sprinkler with which the pigs can cool off or who supplies fresh dry straw to wick away any dampness that enters the hut or to better insulate piglets from the cool night air.

With 105 million pigs sold for market in the United States in 1998, alternatives to the barbaric pig factories must be maintained. The products of farms like the one described above must be labeled distinctively in order to give millions of consumers a way to reject the products of pig factories.

There are 150 humane farms like the one shown here, owned by independent farm families who fulfill the Animal Welfare Institute's Pig Husbandry Standards. These farmers sell their animals to the Niman Ranch Company, which markets the meat across the United States. In 1997, Niman Ranch was the first marketing company to embrace the humane pig husbandry standards of an animal welfare organization—the Animal Welfare Institute—and to require adherence to these standards by farmers who sell to Niman Ranch.

For more information about this unprecedented and unparalleled program, visit the Animal Welfare Institute's website at [www.awionline.org](http://www.awionline.org). You can also learn more about Niman Ranch online at [www.nimanranch.com](http://www.nimanranch.com).

To improve the welfare of pigs, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) is working with the Niman Ranch Company and its network of farm families who raise pigs according to AWI's Pig Husbandry Standards.

*Highlights of the Standards:*

- Sows must be able to build nests and pigs to root, explore and play.
- Well-managed pastures are recommended. When animals are sheltered in barns, they must be given straw or other suitable materials to serve as bedding and to allow for expression of instinctive behavior.
- Animal factory practices—such as intensive confinement of animals in barren crates and cages, tail cropping or the use of electric prods—are prohibited.
- Large-scale animal factory owners or operators who commit only a portion of their operation to humane management are not accepted in this program.
- The routine use of antibiotics to promote growth or productivity or to control or mask disease is prohibited.

*Family Farm Requirement:*

- Each farm must be a family farm: one on which an individual or family owns the hogs, depends upon the farm for their livelihood, and participates in the daily physical labor of caring for the animals and managing the farm.

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## **Caroline Lucas: “...Politicians treat globalization like a God.”**

The greed and indifference to animal welfare of the transnational agribusiness corporations has been strikingly revealed in Great Britain. The epidemic of foot-and-mouth disease, says *The Independent*, “is officially out of control—all because Whitehall's [the British government] priority has been agribusiness profits.”

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) has been forcing their mass slaughter policy on farmers. Hundreds of thousands of cattle and sheep have already been killed and often left to rot before MAFF gets around to burning them up in the fields. MAFF has refused to vaccinate against the disease. *The Guardian* clearly states, “...science has moved on a lot since MAFF compiled its contingency plans. New vaccines are cheaper and more effective, and tests have been developed to distinguish between vaccinated and infected animals.”

Prime Minister Tony Blair, according to *The Independent*, belatedly visited Cumbria “to show he was listening to the plight of the farmers. But, confronted with their fury, he was shaken...” The editorial further states that “MAFF is only really concerned with protecting the profits of agribusiness. It was the same story with BSE [Mad Cow Disease], when human health was sacrificed to the same goal.”

The editorial continues: “...if Mr. Blair had visited the Swedish countryside during last week's Stockholm summit, he might have got a clue. A salmonella epidemic that killed 200 people there in 1953 prompted a reappraisal of intensifying agriculture. Since 1972, the country has aimed to have ‘the cleanest agriculture in the world.’ Pesticide use has been cut by 70 percent, pollution by fertilisers by 30 percent, organic farming has boomed, family farms have survived—and agriculture has prospered.”

To quote Caroline Lucas, a British Member of the European Parliament, in *The Independent*: “The sheer absurdity of this ‘food swap’ is shown by the fact that Britain...imported 240,000 tonnes of pork and 125,000 tonnes of lamb, while at the same time exporting 195,000 tonnes and 102,000 tonnes of pork and lamb respectively....It is the race for ever greater international trade and competitiveness that should go up in smoke, not our animals and the future for our farmers, tourism and the countryside.”

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## **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Presents AWI's Albert Schweitzer Medal to**





Jen Rinnick/AWI

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., presenting Schweitzer award to Andrzej Lepper.

## Polish Humane Hog Farm Advocate Andrzej Lepper

On Monday, June 11th, 2001, in front of a packed Mansfield Room of the United States Capitol, the Albert Schweitzer Medal was awarded to Andrzej Lepper. Lepper, who has vowed to stop “concentration camps for animals” from taking root in Poland, is the charismatic President of *Samoobrona* (“Self-defense” in Polish), a major Polish rural union. “The motto that I have adopted and that is adopted by the rest of *Samoobrona*,” Lepper highlighted, “says that if a person is not capable of loving animals and nature they will never be capable of loving another human being.”

Early in 1999, *Samoobrona* forced the Polish government to curb a flood of agricultural imports from the European Union by blockading roads across Poland. In September 1999, after visiting areas in North Carolina infested by industrial hog factories, Lepper launched a campaign, supported by AWI, to prevent Virginia-based Smithfield Foods, the world’s largest pork production company, from realizing its goal of building a network of hog factories in Poland. By June 2000, Smithfield CEO Joe Luter was forced to admit to *The Washington Post* that his plan to establish US “industrial-style” pig farming has no immediate future in Poland.

“Farm animals,” Lepper once told the University of Michigan Law Society, “like any other living beings, possess natural instincts that need to be expressed. It is essential, therefore, to do everything in our power to allow animals raised on our farms an opportunity to live their lives in the most natural conditions possible, to treat them with respect, dignity and empathy. The right to dignity, in the case of farm animals, is the right to live without suffering and without being isolated from their natural environment.”

In his remarks to the gathering (translated by Agnes Van Volkenburgh, who represents Poland on AWI’s International Committee), Lepper criticized the globalists who “pursue money at all costs without paying attention to the health of people, without paying attention to the health and welfare

of animals, without paying attention to nature.” Lepper, the indefatigable Polish farm leader, warned Smithfield Foods Vice President, General Counsel and Senior Advisor to the Chairman, Richard Poulson, that in his efforts to expand into and invade Poland he “will always feel the breath of *Samoobrona* on his neck and if that is not enough he will have to feel the fist of Polish farmers.” He concluded: “This medal is a huge honor not only for me, but for the entire Polish movement that’s involved in this battle for the welfare of animals, the humane treatment of animals, for our environment, and for the safe future of our planet.”

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., President of Water Keeper Alliance and a professor at Pace University Law School, presented the award. Water Keeper Alliance has 67 keepers around the country who seek to protect and restore waterways, including those ravaged by pollution from animal factories. Water Keeper Alliance is leading a broad legal assault against hog factories, which Kennedy has characterized as “extraordinarily cruel” and lamented what he termed the corporate hog farm’s “pollution based prosperity.” During the ceremony, Kennedy recalled a conversation he had with Lepper after the Polish leader toured corporate hog farms along the Neuse River in North Carolina. Kennedy remembered the poignant and provocative reaction that Lepper had, in which he was reminded of “the large state farms that were created during the communist years in Poland that were also notorious for their pollution and their capacity for treating not only the human beings who worked on the land but also the animals themselves as units of production, ignoring the consequences to the community and the environment and public health in their drive to produce short term cash.”

Kennedy asserted: “I think the thing that Animal Welfare Institute has recognized better than anybody else is that the fate of animals is also our fate... We can’t get away with this kind of cruelty to the creatures with whom we share this planet without having some dire karmic consequences to ourselves.” Kennedy praised Lepper’s heroism and courage for “standing up to these bullies” who try to move industrial hog production all over the world, and for Lepper’s efforts to protect “our environment, human dignity, the dignity of these animals and of future generations.” Kennedy congratulated him “for the successful battle that [he has] waged against this criminal, bullying, outlaw industry.”

It was Tom Garrett, a rancher from Wyoming, who had the brilliant idea of inviting Andrzej Lepper and a delegation of Polish activists on a tour of North Carolina and Virginia to observe hog factory farming, then across the country to visit humane pig farms in the Midwest. Tom has been an advisor to the Animal Welfare Institute for many years on a variety of subjects from global wildlife treaties to steel jaw leghold traps. Tom referred to the acute battle against corporate hog farms and the collaborative international war *Samoobrona* and AWI waged against them: “Through Diane Halverson’s videos and Andrzej Lepper’s political right cross, we stopped Smithfield cold in its grandiose scheme to take over Polish pig production with a big network of factory hog farms.”

Diane Halverson, AWI’s farm animal advisor, has devoted herself to preventing the suffering of millions of pigs condemned to life imprisonment in metal and concrete crates in hog factories. She wrote AWI’s Humane Standards for independent family farmers who raise pigs on pasture or in straw bedded barns. Diane noted during her remarks that institutional cruelty such as that in corporate hog farms is often overlooked, but quoted Albert Schweitzer who said, “Whenever an animal is somehow forced into the service of men, every one of us must be concerned for any suffering it bears on that account.”

The Animal Welfare Institute, celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, honors individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the protection of animals with the Albert Schweitzer Medal. This tribute, inaugurated in 1953, has been awarded to deserving individuals ranging from those of modest position who have significantly bettered the welfare of animals on a hands-on basis, to towering public figures who have engendered important changes that have improved the lot of hundreds of thousands of animals. Past recipients include Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Rachel Carson, Senator Bob Dole and Jane Goodall.

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## Humane Slaughter Act Resolution Introduced

In 1958, Senator Hubert Humphrey and Congressman W.R. Poage shepherded the Humane Slaughter Act through the national legislative process. Over forty years later, with great disappointment, it is increasingly evident that the law is being flouted at large slaughter plants across the country. Today, corporate slaughter lines move with such rapidity that every animal cannot be stunned properly and rendered unconscious before being hoisted by a hind leg, violently skinned and brutally dismembered.

To address this horrifying situation, Senator Peter G. Fitzgerald (R, IL) has sponsored a concurrent resolution “Expressing the sense of the Congress that the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1958 should be fully enforced so as to prevent the needless suffering of animals.”

Although enacted over forty years ago, public interest over this issue still runs high today. In April, a *Washington Post* investigative report entitled “Modern Meat/A Brutal Harvest,” revealed that there are “repeated violations of the Humane Slaughter Act at dozens of slaughterhouses” and that USDA inspectors have little support from USDA in enforcing the law. According to the paper, “the USDA has stopped tracking the number of violations and dropped all mentions of humane slaughter from its list of rotating tasks for inspectors.” Senator Fitzgerald, in his statement on the Senate floor, lamented the practical impact of the USDA’s futility in inspecting facilities and recording violations: “This is simply unacceptable. We cannot manage nor regulate what we do not monitor nor measure.”

Thus, S. Con. Res. 45 requests that Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman fully enforce the 1958 law to prevent needless animal suffering, resume tracking Humane Slaughter Act violations and report the USDA’s findings to Congress annually. It further reiterates, “it should be the policy of the United States that the slaughtering of livestock and the handling of livestock in connection with slaughter shall be carried out only by humane methods.” Representatives Constance Morella (R, MD) and Elton Gallegly (R, CA) have introduced a companion resolution in the House of Representatives, H. Con. Res. 175.

During the Congressional deliberations on the original humane slaughter bill in the ’50s, Congressman Poage noted that the meat packing industry, “up until a few months ago [had] done practically nothing to meet the requirement of human kindness, and even decency in the slaughtering of animals.” It’s truly sad that Congress has to remind the USDA and slaughterhouse industry again of the need for basic compassion. The cruelty inflicted on animals in 2001 is even worse than it was when Poage lamented.

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## What’s at stake in Poland?

BY TOM GARRETT

Poland is the last oasis of traditional organic farming in Europe. Tens of millions of acres of enormously productive farmland are tilled without chemicals. Poland contains the last large, free flowing, unpolluted rivers in Europe, the Bug and the Narew. It has magnificent mountains, wetlands and forests, more parkland and protected area than the four largest EU nations combined and by far the most abundant wildlife remaining in Europe. Poland is the only potential EU member with large areas of unspoiled land.

This is the prize that has drawn the agribusiness giants, backed by international bankers, to Polish soil. The first efforts of Big Ag to seize control have been largely thwarted. Earlier this spring, after having washed through the Sejm on a tide of foreign lobbying money, an effort to destroy the Polish Animal Welfare Act was smashed in the Senat by the intervention of the great Polish film director, Andrzej Wajda and other directors and performers. I called it the second “Miracle of the Vistula.”

The biggest, the only really durable, obstacle to US style agribusiness in Poland is the stubborn resistance of Poland’s peasantry. If their resistance is broken, big money will prevail. The stakes are huge. The struggle is only beginning.

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## Transatlantic Victories for Pigs

### In Poland...

Andrzej Lepper, leader of Poland’s *Samoobrona* (“Self-Defense”), has won a substantial place for his rural union



in the Polish Parliament. Reuters called his third place finish with ten percent of the vote “stunning.” According to *The Financial Times*, September 25, 2001, Mr. Lepper said “We will do everything possible to make Poland stop serving as a market for the EU’s agricultural surpluses... If things don’t change, there will be a social explosion.” Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. presented Mr. Lepper, a fierce defender of family hog farms in Poland, with AWT’s Albert Schweitzer medal in June.

### **and the US**

United States District Judge Malcolm J. Howard upheld the right of citizens to sue polluting pork plants in the case of Neuse Riverkeeper, et al. v. Smithfield Foods, Inc. Environmentalists and family farmers are claiming that Smithfield’s cruel corporate pork factories in North Carolina are operating illegally: without proper permits under the Clean Water Act and by disposing of hog waste on fields, thus spreading pollution. In ruling against Smithfield’s motion to have the case dismissed, Judge Howard held that every industrial hog factory must have a Clean Water Act permit and that it is illegal for hog factories to spray hog waste on fields without a permit. Smithfield could face significant civil and criminal liabilities as a direct result.

Waterkeeper Alliance’s Rick Dove commented, “We are very pleased with the Court’s decision, which recognizes citizens’ right to stand up to the millionaire hog barons who have destroyed North Carolina’s waterways, shattered its rural communities, poisoned its groundwater and impoverished family farmers and fishermen.” President of Waterkeeper Alliance, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., said “This is an outlaw industry which can only make money by breaking the law. Smithfield deliberately locates its factories in rural states where it can easily dominate state enforcement agencies. This decision puts every pork factory in the country on notice that the Marshall has come to Dodge.” According to former hog farmer Don Webb, President of the Alliance for Responsible Swine Industries, “This decision will help break Smithfield’s death grip on the American family farm.”

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## **Relief in Store for Sows and Gilts in the European Union**

While United States agribusiness corporations continue to build pig factories, dooming even more animals to a miserable fate, the European Union is preparing to phase out two of the most cruel devices used in raising animals for food. In June 2001, the Agriculture Council of the European Union released a draft amendment to Directive 91/630/EEC that, when finalized later this year, eventually will give pregnant sows and gilts\* great relief from the narrow crates that prohibit them from walking or even turning during their nearly 4-month pregnancy, and from the neck collars and chains that similarly

restrict their movements.

The amendment prohibits new construction of or conversion to the tethering system for sows and gilts. In this system, the sow or gilt wears a neck collar that is attached to the floor by a chain roughly 2 feet long; bars on either side of the animal prohibit her from turning around. Tether systems already in use would be prohibited from January 1, 2006. The amendment requires that sows and gilts—who are social animals—be kept in groups from 4 weeks after breeding until one week before the expected time of farrowing, rather than be kept individually. No new or reconstructed gestation crate systems could be installed after January 1, 2003. Existing gestation crates would be prohibited from January 1, 2013.

Other elements of the amendment require that (a) sows and gilts kept in groups be fed using a system that ensures that each individual can obtain sufficient food, even when competitors for the food are present; (b) to satisfy their hunger and given the need to chew, all pregnant sows and gilts be given a sufficient quantity of bulky or high fiber food as well as high energy food [AWI note: intensively kept pregnant sows are typically fed a restricted diet comprised of a feed concentrate]; (c) sows be given at least a partly solid floor, rather than a fully slatted one (the width of slat openings is regulated); (d) sows kept in groups be given straw or other manipulable materials; (e) minimum pen dimensions and/or space requirements are required for sows and gilts and for pigs from weaning to market weight.

The lengthy phase out period for the barbaric gestation crate is regrettable, as is allowing sows and gilts to be kept in narrow crates, unable to walk or turn, during the first four weeks of pregnancy and while farrowing. Nevertheless, the EU is poised to turn pig farming in a more humane direction and bring relief to affected animals.

\*A gilt is a young female. A sow is an adult female.

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## **USDA Brass Hinders Slaughterhouse Inspections**

A full-page advertisement in *The New York Times* describes the hideous cruelty to cattle at IBP (the world’s largest meat packer in Wallula, Washington), based upon affidavits obtained by Gail Eisnitz of the Humane Farming Association (HFA). (See also *AWI Quarterly*, Vol. 49, No. 4.)

The affidavits document the enormously increased slaughter line speed, which often results in the torture of animals who have not been stunned successfully before moving down the line to be skinned and have their legs chopped off. Washington State’s Prosecutor declined to file criminal charges against IBP—even though he admitted that crimes had occurred.

HFA obtained videotapes at the plant showing that the animals were conscious because no employee or US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspector was permitted to stop the line. Employees feared being fired if they stopped the production line for live, struggling cattle, and the USDA had

permitted the plant to erect a wall blocking the inspector’s view into the killing area. In addition, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), a new meat inspection program highly praised by the Secretary of Agriculture, removed all inspectors from plants’ killing areas. In 1978, the Humane Slaughter Act gave USDA meat inspectors the authority and duty to stop the line if they saw an animal cruelly slaughtered, whether because of equipment failure or human callousness.

At a press conference, union officials representing all 7,000 USDA Inspectors indicated that they would like to go back to the days in which their work was effective because they were able to stop the slaughter line to prevent animal suffering. Other meat inspectors’ union officials happened to be meeting at USDA with Tom Billy, head of the Food Safety and Inspection Service, when Mr. Billy learned of the press conference. Instead of responding to inspectors’ complaints Mr. Billy threw the inspectors out of his office on the grounds that they failed to support Mr. Billy’s famously industry-oriented positions.

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## **Senate Passes Humane Slaughter Act Resolution**

On July 31, 2001 the Senate passed by unanimous consent Senator Peter Fitzgerald’s (R, IL) excellent Resolution, S. Con. Res. 45, calling on the Secretary of Agriculture to enforce the Humane Slaughter Act (see *AWI Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 3). According to the Resolution, full enforcement of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1958 would “(i) prevent needless suffering;” and “(ii) result in safer and better working conditions for persons engaged in the slaughtering of livestock.” S. Con. Res. 45 states that public demand for passage of the Act “was so great that when President Eisenhower was asked at a press conference if he would sign the bill, he replied, ‘If I went by mail, I’d think no one was interested in anything but humane slaughter.’”

The House of Representatives must now act on the companion Resolution, H. Con. Res. 175, introduced by Congresswoman Constance Morella (R, MD), Congressmen Christopher Shays (R, CT) and Elton Gallegly (R, CA).

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## **Congressional Record: Senate**

### **July 9, 2001 - Cruelty to Animals**

Mr. BYRD: *Mr. President, a few months ago, a lady by the name of Sara McBurnett accidentally tapped a sports utility vehicle from behind on a busy highway in California. The angry owner of the bumped vehicle, Mr. Andrew Burnett, stormed back to Ms. McBurnett’s car and began yelling at her; and then reached through her open car window with both hands, grabbed her little white dog and hurled it onto the busy roadway. The lady*

*sat helplessly watching in horror as her frightened little pet ran for its life, dodging speeding traffic to no avail. The traffic was too heavy and the traffic was too swift.*

*Imagine her utter horror. Recently, Mr. Burnett was found guilty of animal cruelty by a jury in a California court, so my faith in the wisdom of juries was restored. Ever since I first heard about this monstrous, brutal, barbaric act, I have wondered what would drive any sane person to do such a thing. There are some people who have blamed this senseless and brutal incident on road rage. But it was not just road rage, it was bestial cruelty. It was and is an outrage. It was an act of sheer depravity to seize a fluffy, furry, innocent little dog, and toss it onto a roadway, and most certainly to be crushed under tons of onrushing steel, iron, glass, and rubber, while its terrified owner, and perhaps other people in other vehicles, watched.*

*There is no minimizing such cruelty and resorting to the lame excuse that, “after all, it was just a dog.”*

*The dog owner, Ms. McBurnett, puts the incident in perspective. Here is what she said: ‘It wasn’t just a dog to me. For me, it was my child.’ A majority of pet owners do believe their pets to be family members. That is the way I look at my little dog, my little dog Billy—Billy Byrd. I look at him as a family member. When he passes away, I will shed tears. I know*



*On July 9th, 2001 Senator Robert C. Byrd (D, WV) (at left with Mrs. Byrd and their dog, Billy Byrd) presented what may be the most profound oratory for animals ever delivered in the US Congress. He turned his considerable influence and skill to address and act on animal cruelty ranging from the little dog thrown into traffic to the suffering and deplorable conditions in animal factories and massive slaughterhouses. Reminiscent of Albert Schweitzer, Senator Byrd said, “...respect for life, all life, and for humane treatment of all creatures is something that must never be lost.”*

that. He is a little white Maltese Terrier. As a pet owner and dog lover, I know exactly what that lady means, and so did millions of other dog lovers who could never even fathom such an act.

For my wife and me, Billy Byrd is a key part of our lives at the Byrd House in McLean. He brings us great joy and wonderful companionship. As I said on this floor just a few months ago, if I ever saw in this world anything that was made by the Creator's hand that is more dedicated, more true, more faithful, more trusting, more undeviant than this little dog, I am at a loss to state what it is. Such are the feelings of many dog owners.

Dogs have stolen our hearts and made a place in our homes for thousands of years. Dogs fill an emotional need in man and they have endured as our close companions. They serve as guards and sentries and watchdogs; they are hunting companions. Some, like Lassie and Rin Tin Tin, have become famous actors. But mostly, these sociable little creatures are valued especially as loyal comforters to their human masters. Petting a dog can make our blood pressure drop. Try it. Our heart rate slows down. Try it. Our sense of anxiety diminishes, just goes away. Researchers in Australia have found that dog owners have a lower risk of heart disease, lower blood pressure, and lower cholesterol levels than those people who do not own dogs. Researchers in England have demonstrated that dog owners have far fewer minor health complaints than those people without a dog. Our dogs are about the most devoted, steadfast companions that the Creator could have designed. They are said to be man's best friend and, indeed, who can dispute it?

The affection that a dog provides is not only unlimited, it is unqualified, unconditional. A faithful dog does not judge its owner, it does not criticize him or her, it simply accepts him or her; it accepts us as we are, for who we are, no matter how we dress, no matter how much money we have or don't have, and no matter what our social standing might be or might not be. No matter what happens, one's dog is still one's friend.

A long, frustrating day at work melts into insignificance—gone—with the healing salve of warm, excited greetings from one's ever faithful, eternally loyal dog.

President Truman was supposed to have remarked: 'If you want a friend in Washington, buy a dog.' I often think about Mr. Truman's words. No wonder so many political leaders have chosen the dog as a faithful companion and canine confidante. Former Senate Republican leader, Robert Dole, was constantly bringing his dog, "Leader"—every day—to work with him. President Bush has "Barney" and "Spot." President Truman had an Irish setter named "Mike." President Ford had a golden retriever named "Lucky." The first President Bush had "Millie."

Of course, there was President Franklin Roosevelt and his dog, "Fala." They had such a close relationship that his political opponents once attempted to attack him by attacking his dog. Eleanor Roosevelt recalled that for months after the death of her husband, every time someone approached the door of her house, Fala would run to it in excitement, hoping that it was President Roosevelt coming home.

The only time I remember President Nixon becoming

emotional, except when he was resigning the Presidency, perhaps more so in the first instance, was in reference to his dog "Checkers."

At the turn of the century, George G. Vest delivered a deeply touching summation before the jury in the trial involving the killing of a dog, "Old Drum." This occurred, I think, in 1869. There were two brothers-in-law, both of whom had fought in the Union Army. They lived in Johnson County, MO. One was named Leonidas Hornsby. The other was named Charles Burden.

Burden owned a dog, and he was named "Old Drum." He was a great hunting dog. Any time that dog barked one could know for sure that it was on the scent of a raccoon or other animal.

Leonidas Hornsby was a farmer who raised livestock and some of his calves and lambs were being killed by animals. He, therefore, swore to shoot any animal, any dog that appeared on his property.

One day there appeared on his property a hound. Someone said: "There's a dog out there in the yard." Hornsby said: "Shoot him."

The dog was killed. Charles Burden, the owner of the dog, was not the kind of man to take something like this lightly. He went to court. He won his case and was awarded \$25. Hornsby appealed, and, if I recall, on the appeal there was a reversal, whereupon the owner of the dog decided to employ the best lawyer that he could find in the area.

He employed a lawyer by the name of George Graham Vest. This lawyer gave a summation to the jury. Here is what he said:

The best friend that a man has in this world may turn against him and become his enemy. His son or daughter whom he has reared with loving care may prove ungrateful. Those who are nearest and dearest to us, those whom we trust with our happiness and our good name may become traitors to their faith. The money that a man has, he may lose. It flies away from him perhaps when he needs it most. A man may sacrifice his reputation in a moment of ill-considered action.

The people who are prone to fall on their knees and do us honor when success is with us may be the first to throw the stone of malice when failure settles its cloud upon our heads. The one absolutely unselfish friend that a man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous, is the dog.

Gentlemen of the jury, a man's dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground when the wintry winds blow, and the snow drives fiercely, if only he can be near his master's side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer, he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounter with the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he were a prince.

When all other friends desert, he remains. When riches take wings and reputation falls to pieces, he is as constant in his love as the Sun in its journey through the heavens.

If fortune drives the master forth and outcast into the

world, friendless and homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him, to guard him against danger, to fight against his enemies.

And when the last scene of all comes, death takes the master in its embrace and his body is laid in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends desert him and pursue their way, there by his graveside will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws and his eyes sad but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true, even unto death.

Well, of course, George Vest won the case. It was 1869 or 1870. In 1879 he ran for the U.S. Senate and was elected and served in the Senate for 24 years. The citizens in Warrensburg, MO, decided to build a statue to Old Drum, and that statue stands today in the courtyard at Warrensburg. Harry Truman contributed \$250 to the building of the statue. I generally ask new Senators from Missouri have they heard about Old Drum. I asked that of KIT BOND one day and he remembered, so upon his first occasion to visit Warrensburg, MO, after that, he brought me a picture of the statue of Old Drum.

So, just a little pat, a little treat, a little attention for the dog is all that a pet asks. How many members of the human species can love so completely? How does man return that kind of affection?

I remember a recent news program that told of a man who was going around killing dogs and selling the meat from them. A couple of years ago, NBC News reported that American companies were importing and selling toys made in China that were decorated with the fur from dogs that were raised and then slaughtered just for that purpose.

And now we have this monster...I do not hesitate to overrate him—who, because of cruelty and rage, decided that he had the right to grab a harmless little dog and hurl it to its certain death. It makes one ponder the question, doesn't it, Which was the animal? Burnett, or Leo, the little dog? Of course we know the answer.

The point is this: We have a responsibility to roundly condemn such abject cruelty. Apathy regarding incidents such as this will only lead to more deviant behavior. And respect for life, all life, and for humane treatment of all creatures is something that must never be lost.

The Scriptures say in the Book of Proverbs, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

Mr. President, I am concerned that cruelty toward our faithful friend, the dog, may be reflective of an overall trend toward animal cruelty. Recent news accounts have been saturated with accounts of such brutal behavior. A year or two ago, it was revealed that macabre videos showing small animals, including hamsters, kittens, and monkeys, being crushed to death were selling for as much as \$300 each. And just a few days ago, there were local news accounts of incidents in Maryland involving decapitated geese being left on the doorsteps of several homes in a Montgomery County community.

Our inhumane treatment of livestock is becoming widespread and more and more barbaric. Six-hundred-pound hogs—they were pigs at one time—raised in 2-foot-wide metal

cages called gestation crates, in which the poor beasts are unable to turn around or lie down in natural positions, and this way they live for months at a time.

On profit-driven factory farms, veal calves are confined to dark wooden crates so small that they are prevented from lying down or scratching themselves. These creatures feel; they know pain. They suffer pain just as we humans suffer pain. Egg-laying hens are confined to battery cages. Unable to spread their wings, they are reduced to nothing more than an egg-laying machine.

Last April, The Washington Post detailed the inhumane treatment of livestock in our Nation's slaughterhouses. A 23-year-old Federal law requires that cattle and hogs to be slaughtered must first be stunned, thereby rendered insensitive to pain, but mounting evidence indicates that this is not always being done, that these animals are sometimes cut, skinned, and scalded while still able to feel pain.

A Texas beef company, with 22 citations for cruelty to animals, was found chopping the hooves off live cattle. In another Texas plant with about two dozen violations, Federal officials found nine live cattle dangling from an overhead chain. Secret videos from an Iowa pork plant show hogs squealing and kicking as they are being lowered into the boiling water that will soften their hides, soften the bristles on the hogs and make them easier to skin.

I used to kill hogs. I used to help lower them into the barrels of scalding water, so that the bristles could be removed easily. But those hogs were dead when we lowered them into the barrels.

The law clearly requires that these poor creatures be stunned and rendered insensitive to pain before this process begins. Federal law is being ignored. Animal cruelty abounds. It is sickening. It is infuriating. Barbaric treatment of helpless, defenseless creatures must not be tolerated even if these animals are being raised for food—and even more so, more so. Such insensitivity is insidious and can spread and is dangerous. Life must be respected and dealt with humanely in a civilized society.

So for this reason I have added language in the supplemental appropriations bill that directs the Secretary of Agriculture to report on cases of inhumane animal treatment in regard to livestock production, and to document the response of USDA regulatory agencies.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies have the authority and the capability to take action to reduce the disgusting cruelty about which I have spoken.

Oh, these are animals, yes. But they, too, feel pain. These agencies can do a better job, and with this provision they will know that the U.S. Congress expects them to do better in their inspections, to do better in their enforcement of the law, and in their research for new, humane technologies. Additionally, those who perpetuate such barbaric practices will be put on notice that they are being watched.

I realize that this provision will not stop all the animal life in the United States from being mistreated. It will not even stop all beef, cattle, hogs and other livestock from being tortured. But it can serve as an important step toward alleviating cruelty and unnecessary suffering by these creatures.



Let me read from the Book of Genesis. First chapter, versus 24-26 reads:

And God said--

Who said? God said.

And God said, Let the Earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the Earth after his kind: and it was so.

And God made--

Who made?

And God made the beasts of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

And God said--

Who said? God said. Who said?

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the Earth.

Thus, Mr. President, God gave man dominion over the Earth. We are only the stewards of this planet. We are only the stewards of His planet. Let us not fail in our Divine mission. Let us strive to be good stewards and not defile God's creatures or ourselves by tolerating unnecessary, abhorrent, and repulsive cruelty.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

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## The Carolinas Say "No" to Hog Factories

At the end of June North Carolina's Governor, Mike Easley, signed a law extending the state's moratorium on construction or expansion of hog factories and their hog waste cesspools. The prohibition, which began in 1997 and would have expired July 2001, will remain in effect until September 1, 2003. South Carolina legislators, concerned that the hog factories would move to their state, also have banned new hog factories.

Residents of North and South Carolina are fighting against growth of industrial hog factories, which produce a huge volume of hog sewage that pollutes the air and water. Numerous studies document the negative consequences of living near hog factories, including a 1999 study conducted by the University of North Carolina School of Public Health that found a significant increase in upper respiratory and gastrointestinal symptoms in people living near these operations. Though the report did not address it, the health consequences of intensive factories are clearly deleterious to the pigs themselves, who are subjected to the appalling conditions twenty-four hours a day for their entire lives.

North Carolina has about 2,400 hog operations with a total of 9.5 million animals, and South Carolina has approximately 300,000 hogs, with most located just over the state line from North Carolina.

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USDA

Half of the pigs that died in the fire were less than one month old.

## 12,000 Pigs Die in Utah Hog Factory Inferno

Over 12,000 pigs were burned alive or died from smoke inhalation in a fire at Circle Four Farms in Cedar City, Utah. The media and Circle Four are treating this devastating tragedy as merely a momentary business setback, completely ignoring the intense suffering of thousands of animals. One of the more callous statements was from Mike Marshall, a veterinarian with the Utah Department of Agriculture who said, "It is incredibly unfortunate, [but] if we like eating them, we have to put up with the risks of raising them." Yet after a tax write-off and insurance claim settlement, Circle Four will be up and running again with its same cruel practices.

Circle Four, which owns 55 hog factories in Utah and markets under the brand name "Farmer John" is no farm; it is an intensive animal factory subsidiary of the largest pork producer in the world, Smithfield Foods. There were no alarms, sprinklers or onsite workers to save the animals when the four large buildings were engulfed in flames.

The public, state officials and the federal government must step forward and reject the intensive and inhumane practices that led to this devastating event. The owners of Circle Four should be prosecuted for their neglect, and every effort made to prevent the rebuilding of this and any other inhumane animal factory. Utah should follow North and South Carolina's leads in enacting moratoriums on new hog factories.

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## Waterkeeper Alliance Keeps the Pressure on Smithfield

Smithfield Foods chairman, president and chief executive officer, Joseph W. Luter III, is feeling the pressure from the Waterkeeper Alliance, headed by environmental attorney Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., for his company's cruel treatment of animals and environmental destruction. He recently announced that Smithfield has "no current plans to significantly increase

the size of its herd" in the US because, "there are enough hogs in this country. If we had unlimited opportunity to expand, we wouldn't."

Waterkeeper Alliance currently has four lawsuits pending against Smithfield for its pollution in North Carolina and Florida. Kennedy said that "Our intention is to sue every one of Smithfield's facilities if we have to...Luter is an outlaw stealing from the public, he raises the standards of living for himself by lowering the quality of life for everybody else."

Luter did say that Smithfield will increase output in Poland and Mexico. Following Smithfield's rejected attempt to implement US style hog factories in Poland by Polish union leader Andrzej Lepper and AWI, the company is trying another tactic. Smithfield wants to develop a system of "contract growers" who will provide land, buildings, equipment and labor to raise Smithfield's "low-fat" piglets provided by Animex, a Polish subsidiary of Smithfield, acquired in 2000. The growers will deliver the pigs back to Animex in exchange for new production technologies and financial support. Animex would receive substantial return on their investment while Polish contract growers would become dependent on the corporation.

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## Multimillion Dollar Settlement for Neighbors of Buckeye Egg Factory Farm

### But no punishment for leaving hens to die of starvation and thirst

In September 2001, a jury awarded more than \$19.7 million in damages to neighbors of the notoriously cruel and environmentally hazardous Buckeye Egg Factory Farm (see *AWI Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 1).

Owner Anton Pohlmann, who was found guilty of cruelty to hens in Germany, moved his operations to Ohio where hens and other farm animals are exempted from the anti-cruelty laws. Ohio law states it is unlawful to "keep animals other than cattle, poultry or fowl, swine, sheep or goats in an enclosure without wholesome exercise and a change of air."

Neighbors of the Buckeye Egg Farm near Croton, in central Ohio, sued the company in August. Jurors heard three weeks of testimony, and awarded the multi-million dollar settlement to cover negligence by one of the world's largest egg factories and nuisance of odors and fly infestations caused by Buckeye Egg Farm and Pohlmann. Compensatory damages, reimbursements for loss of use of property and its diminished value, totaled nearly \$4 million. Punitive damages, ordered as a punishment for wrongful acts, amounted to over \$15.7 million.

The state has filed seven sets of contempt charges for violations such as spilling contaminated water into creeks and failing to stop massive outbreaks of flies and other insects at its

facilities in Wyandot, Hardin and Licking counties.

Congratulations to the plaintiffs for their success in holding Mr. Pohlmann and the Buckeye Egg Factory accountable for at least some of their atrocities!

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## Whistlestop Tour Unites Soldiers in the Fight Against Animal Factories

Community buildings across the Midwest filled with farmers and concerned citizens in early December when Friends of Rural America and Illinois Stewardship Alliance organized a whistlestop tour through Iowa and Illinois for Waterkeeper Alliance Senior Attorney Nicolette Hahn and Southeast Representative Rick Dove. AWI's Farm Animal Advisor, Diane Halverson, organized a Minnesota whistlestop for Waterkeeper Alliance Founder and President Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

The tour galvanized various groups to fight corporate hog factories and led to massive press attention, including the *Omaha World Herald* and *Des Moines Register*. The *St. Paul Pioneer Press* proclaimed "Factory farms face threat of legal action;" while in Northfield, Minnesota, the *Northfield News*' headline read: "Kennedy: 'Day of reckoning coming.'" In Red Wing, Minnesota, the *Red Wing Republican Eagle* proclaimed "Kennedy warns audience of factory farms." The goal of the tour was to warn people living in regions burdened by animal factories about their dangers, identify citizens in need of legal support in their fight against factories, and provide details of Waterkeeper's legal actions against Smithfield Foods, Inc., the world's largest hog raiser and processor.



Doug McCrae/Faribault Daily News

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. speaks about the cruelty and environmental dangers of factory farming at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota.



Waterkeeper Alliance has filed multiple legal actions against Smithfield under the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), the federal Clean Water Act, the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (the federal solid and hazardous waste law), and North Carolina state law. RICO is a powerful tool to rein in outlaw industries. One of the themes of the RICO complaint is that Smithfield's operation is funded by its illegal pollution-based profits. In violating environmental laws, which is an intended part of its business strategy, it is unlawfully shifting the cost of handling its pollution to the American public.

The tour culminated with Mr. Kennedy's stirring speech to an overflow crowd, including a dozen state legislators, attorneys from Minnesota's Office of Attorney General, family farmers, public interest activists, and interested citizens from seven states, at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota on December 7. Preceding the meeting, AWI organized a press conference that included Waterkeeper Alliance, AWI and environmental, public health, and family farm activists, and a reception for Minnesota citizens who suffer from living in the shadow of animal factory pollution, stench and cruelty and who have organized to fight industrial farming.

Following are excerpts from Mr. Kennedy's presentation:

"Instead of raising hogs on farms they shoe-horn thousands of animals into a building where they live in unspeakable misery in tiny confinement crates. They live without straw bedding, without rooting opportunities, without sunshine, without the social interactions that are critical to the happiness of these animals.

"What polluters do is make themselves rich by making other people poor. They raise standards of living for themselves by lowering quality of life for everybody else. And they do that by escaping the discipline of the free market, by forcing the public to pay part of their costs of production.

"I want to make one last point and it's probably the most important point, but I think it takes a higher level of understanding: the most important issue that we're dealing with here is not the environmental democracy issue but the issue of how we treat these animals...at some level, we begin treating these sentient beings with such unspeakable cruelty that it has to come back and hurt us and it's going to destroy our humanity.

"I'm going to close with a proverb from the Lakota people, appropriated to some extent by the environmental movement, where they said 'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.' If we don't return to them something roughly equivalent to what we received, they have a right to ask us some very difficult questions...Thank you for joining us in this fistfight. As long as we don't give up, we can never lose."

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Viva! USA

*Part of the ducks' sensitive upper bills are cut off, as shown above at Grimaud Farms, causing excruciating life-long suffering.*

## Ducks: Yet Another Animal Factory Victim

As the old adage puts it, ducks are not adapted to exist without access to water, but that is exactly what 24 million ducks being raised in deplorably inhumane conditions on duck factories throughout the US are being forced to do each year.

The most common ducks in these factories descend from the largely aquatic Mallard. They can never fly or swim and live in filthy sheds crammed together with hundreds of other ducks. They are denied access to sufficient water for bathing and preening, which is essential to their health. Such deprivation often results in serious eye problems and eventual blindness. They can barely walk because of bone deformities caused by slatted or wire mesh floors.

One of the cruelest practices is bill trimming or "debilling," which destroys the ducks' ability to fulfill their natural instincts to preen and forage for food. The very sensitive top portion of the bill is burned off with a stationary blade or cut off with a knife or scissors without anesthesia, in an attempt to prevent pecking and cannibalizing of other ducks in the overcrowded shed. According to Sarah Stai, a Muscovy duck expert from the University of Miami, this practice does not necessarily address confrontation among Muscovy ducks, which are known to fight with their feet and wings.

According to Lauren Ornelas of Viva! USA, the organization responsible for exposing the cruelty perpetrated on ducks, the largest supplier of factory raised ducks in the US is Maple Leaf Farms headquartered in Indiana, which produces about 15 million ducks a year. Grimaud Farms, located in California and is a major producer of Muscovy factory-raised ducks, processes as many as 8,000 ducks a week. Muscovy ducks are the only modern domestic duck not descended from the Mallard. Their wild counterparts are strong flying birds that inhabit wetlands near wooded areas, using trees for roosting and nesting. Despite misrepresentations by duck

factory operators, the Muscovy duck is indeed a species of waterfowl and does require full body access to water.

Grimaud contacted the University of California at Davis to evaluate its duck husbandry practices. A summary of the study released by Ralph Ernst, Extension Poultry Specialist at the UC Davis, confirmed that Grimaud is indeed an industrial duck factory. The report justifies Grimaud's practice of bill trimming and confinement as a "carefully planned program for duck husbandry that considers the welfare of the ducks under their care." Mr. Ernst's writings clearly demonstrate his support and promotion of the cruel methods employed by those in the intensive animal factory industry.

Based on the initial review and findings at Grimaud, Mr. Ernst is developing a set of guidelines for raising ducks. AWI received a draft copy of the UC Davis study from Grimaud for review and comments after requesting to discuss the issue. Following consultations with avian veterinarians from the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights and the Muscovy duck expert at the University of Miami, AWI determined that the study, if enacted as written, is far from humane.

If you shop in any of the following stores please urge them to stop selling ducks raised in cruel and inhumane duck factories such as Maple Leaf and Grimaud Farms: Wal-Mart SuperCenter, Kroger's, Albertson's, Safeway, Trader Joe's, and Whole Foods/Fresh Fields.

### Grimaud: Full of Foie Gras

Grimaud is not only the leading supplier of Muscovy ducks in the US, it also provides ducklings to Sonoma Valley Foie Gras, one of only two foie gras producers in the US—the other being Hudson Valley Foie Gras. However, this relationship does not end with the ducklings. Grimaud then markets the final Sonoma Valley Foie Gras product. Even though Grimaud claims not to be involved in the inhumane process of force-feeding the ducks, they do handle almost every other aspect of this cruel business.

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## Preserving Poland's Family Farms

BY TOM GARRETT

If London is a city of pigeons, Warsaw in winter, before the return of spring migrants, is a city of crows. Saski (Saxon) Park, in downtown Warsaw, contains a full range of European corvids. Jackdaws swirl around the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Rooks strut and caw. There are Alpine choughs, acrobatic fliers with curved, yellow beaks and magpies with iridescent tails. Flocks of European jays, large, noisy birds with brown, black and white markings often appear; the smaller corvids, nutcrackers and starlings, are abundant. All give a wide berth to the formidable 20 inch, gray and black hooded crows, the common crow of northern Europe and dominant species, save one, in matters corvine. Ravens themselves,

are not urban birds. But jogging in first light on a Sunday morning, I finally saw a pair of ravens sitting together on the park's highest monument, regarding me, it seemed, silently and wisely.

The profusion of bird life in Poland's capital is no anomaly. Poland's forests, untouched river floodplains, vast tracts of preserved marshes, millions of hectares of farmland unpoisoned by pesticides or herbicides, are home to over 200 avian species driven to rarity or extinction in Western Europe. There is no better gauge of the ecological health of Poland vs. Western Europe than the status of the white stork. More than a quarter of the world's remaining white storks—over 40,000 pairs—nest in Poland compared to 3-4,000 in Germany, 400 in Austria, less than 100 in France, 8 in Denmark and none in Belgium. For some birds, the Greater Spotted Eagle perhaps, and the Great Snipe, dependence is absolute; they survive as Poland endures.

While Poland remains an oasis, it is an oasis besieged. All that Poland has sheltered from the ecological havoc beyond its borders—undammed rivers, virgin temperate forests, an aquatic ecosystem larger than Belgium, a traditional, peasant based agriculture—is acutely at risk from European Union



Photos by Diane Halverson

*A 40 acre pasture, complete with a water system, movable hutches and a self-feeder at Barka's 1,000 acre farm in western Poland. The hutches are filled with straw and large enough for a grown man to recline.*





Rare Polish spotted pig follows a caretaker at Barka's Chudopczyce farm.

(EU) demands of economic subjugation as the price for Poland's accession to the EU and from an interlocking phalanx of multinational corporations and banks.

With foreign takeover of Poland's industry all but consummated and once powerful unions impotent, the corporate-bureaucratic assault is aimed at the 25 percent of Poland's population living on farms and in tiny rural villages. The aim of the EU converges precisely with the designs of multinational agribusiness: "modernize" Polish agriculture by driving 1.2 million of the nation's two million farm families off the land, thereby facilitating replacement of traditional agriculture by industrial agriculture.

Poland runs the risk of meeting the same fate as the United Kingdom. There, almost as a template for what is now happening in Poland, EU guidelines were used as a pretext for shutting down the great majority of the UK's small slaughterhouses. By wiping out small slaughterhouses, the small shops relying on them were denied a source of supply and small farmers who sold to them were denied a market.

As multinationals took over, the average length of time animals waited in trucks to be slaughtered increased seven fold. There was a vast increase in the export, import, and suffering of live animals. Food poisoning, almost unknown in the UK, increased dramatically. Outbreaks of mad cow disease, swine fever, and finally foot and mouth disease ravaged the island. In the wake of the foot and mouth disaster, livestock were reduced to smoldering pyres and British tourism took a 15 billion pound loss.

It is upon the struggle for rural Poland, pitting the massed power of banks and bureaucracy against indefatigable farmers that the environmental future of the nation hinges.

### **Beating Back Big Agriculture**

In September 1999 Smithfield Food's CEO Joe Luter made a grandiloquent promise to "repeat Smithfield's American success in Poland." AWI responded by bringing a delegation of Polish farm leaders to the US to see firsthand what lay ahead if Luter succeeded. Horrified at what he saw, Andrzej Lepper, the head of Poland's formidable *Samoobrona* (Self-Defense) farmer's union, vowed to halt the Smithfield invasion. In July 2000, in an interview in *The Washington Post*, Luter admitted that his effort to establish "vertically integrated pork production" in Poland had been stopped in its tracks.

Undeterred, Luter telegraphed his next move: Smithfield's future in Poland, he said, depended on the Polish government making the difficult political decision to close thousands of "backyard slaughterhouses" with which Animex, Smithfield's subsidiary, was forced to compete.

AWI then invited Dr. Bartosz Winiecki, head of Poland's National Veterinary Chamber, an organization representing Poland's 10,000 veterinarians, Renata Beger, pig farmer and small slaughterhouse owner, and five colleagues for a tour of the American Midwest. After passing through the hog factory-blighted counties of northern Missouri, where one can drive for twenty miles without losing sight of identical metal hog sheds, our friends spent a few days in Iowa visiting family farms raising pigs humanely under AWI criteria. Upon her return to Poland, Ms. Beger immediately converted her hog barns to the deep straw. AWI next worked to introduce the Niman Ranch hog raising system to Poland. We worked with the Barka Self Help Foundation, which combats poverty by creating self-sustaining communities, to set up a model pasture and deep straw system of raising hogs.

While AWI demonstrated humane husbandry, "Big Ag's" Polish assault entered a critical phase. In August 2000, Luter met for three hours with Prime Minister Buzek, reportedly demanding that the small slaughterhouses be shut down. Ratcheting up the pressure, Smithfield began closing the packing plants it had acquired with such fanfare less than two years earlier. Thousands of workers lost their jobs.

In November, Chief Veterinarian Andrzej Komorowski presented the Polish Parliament with a "model law" drafted in his department within the Agriculture Ministry, designed, he said, to "harmonize" Poland's Veterinary Act with EU regulations. He stated that no more than a third of Poland's 4200 slaughterhouses would "have a chance" to survive under the new regulations. Ultimately, 70 percent of Polish "meat production" would occur in 24 large slaughterhouses.

That Komorowski would emerge as a tool of foreign agribusiness surprised no one. He is under investigation—among other things—for arranging the "disappearance" of tens of thousands of tons of imported boneless chicken, that could not be legally sold in Poland, between Gdansk and the Ukrainian border.

In April 2001, the Agriculture Ministry brought a package of amendments before the Agriculture Commission of Poland's parliament. The bill was managed by SLD (post-communist) deputy Jozef Pilarczyk, a long-time supporter of foreign agribusiness. Despite fierce opposition, he succeeded in passing the bill in the Sejm. President Kwasniewski vetoed portions of the bill. Unfortunately, however, eclipsed by a battle over animal welfare, the Veterinary Act amendments survived to become law.

### **The Tightening Siege**

In February 2002, I flew to Warsaw to join AWI's Polish consultant Marek Kryda and AWI International Committee member Dr. Agnes Van Volkenburgh at a conference on slaughterhouses jointly sponsored by *Samoobrona* and AWI.

The conference was chaired by Renata Beger, now the Secretary of *Samoobrona*, and attracted 200 slaughterhouse owners and workers from throughout Poland.

Dr. Van Volkenburgh explained how "consolidation" of slaughterhouses in the US had not only opened the way to "vertical integration" and factory farming but vastly increased the suffering of animals who languish long hours in trucks waiting to die and are subjected to atrocities in the plants. She pointed out that far from improving hygiene, "consolidation" led to a 500 percent increase in US food poisoning and that it made meatpacking the most dangerous occupation in America.

Dr. Jacek Leonkiewicz from the National Veterinary Chamber then rose to present a grim scenario. He described a situation in which the Ministry of Agriculture is moving, with complete impunity, to do exactly what foreign agribusiness wants: shut down virtually every small slaughterhouse in Poland. Very small slaughterhouses, with a capacity of under seven tons per day, are to be eliminated arbitrarily. Veterinary regulations applying to the remainder, said Dr. Leonkiewicz, who has 20 years experience inspecting slaughterhouses, make no sense at all from the standpoint of hygiene or humaneness. They were, he said, deliberately designed to overwhelm smaller slaughterhouses with financially burdensome retrofitting and forced them to close.

Dr. Leonkiewicz stressed that EU is not responsible for the Polish regulations, especially the bias against small slaughterhouses, noting that in Hesse and other German states small slaughterhouses are subsidized to ensure that they remain open. He predicted that enforcement of current regulations would allow no more than 50 slaughterhouses, almost all large, foreign-owned industrial plants, to remain in operation.

Owners buttressed Leonkiewicz's conclusions with first hand accounts. We learned that Jozef Pilarczyk, the new Vice Minister of Agriculture, had suddenly truncated the July 2002 deadline for applying for an extension of time to finish retrofitting. If his ruling stands, it means that over 2000 slaughterhouses unable to submit paperwork by March 1st have lost the opportunity and have little chance to survive.

We were left with no doubt that, as in Britain and the US, the centerpiece of the corporate takeover strategy—although other food processing has by no means been ignored—is the "consolidation" of slaughterhouses. It was clear, too, that the Polish Ministry of Agriculture has become a virtual captive of foreign agribusiness and that the siege of Poland is rapidly tightening.

### **The Politics of Survival**

In the September 2001 parliamentary elections, the discredited Solidarity government was wiped from the political map and replaced by a post-communist (SLD) and peasant party (PSL) coalition. While there is no sign that the new government is an improvement over its predecessor, the election brought a breath of hope. *Samoobrona* took 53 seats in the 460 seat Sejm. Two other new parties, Law and Justice, formed expressly to combat governmental corruption, and the ultra-nationalist

League of Polish Families gained 83 additional seats. These reform parties form a core of opposition to foreign takeover. With unemployment at 20 percent and government poll numbers plunging (the latest showed 63 percent disapproval), support for them is rapidly growing. The anti-corruption campaigns of Andrzej Lepper and Lech Kaczynski, head of Law and Justice, are a particular danger to companies like Smithfield. For all its money "Big Ag" is critically dependent on captive agencies and inside operatives.

Ultimately, the outcome of the struggle will depend on Polish farmers themselves, families who live on farms tilled sustainably, in many places, for a thousand years. Polish peasants carried out a fierce partisan campaign against the Germans and faced down the communists on the issue of collectivization. During the Soviet-Polish crisis of 1956, the greatest deterrent to Soviet invasion was a partisan campaign to thwart their supply lines to Germany. In 1999, farmers blockaded roads throughout Poland; at one point there were 2000 roadblocks. Poland's farmers will not go gently into the good night.

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## **AWI's Pig Husbandry Program Sets a National Standard**

A modest collaboration that began in 1997 between the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) and one family farmer has, in 2002, become a national program with nearly 200 farmers adhering to AWI's Humane On-Farm Pig Husbandry Standards. Although the standards were developed to preserve the welfare of pigs, they appeal to an array of organizations with diverse interests.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in Manhattan, on May 9, 2002, when America's leading chefs and environmentalists gathered to endorse AWI's standards. The press event, held at Blue Smoke/Jazz Standard, included an overview of AWI's standards and footage contrasting sow factories with humane farms. Paul Willis, a farmer from Niman Ranch, one of the nation's leading purveyors of products from humane family farms, and Bill Niman, co-founder of Niman Ranch, testified that AWI's standards are the best for both animals and farm families. Leaders from Waterkeeper Alliance, Slow Food USA, Chefs Collaborative, Earth Pledge Foundation and Global Resource Action Center for the Environment (GRACE) announced why they endorse AWI's standards. These groups recognize the importance of protecting pig welfare, but they see additional merit in the standards: protecting water quality, revitalizing a culture of traditional, sustainable family farms and protecting the effectiveness of antibiotics in human and veterinary medicine. Chef Michael Romano made an impassioned statement:

*Good morning! I am Michael Romano, one of the proprietors of Blue Smoke/Jazz Standard, and along with my partners, Danny Meyer, David Swingthamer, Paul Bolles-Beaven, Richard Coraine, as well as our*



*Executive Chef Ken Callaghan, please allow me to welcome you wholeheartedly to our new restaurant. We are very pleased to host this breakfast.*

*It strikes me that what you all are about here is some terribly important work...I took a wonderful visit to the Iowa home of Paul Willis and his family. I was very impressed not only by the gracious hospitality of my hosts, but also by the pigs we met out in Paul's fields. And I use the word 'met' intentionally because it felt like a genuine meeting, a connection even, with animals living as they were meant to live.*

*You know...I decided, and I wish more people would, that if we feel it is our right to raise animals for our consumption, then we are charged with the duty to do so responsibly, humanely, and with respect for the sentient beings that these creatures are. I thank you all for leading this good fight.*

In addition to groups involved in the May 9th event, Public Citizen and New England Livestock Alliance have endorsed AWI's husbandry standards.

### May 9th Statement Excerpts

"It is a pleasure for us at Earth Pledge to support AWI's initiative and to endorse the standards that will help consumers know how the animals they are eating have been treated. I applaud AWI and Niman Ranch for offering us opportunities to buy food that is good for us, good for the environment and good for the animals as well."

—Leslie Hoffman, Executive Director,  
Earth Pledge Foundation

"By signing on to AWI's standards, GRACE is saying consumers do have a choice. Co-ops and companies like Niman Ranch are springing up all over the country, where independent family farmers are raising animals humanely, respecting the environment, and are offering healthy, high quality meat. GRACE is proud to stand here today with the future of our food."

—Diane Hatz, Communications and  
Marketing Director, GRACE

"We can't do this work alone. The issues are very complex and not simply reduced down to easy terms like organic or natural...Busy in our kitchens cooking for our patrons, we look to organizations like the Animal Welfare Institute and Waterkeeper Alliance to provide us with tools upon which to base our purchasing....That is why we are happy to have AWI's protocols, to endorse them and to distribute them to our members."

—Peter Hoffman, National Chair, Chefs Collaborative

"AWI's agenda is reasonable and workable—their standards require that pigs be allowed to behave naturally and be raised by independent family farmers. Waterkeeper Alliance is proud to endorse AWI's humane husbandry standards."

—Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., President, Water Keeper Alliance

"...The time has come for people to start demanding information about where their food comes from and how it is raised. AWI standards will help consumers understand more and feel assured that what they are eating deserves the title of nourishment."

—Patrick Martins, President, Slow Food USA  
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## Considering Cruel Chicken Confinement

In May, Yale University convened a unique conference examining "The Chicken: Its Biological, Social, Cultural, and Industrial History From Neolithic Middens to McNuggets." The raising of chickens for eggs or meat by corporate agribusiness results in terrific cruelty for the birds, threats to public health and factory workers, and the systematic degradation of the environment. The Yale conference explored these consequences and discussed examples of alternative, humane, and sustainable farming methods.

Like her wild ancestors, today's domestic chicken is a nestbuilder. When hens were first confined to brutal cages in the 1920s, a small nesting area was built into the cage. In the 1930s, cages for individual hens were introduced—without a nest area. By the 1950s, wire cages with 3-6 birds in each, arranged in tiers, became commonplace. Cruelty became institutionalized in the keeping of hens for commercial egg production. Today, once-common small, outdoor flocks and barns with nest boxes and perches that took biology into account, allowing the birds to build nests, dustbathe, preen, stretch their legs and extend and flap their wings are a rarity. The denial of the birds' natural behavior and movement has led to decades of suffering from osteoporosis and muscle



United Poultry Concerns

*These hens, imprisoned for life in battery cages, can never fulfill their inborn nature as recorded in The Bible: "Even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." Matthew 23:37*

weakness to bone breakage when hens are removed from cages, transported to slaughter, then cruelly shackled and hung for

slaughter.

The Yale conference represents an admirable start toward recognizing the barbaric cruelty and suffering inflicted upon chickens by humans, hopefully with a view toward rectifying this unfathomable misery. For more information about the conference, visit <http://www.yale.edu/agrarianstudies/chicken/index.html>.

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## Animal Factories Don't Want You to See Their Cruelty

State legislators in Illinois and Missouri recently had a lesson in American democracy when they introduced legislation that would have taken away an important piece of basic American freedom—the public's right to know. These legislators had hoped to deny public access to an industry impacting millions of animals and people, but their attempt was quickly quashed.

Earlier this year legislation quietly passed the Illinois and Missouri State Houses that would have made it illegal for anyone, including the press, to photograph or videotape animal factory operations for any reason. The authors of the legislation and its supporters in the state Farm Bureaus convinced other legislators that this bill was crucial to ensure the future of agricultural "research," but in reality they wanted to deflect public attention from the atrocities being committed on animals and to the fouling of the food supply behind the closed doors of animal factories.

Fortunately what the authors of this bill feared the most is exactly what brought about its demise—public awareness. As soon as the public and the media became aware of the scheme, it failed in the Senate. Instances like this show the importance of keeping the public informed about what is taking place in these animal factories and within our political system. However, much more needs to be done. The public should demand that the doors to these factories be thrown open to expose wanton animal cruelty and the reckless attitude of those playing with America's food supply.

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## Congress Wants the Humane Slaughter Act Enforced

Although the Federal Humane Methods of Slaughter Act was enacted in 1958 to ensure that animals are rendered unconscious prior to slaughter, the enormous increase in line speed demanded by big slaughterhouses means cattle and pigs are often fully conscious when being skinned and cut up. Now, Congress is demanding that the United States Department of Agriculture enforce the law properly. A Resolution was included in the just-passed contentious farm bill calling on the Secretary of Agriculture to track violations of the Humane

Slaughter Act "and report the results and relevant trends annually to Congress." The Amendment was based on S. Con. Res. 45 introduced by Senator Peter Fitzgerald (R-IL) to prevent the torture of animals killed for food.

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## 15,500,000 Laying Hens at Stake

On April 22, 2002, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Director Christopher Jones proposed revocation of Buckeye Egg Farm's (BEF) 15 wastewater permits. The permits allow BEF to operate legally 125 facilities at four locations, which confine a total of 15,500,000 laying hens in battery cages. BEF also operates a hatchery and breeding barns. This unprecedented action is in response to a culmination of significant, ongoing compliance problems at all BEF facilities. "For years, citizens and the environment have suffered as a result of the company's poor management and broken promises," Jones said.

The proposed action would have become final on May 23, 2002. However, on May 22, BEF filed an appeal, and it can continue to operate while the appeal is pending. A hearing is expected in July. For the sake of the hens, the environment, and the health of the people that live near the factories, BEF should be banned expeditiously from Ohio as it has been from Germany, where Buckeye Egg Farm's owner, Anton Pohlmann, is prohibited for life from operating such an establishment because of his great cruelty to hens. (See Winter 2001 *AWI Quarterly* and Fall 2001 *AWI Quarterly*.)

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## Localizing Animal Agriculture

During the WSSD, AWI's Adam Roberts participated in a presentation on "The Livestock Revolution: Problems for the Environment, Development, Human Health and the Animals,"



Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary

*Small scale animal agriculture benefits local people without the hazards of intensive animal factories.*



describing our work to promote humane husbandry standards for pigs in order to raise the animals in a compassionate and environmentally friendly way. He also detailed our work to prevent agribusiness giant Smithfield Foods from infiltrating countries such as Poland, which cling perilously to the last remaining vestiges of their family farming way of life.

The discussion was met with great enthusiasm by audience members, including one South African farmer who noted that he recently acquired a small parcel of land, like many impoverished South Africans, and that he hopes to raise his animals on that land in accordance with AWI's humane principles.

Meanwhile, Compassion in World Farming (CIWF) released a new report on the detrimental impacts of animal agriculture, which offers case studies from a variety of countries including China, Pakistan, and Brazil. The report concludes that "Food security, the environment, food safety, human nutrition and animal welfare are all put at risk by the present continued support for industrial animal farming." The author, Leah Garces, urges policymakers to "turn away from industrial animal agriculture and support a more humane and sustainable form of food production."

According to CIWF, products from industrial animal agriculture in developing countries are often exported or cost more than most impoverished people can afford. Truly sustainable agriculture recognizes the need to embrace family farming and reject corporate agribusiness, whose costs are too great for the environment and the impoverished.

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## Farm Animal Health and Well-Being Paper Now Available

AWI's Farm Animal Economic Advisor Marlene Halverson wrote a Technical Working Paper (TWP) on Farm Animal Health and Well-Being for the State of Minnesota. She prepared her paper in consultation with seven international animal welfare scientists, and it is part of Minnesota's Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) on animal agriculture. The State had contracted with a number of technical consultants including Marlene to prepare TWPs to bring together the latest scientific information and recommend ways to make animal agriculture more responsive to public concerns.

This 325 page paper, which was described in a veterinary newsletter as a "substantive" critique, is available on Minnesota's website at [http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/geis/TWP's/HalversonTWPAnHealth&WB\(3\).pdf](http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/geis/TWP's/HalversonTWPAnHealth&WB(3).pdf).

A limited number of compact disc copies are also available upon request from the Animal Welfare Institute for \$10 to cover CD production, postage, and handling.

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Photos by Jen Riniack/AWI

**Top:** Visitors learn about the suffering inflicted by intensive farming.

**Bottom:** Two residents taking time to stop by one of the day's lectures.

## Life on Ooh Mah Nee Farm

On one hundred acres of rolling farmland in western Pennsylvania, more than one thousand cows, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, rabbits, and turkeys call Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm their home and have been doing so since its founding by Cayce Mell and Jason Tracy in 1995. On August 4, 2002, these residents, most of whom were displaced, abused, and/or abandoned by the intensive animal factory industry, welcomed the public for the Farm's first open house.

The day began with the grand opening of the Humane Education Center, dedicated to enlightening each visitor to the brutal reality of intensive farming by offering informative literature on the tragedy of laying hens condemned to life in small battery cages and the immense suffering of all farm animals in slaughterhouses. A viewing area for documentaries and other videos also allows the public a glimpse at the cruelty of the intensive farming industry.

Visitors were invited to take self-guided tours that revealed many stories of the harsh lives these farm animals endured before coming to Ooh-Mah-Nee. Two of the most horrific are of the more than 600 Buckeye Egg Farm hens rescued from the Ohio factory by the staff of Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm in September 2000 (see *AWI Quarterly*, Winter 2001), and of the 25 cows headed to a slaughterhouse until a traffic accident involving their double-decker transport trailer led to their



*The animals can enjoy green wide-open spaces.*

rescue, again by Ooh-Mah-Nee. A happier story is that of the friendly and intelligent Nubian goats, who were given to Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm by a retiring humane dairy farmer, and who will spend their remaining years roaming the pastures. Also on the tour is the new animal hospital, which in addition to veterinary care provides a heated and predator proof infirmary through the winter months—a novel comfort for most of its once-abused victims.

To learn more about Ooh-Mah-Nee Farm please visit [www.oohmahneefarm.org](http://www.oohmahneefarm.org). They welcome visitors, and the outstanding staff is available to speak to groups and at special events.

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## Tail Docking Dairy Cattle

BY MARLENE HALVERSON

Tail docking of dairy cattle, or amputating half or more of the cow's tail, first became a routine practice among dairy farmers in New Zealand. Today, it is also practiced in Australia and Ireland and is becoming routine on an increasing number of North American dairy farms. The procedure is banned in the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Tail docking is a mutilation and causes injury to the animal. Generally, it is performed on an unanesthetized animal. In one to two day old calves, a tourniquet may be applied to the tail before amputating with scissors. In some cases, heated scissors are used to cauterize the stump simultaneously with cutting. In 6-8 week old calves, an emasculator (used in crushing testicles during castration of male calves) is used to crush the tail, and then the tail may be cut off below the crushed area. In heifers and grown cattle, tail docking usually involves applying a tight rubber ring around the tail. The rubber ring reduces oxygen to the tail below the ring. The necrotic tail below the rubber ring may be amputated with pruning shears or it may be left to fall off. In addition to the acute pain inflicted at the time of docking, there is the potential for chronic pain due to neuroma (a tumor composed of nerve tissue that forms at the injury site) formation in the docked stump. Similarly, human amputees have described pain, itching, or discomfort

in the limbs they no longer have; a condition referred to as "phantom limb."

Though it has been assumed that dirty tails can contaminate udders, increasing the incidence of mastitis (a painful disease of the udder) and reducing milk purity, research shows that areas of the body where cows become soiled with manure do not closely correspond with areas reached by intact tails.

The tail is an important tool for protecting the cow from flies. Research shows that docked cows spend considerably more time than intact cows in fly avoidance behavior and that inability to swat flies results in greater fly numbers on docked cows as fly numbers increase, possibly indicating that docked cows are uncomfortable, as cows tend to stand when they are uncomfortable because cows have a biological need to lie down 9-14 hours each day in order to ruminate efficiently and produce milk. Fly avoidance behavior can disturb rumination



*The purpose of the tail is to ensure a cow's well-being.*



Photos: Marlene Halverson

*Tail-docking is both painful and debilitating.*



and milk production. Fly avoidance behaviors also disturb grazing. Research has further indicated that cows use tail postures in signaling to other cows. Without a tail, the cow is deprived of this method of communication.

Cows rely on the endowments nature has given them for survival and for well-being. We have choices they do not have when it comes to designing housing systems and tailoring husbandry practices. Our choices should embrace both the integrity and well-being of these animals. Tail docking is not a universal practice in the North American dairy industry yet, and some dairy farmers would never think of docking their cows' tails. For them, tails are indispensable parts of the cows' anatomy both practically and aesthetically.

Full article and citations to references used in this article are available at the AWI website: [www.awionline.org/farm/taildockdairy](http://www.awionline.org/farm/taildockdairy).

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## Zapping Irradiation

2002 saw the single largest meat recall in history—27.4 million pounds of turkey and chicken! Not surprisingly, Americans suffer from foodborne illnesses. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 76 million Americans get sick each year, 325,000 are hospitalized, and about 5,000 die due to foodborne pathogens. The majority of these cases are associated with contaminated meat. Cows, pigs, and chickens are subjected to increasingly deleterious housing and slaughter conditions that encourage bacterial contamination. Nonetheless, when people get sick or die industry representatives and the United States Department of Agriculture quickly blame consumers for not cooking meat thoroughly. Most recently, corporate interests are promoting irradiation as a “solution” to the contamination problem.

Unbeknownst to most Americans, a substantial amount of meat is already irradiated. Food irradiation is the deliberate exposure of food to ionizing radiation in an attempt to kill pathogens that cause illness. Industry representatives advocate irradiation to prevent the public relations disaster of people getting sick and to extend the shelf life of meat for export purposes. Rightly so, there is consumer skepticism of this technology, but in an attempt to deceive the public, industry is petitioning the Food and Drug Administration to rename the process “cold pasteurization” and to request that labeling be voluntary. Currently, irradiated meat products sold in grocery stores must bear the international symbol for irradiation and a statement saying they have been “treated by irradiation.” However, there is no labeling requirement for irradiated food served in restaurants, schools, or by other food service providers.

Labeled or not, irradiation neither removes contaminants that cause illness nor addresses how they got there in the first place. Meat contamination coincides with a dramatic increase in inhumane factory farming practices, substantial cutbacks in federal food safety inspectors, and dangerously accelerated

line speeds at slaughtering and processing facilities.

The most common sources of contamination are the inherently filthy and inhumane conditions of massive factory farms. The use of irradiation does nothing to reform the cruelty animals suffer in factories where pigs are confined in crowded and barren conditions, where sows are housed in crates so narrow they cannot walk or turn around, and where chickens raised for meat spend their short lives indoors, standing in their own feces. It is in these cramped, dark, damp conditions that bacteria proliferate.

Irradiation also masks cruel conditions in slaughterhouses. Rather than irradiate meat at the end of the processing line, USDA should station inspectors, on a full-time basis, for the purpose of enforcing the Humane Slaughter Act, at those critical points in the handling and slaughtering process where violations are most common, such as the unloading and handling areas and the stunning and bleeding areas. Furthermore, line speeds in slaughterhouses must be drastically reduced. Current line speeds prevent animals from being stunned in accordance with the Humane Slaughter Act. Improperly stunned animals thrash about in unnecessary pain and fear resulting in the contamination of meat with partially digested food or fecal matter.

Far from being a solution, irradiation masks the food safety problems caused by inhumane conditions at factory farms and slaughterhouses. AWI will continue to work for comprehensive food safety policies that protect farm animals and prevent foodborne illness. For more information visit [www.citizen.org/cmep/foodsafety/foodirrad/](http://www.citizen.org/cmep/foodsafety/foodirrad/).

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## Buyer Beware:

### Comments to USDA Critical

An increasing amount of meat is marketed with claims such as “free-range” and “antibiotic-free.” The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is currently seeking public comment on proposed definitions for “USDA Verified” claims. Clear and meaningful language will provide consumers with important information about how animals are raised. Below, in bold type, are USDA’s proposed claims followed by AWI’s recommendation of how USDA must strengthen their definitions and remove potential loopholes that would be exploited by industry. Please write to USDA by March 31, 2003 requesting these changes.

- **“No subtherapeutic antibiotics added” or “Not fed antibiotics”** Animals can receive antibiotics by means other than feed. USDA must alter the second phrase to read: “Not administered antibiotics.” USDA’s proposed definition for these phrases includes the statement, “Livestock are not fed subtherapeutic levels of antibiotics.” USDA should change the definition to read: “Livestock do not receive subtherapeutic levels of antibiotics.”
- **“Free Range, Free Roaming or Pasture Raised”** USDA’s definition for this phrase regarding the environment

provided to cattle, sheep and swine is loophole-ridden. It should be re-defined to require that: 1) “Each individual animal shall have continuous, unconfined and unobstructed access to pasture throughout their life;” 2) “Pasture” include: “Vegetative cover and environment appropriate to the species in terms of diet and natural behavior;” and 3) “Animal density must be restricted so that animals can fulfill normal patterns of behavior and so that healthy pasture or range is maintained.”

- **“Grass fed”** USDA’s proposed language would allow farmers confining animals in feedlots to make a “grass-fed” claim. USDA must require that: Animals have had continuous, unconfined and unobstructed access to grass (including legumes and forbs) pastures throughout their life. When free-standing forage is unavailable during the winter season cattle will continue to be fed an 85 percent forage derived diet.”

The address for USDA is: Chief, Standardization Branch, Livestock and Seed Program, AMS, USDA, Room 2603-S, Stop 0254, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0254. Comments can also be emailed to [marketingclaim@usda.gov](mailto:marketingclaim@usda.gov). Refer to Docket No. LS-02-02. Comments submitted by AWI to USDA can be viewed at [www.awionline.org/farm](http://www.awionline.org/farm).

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## AWI’s Humane Husbandry Program Expands; Rabbits Hop Onto the Scene

Every year in the United States, over nine billion farm animals are raised, transported, and slaughtered for food. The vast majority of these animals must endure months, or even years, of intensive confinement and grossly inhumane conditions. Federal and state anti-cruelty laws inadequately protect farm animals and, in some cases, specifically exclude them. Furthermore, husbandry standards that are not truly humane are emerging from industry groups and agricultural organizations that are less concerned about animal welfare than they are about capturing the higher prices customers will pay for products marketed as humanely raised. Therefore, in a continuing effort to reduce unnecessary pain and fear inflicted on farm animals, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) is expanding its husbandry program by developing humane criteria for all farm animals.

The impetus to expand the husbandry program is not only AWI’s successful pig program but also the growing number of requests AWI receives from farmers and retailers for humane criteria. This presents AWI with an unprecedented opportunity to influence how farm animals are treated. In addition to humane criteria for pigs, AWI has already completed standards for rabbits. The interest in rabbits came about when a regional meat manager for a national grocery chain contacted AWI for such guidelines. When none were found, AWI developed them. Among other provisions, AWI rabbit standards require



Caroline Gilbert/adopt-a-rabbit.org



Compassion in World Farming

**Top:** Rescued rabbits reside at the Fund for Animals’ Rabbit Sanctuary. **Bottom:** Rabbits, who instinctively run and dig, are confined in factories to wire mesh cages and subjected to artificial lighting to increase production.

that the animals are weaned at a natural age, have bedding, and are allowed to run and burrow.

In America, over six million rabbits are raised for meat. The majority, if not all, of these animals are confined in barren, elevated wire-mesh cages frighteningly similar to the way in which laying hens are kept in factories. As is common in animal factories, does (female breeding rabbits) are forced to reproduce at many times their natural rate, and young rabbits are prematurely weaned causing additional stress to the doe and her young. Does and bucks (male breeding rabbits), in confinement operations, are isolated in solitary cages while the young are often overcrowded. In developing humane husbandry standards for rabbits, AWI seeks to provide a humane alternative to the inhumane practices commonly used when rabbits are raised for meat.

All AWI standards are developed in conjunction with farmers and scientists; address all stages of life; and delineate on-farm, transport, and slaughter requirements. Two distinguishing characteristics of all AWI criteria are that the



animals are allowed to behave naturally, and that each farm is a family farm on which the family or a family member owns the animals, depends upon the farm for livelihood and participates in the daily physical labor to manage the animals and the farm. Furthermore, AWI is calling attention to and will not endorse dual production systems—operations that raise some animals humanely and subject other animals to cruel, factory conditions. By the end of the year, humane criteria will be available for dairy cows, laying hens, chickens, turkeys, ducks, and beef cattle.

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## Chipotle Mexican Grill Takes Humane Standards to the Mass Marketplace

BY DIANE HALVERSON

At last, a restaurant chain not only lives up to its pledge to let pigs be pigs down on the farm, but advertises that commitment. Chipotle, with 250 quick service restaurants in 10 states, publicly promotes its choice of Niman Ranch, the marketing company that embraces AWI's humane husbandry standards for pigs, as its sole supplier of pork for its gourmet tacos and burritos.

Chipotle's CEO and founder, Steve Ells, explains: "Carrying Niman Ranch pork, derived from pigs raised according to Animal Welfare Institute standards, has validated

that our ingredients have integrity. And people are willing to pay a little more for food that doesn't exploit."

Chipotle posters hail the husbandry methods that once characterized pig raising in rural America but have been almost entirely replaced by barbaric systems that inflict relentless suffering on animals. One Chipotle restaurant poster tells customers: "...They've bucked the system of corporately owned hog operations and returned to the land. Literally. Niman Ranch farmers raise their pigs outdoors in open pastures. Pigs have room to roam, root and socialize."

Ells visited Niman Ranch farmers in Iowa, observing that "All the farmers cared about their animals. Certainly they knew they were raising them to feed people but there was none of the factory farming mentality where animals are 'product,' not living creatures. There's no excuse in the world to treat animals in such a brutal way. Look at all the repercussions from factory farms. It's an exploitation that's senseless."

"The factory owners' only advantage is their ability to bring down the price and have further control on the 'commodity' market. So much of the quick service restaurant business is about price—lowering the price to 99 cents and increasing the amount of food served. In that environment it's impossible to have better quality foods. That approach fosters factory farming. I feel lucky we are in a place where we can make things happen and that our customers enjoy the Chipotle experience."

After all, says Ells, "dining is about the senses. If you take an emotional approach, you're better off. Some people buy Niman for the taste or because the pigs are raised without antibiotics or to support independent family farmers or because they deplore what factory hog farming does to animals. What I care about is that people are excited about some part of it and they are supporting the overall cause of food with integrity."

Traditionally, Niman products have been carried by four-star restaurants and natural foods grocers. Chipotle allows them to reach a larger audience. Bill Niman, co-founder of Niman Ranch, explains: "One of our goals at Niman Ranch is to provide high-quality meat products from the most sustainable, animal-friendly protocols, adhered to by family farmers and available to the most people. Chipotle is one strong example of making this dream a reality. You don't have to go to a four-star restaurant to eat food produced with the highest integrity. Chipotle demonstrates that when there is a desire to make a difference, it is possible. With every carnitas purchase, Chipotle customers are having a positive impact on the landscape of rural America and supporting family farmers who raise hogs humanely, according to the Animal Welfare Institute's high standards."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that nearly 70 percent of sows in the U.S. live in coffin-sized crates for their entire adult lives. An untold number of boars suffer the misery of crating, too. The long-term commitment of restaurants, meat purveyors and consumers to purchase products derived from animals raised under AWI's Humane Husbandry Program will help relieve animals of the brutal burden of a factory farm existence. We urge more of them to,

as the Chipotle ad says, "try a little tenderness."

For locations, visit [www.chipotle.com](http://www.chipotle.com).

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## Poland In Peril

BY TOM GARRETT

Among the world's "decision makers," palms open to receive what the great corporations provide, few have proven more susceptible than the former Communist apparatchiks of eastern and central Europe. There is, at the same time, no greater corrupter of politicians and government officials than corporate agribusiness. In Poland, the convergence of a politically virulent American corporation, Smithfield Foods, and a government made up of former Communists threatens the destruction of Europe's last oasis of traditional peasant agriculture.

Two years ago, Andrzej Lepper, head of *Samoobrona* ("Self-Defense") union received AWI's Albert Schweitzer Medal for his role in stalling Smithfield's initial effort to take over Polish pig production. However, in September 2001, Polish voters swept the shambling AWS (Solidarity Action) government from office and returned the post-communist SLD (Democratic Left Alliance), dominated by figures from the ancient regime, to power. With the change in government, Smithfield operatives gained key government positions, and administrative barriers to corporate agribusiness were swept away. Bolstered by a \$100 million loan organized by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, Smithfield began a massive offensive in the Polish countryside. By the end of 2002, operating behind front companies so as to evade laws forbidding foreigners from owning Polish agricultural land, Smithfield had gained control of over 30 large, former state farms and had already converted many of them into hog factories.

During the first months of 2003 Marek Kryda and I (accompanied sometimes by British organic farmer Tracy Worcester) toured the chief areas of infestation and met with local activists. We were stunned by the impunity with which Smithfield is operating, ignoring federal and local laws alike and overriding intense, often desperate, local opposition. The company's prison-like compounds contain packs of savagely barking police dogs. On at least two occasions we



Hell in a dark place. Smithfield's Wronki Wilki hog factory.

encountered English-speaking Poles who had been taken to North Carolina for training in Smithfield facilities. Every Smithfield hog factory building is flanked by identical feed silos that dispense feed automatically. In the area around Goldap in Northeast Poland, the number of workers on three state farms where Smithfield has set up hog factories was reduced from 120, before the company took over, to seven. As in the U.S., dead pigs are a ubiquitous, almost symbolic feature, of company operations. When dumpsters overflow, the victims are left in piles inside the buildings, as Kryda found in penetrating the appalling interior of a hog factory at Wronki Wilkie, or are dumped outside.

While five provinces have been violated, the most intense hog factory development is in former German areas seized by Poland after the war where large estates (including Otto Von Bismark's) were converted into state farms. In Warminko-Mazurskie (former East Prussia) in the northeast, Smithfield operates on state farms previously leased by its Animex subsidiary. In Zohodnio Pomorskie (Western Pomerania) in the northwest, where the takeover has gained blitzkrieg momentum, Smithfield uses a front called Prima. Here, the situation is so out of control that on one occasion we found a hog factory, operating without licenses or permits, after noticing that liquid hog manure was being disposed of alongside the road. Everywhere we heard the same story: Attempts by local officials to enforce the law are overridden by the governors or by ministries in Warsaw. Protests by villagers driven half mad by the stench are disregarded. Press exposés have no effect.

However, Smithfield's "fix" is swirling in a larger vortex. Unemployment has reached 20 percent; much of Poland is locked in a situation reminiscent of the great depression of the 1930s. The top down corruption of the post-communist government was revealed when a secretly recorded conversation, soliciting a bribe of \$17.5 million to SLD in return for passage of a radio and television bill favorable to commercial interests, was published in Poland's largest daily newspaper. Public support for the government has plummeted to 12 percent in the polls. A vote of confidence has been put off until after the June referendum on EU accession. Once this is over, the government will probably fall, new elections will be called, and opposition parties (including *Samoobrona*, now polling far ahead of SLD) will dominate the Sejm. Opposition parties decry corruption and promise Poland for Poles. The question upon which Poland's future depends is whether they can put words to practice.

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## Activists Stop Construction of Massive Hog Factory

Marek Kryda





BY GAIL EISNITZ, CHIEF INVESTIGATOR, Rosebud Sioux tribal members participate in a drum circle at a press conference outside U.S. Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle's Rapid City office to protest construction of a giant hog factory.

Humane Farming Association

#### HUMANE FARMING ASSOCIATION

In November 1998, a coalition consisting of Concerned Rosebud Area Citizens, Humane Farming Association, South Dakota Peace and Justice Center, and Prairie Hills Audubon Society took on an unprecedented legal battle against what was scheduled to be the third largest hog factory in the world. The factory was to be sited on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in southern South Dakota, the second poorest reservation in the United States. In addition to the cruelty on an almost incalculable scale, it would have generated roughly three times the amount of raw sewage of the entire human population of the state of South Dakota.

Because Indian lands are exempt from state environmental laws, Bell Farms, a major hog factory corporation, entered into a joint venture with the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council to operate its proposed factory producing nearly one million pigs a year on reservation lands. However, the hog factory was subject to federal law, so the citizens' coalition, with Humane Farming Association's financial support, sued the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), challenging it for not first preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The coalition's first legal battle was successful, and the BIA was forced to halt construction of the project until such time as an EIS was prepared. In response, Bell Farms sued the BIA in federal court in South Dakota, and the citizens' coalition intervened on behalf of the BIA. Bell Farms ultimately won that round and construction was allowed to proceed without preparation of an EIS.

Contrary to federal laws requiring public input, most tribal members had been kept in the dark about the venture and about the horrors of factory farming. As the coalition continued with its legal battles, it also spread the word on the reservation about the horrendous cruelty, environmental hazards, and terrible working conditions associated with hog factories. When tribal members became aware of the appalling conditions that had been invited into their community, they

promptly ousted their existing Tribal Council and voted in a new Council that opposed the factory farm.

In an amazing turn, in June 2000, after a complex and tortuous two-year legal battle, the Tribe, formerly a partner in the enterprise with Bell Farms, filed a motion with the court changing its legal posture in the case, realigning itself with the citizens' coalition and the federal government—against Bell Farms. As the litigation progressed, construction on the hog factory stopped after only two of the thirteen sites were built.

The citizens' coalition, the BIA, and the Tribe appealed the South Dakota judge's ruling in the Federal 8th Circuit Court of Appeals. In April 2002, in an astounding victory, the Circuit Court reversed the judge's decision and ruled in the coalition's favor and refused to rehear Bell's case. Earlier this year, the US Supreme Court upheld the winning appeal by declining to review Bell's appeal. This means that Bell Farms has no right to operate on Rosebud lands.

On March 6th, 2003, the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council voted unanimously to shut down the two sites that had been built and remove them from tribal land. The Tribe then formally asked the BIA to provide assistance in initiating legal proceedings to evict Bell from the reservation. The BIA has yet to decide whether it will help the Tribe or not.

Read a history of the Rosebud struggle in Part V of *The Price We Pay for Corporate Hogs*, by Marlene Halverson, at [www.iatp.org/hogreport/](http://www.iatp.org/hogreport/). Visit the Rosebud Sioux Tribe website [www.rosebudsiouxtribe.org](http://www.rosebudsiouxtribe.org). Read Tracy Basile's interview with Rosalie Little Thunder at [www.satyamag.com/may02/basile.html](http://www.satyamag.com/may02/basile.html).

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## USTR's Pig Politics

A USTR factsheet on "U.S. Pork Industry & Trade" cheers America's annual export of over 700 thousand metric tons of pork, valued at more than \$1.5 billion. This, claims USTR, generates "wealth and create[s] good paying jobs that contribute significantly to the economic well-being of rural America." But American family farmers don't benefit; it's the corporate agribusinesses that dominate the domestic and foreign markets, subjecting pigs to intensive confinement.

USTR is brazenly using the Central America Free Trade Agreement to eliminate the "sanitary barriers" that contribute to American pork exports from being restricted in the region. "Sanitary" measures are rules on food safety to prevent the spread of diseases and toxins, through the food supply.

USTR is also trying to undermine "China's zero tolerance on pathogens (listeria and salmonella) in raw meat."

"Opening the Australian market for U.S. pork exports is a priority for the Bush Administration," says USTR. The U.S. won't let food safety issues interfere with our ability to flood a market with cheap hog factory pork: "Australia has sanitary/animal health barriers that keep imported pork out. USTR is pushing the Australian government to develop a new, science-based pork import policy." Rather than improve our food safety, the U.S. wants to force other nations to lower their

standards. When scientific findings are not suitable to USTR, we simply challenge those findings as not being based on sound science.

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## Helping Small-Scale North Carolina Farmers Improve Pigs' Lives

In Fall of 2000, Professor Chuck Talbott of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NCATSU) invited Diane Halverson to speak about AWI's humane husbandry standards for pigs at a Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) conference. Paul Willis, Iowa pig farmer and manager of Niman Ranch Pork Company, the first company to embrace AWI's standards, also spoke.

When Dr. Talbott first read about Niman Ranch and AWI, he envisioned a program in which small-scale North Carolina pig farmers could be provided with a humane, sustainable alternative to contracting with factory hog operations to raise their hogs. In so doing, they would demonstrate their vital roles in enhancing rural communities, avoid the environmental damage commonly associated with factory hog operations, and give pigs free lives.

Enough farmers expressed interest at the CFSA conference that Dr. Talbott applied for financial help to North Carolina's Golden LEAF Foundation, which helps tobacco farmers switch to non-tobacco enterprises, and Heifer Project International (HPI), which provides breeding animals to new or limited resource farmers.

Today, there are 28 small-scale North Carolina farmers in or about to enter the NCATSU-Golden LEAF-HPI program. Several farmers who initially received breeding gilts from Paul Willis' Iowa farm through an HPI grant have raised new gilts to pass on to the next group of farmers entering the program (a condition of the HPI grant). Golden LEAF funds pay for fencing, portable shelters for the pastures, and watering and feeding equipment.

Dr. Talbott's assistants (Mike Jones and Eliza Maclean)



Cicero Dobson and a few of the new sows he received for the NCATSU program.

Marlene Halverson/AWI

provide daily technical support for the farmers. All pigs in the program are raised outdoors with plenty of space and varied environments in which to perform their natural behaviors, including wooded areas with welcome shade during the hot North Carolina summer days.

AWI staff conduct site visits to the farms and prescribe changes, where necessary, for the farmers to meet AWI's standards. The meat from the pigs raised by the farmers that meet AWI's standards is sold to Niman Ranch and distributed in the East Coast market for pork from humanely raised hogs.

AWI is grateful to contribute to this effort and improve the lives of pigs while helping small-scale farmers survive by adopting humane, sustainable alternatives to contract hog production.

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## Learn About the Dirty Secrets of Animal Factories

Thanks to the Edith J. Goode Residuary Trust, AWI's series of educational brochures now includes a farm animal leaflet. Humane family farms are increasingly displaced by corporations that confine animals to factory conditions, and this brochure describes the common and indisputably inhumane industry practices endured by chickens, pigs, and cattle. It thoughtfully details the routine mutilations inflicted on animals in factories and explains how cages and crates are utilized to keep animals immobile. The brochure also addresses detrimental ramifications to human health and the environment. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope or download it from [www.awionline.org](http://www.awionline.org) to educate yourself and others about the unnecessary suffering of farm animals and how you can help stop it!

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## Willow Creek Farm

Tony and Sue Renger and their three children live in the Baraboo Hills of southwestern Wisconsin, close to urban and rural customers who appreciate the Rengers' humane pig husbandry. Their Willow Creek Farm (WCF) products are sold to chefs in Madison, at farmers markets, and in small town delicatessens. AWI is pleased to announce that the Rengers have become the first family complying with AWI husbandry standards to market directly to their customers. Here, in their own words, the family describes their principled approach to raising pigs:

*When we first decided to raise hogs we felt it had to be in the manner my father, grandfather, and great-grandfather raised their hogs with access to the natural surroundings. As we designed our operation utilizing the methods of the past it dovetailed perfectly with the humane methods that the AWI supports.*

*We believe that those involved with raising animals for meat production have a moral obligation*





Diane Halverson/AWI

*Tony Renger practices what he preaches, getting up close and personal with the pigs at Willow Creek Farm.*

*to see that their animals have a natural and comfortable existence. One of our greatest pleasures in farming is to watch our pigs frolic on the pasture and to see that they truly enjoy their surroundings. We give them the opportunity to make their own choices, whether going inside a shelter or outdoors or playing in the straw bedding, running up in the pasture, or making mudholes. It's really just the right thing to do.*

*Some of the stores refer to us as "cruelty-free" farmers and educate their customers concerning the choices they can make when buying meat. Customers are excited to purchase meat from pigs raised in a sustainable and humane manner, to support a small family farm, to know where their food comes from and what's in it. At farmers markets, vegetarians often will buy products from us to serve to their non-vegetarian friends and family just because of the way we raise our animals.*

*At WCF, we strive to form a relationship with consumers in order to make the food system more local, safe, and sustainable. We feel that by raising our hogs humanely and in a sustainable manner we are working with the natural rhythm of the seasons and the land. Growing the corn and wheat straw on our land and returning manure to the fields for fertilizer creates a circle of fertility that we believe is one of the foundations of good husbandry, both of our hogs and our land.*

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## **Buckeye Egg Factory Closed Fate of 13 Million Hens Unknown**

After more than two decades of abysmal cruelty and environmental degradation, the Ohio Department of Agriculture finally ordered the closure of all 90 Buckeye egg factories. Buckeye's demise is due in large part to the persistent

efforts of concerned citizens unwilling to tolerate the nuisances associated with animal factories. Buckeye, which confines over 13,000,000 laying hens to battery cages, should be closed by June 1, 2004. However, Buckeye has appealed, and Japan-based Ise Farms and Ohio Fresh Eggs may buy the facilities. The celebration of Buckeye's closure is short-lived if the cruelty to laying hens simply continues under another name.

Of utmost concern is the welfare of the hens. Buckeye estimates it would have to kill 464,000 to 576,000 chickens per week to comply with the order. Humane euthanasia of such massive numbers of birds is unlikely. Or the birds could be slaughtered for soup and animal food. The future looks bleak for most of the birds, but as we go to press, our friends at Oohmahnee Farm are set to rescue 1,000 of the hens. Hopefully, the compassion shown to these birds will be extended to others, who can be rescued or killed in a truly humane manner.

Buckeye's inability to comply with even minimal environmental laws underscores the fact that it is inherently cruel and problematic to confine millions of animals to factories. Compassionate consumers should not support the cruelty of any egg factory. If you consume eggs, please be certain they come from cage-free hens who have access to pasture.

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## **Improving the Lives of Calves Raised for Veal**

With over nine million dairy cows in the United States, and with an estimated 88 percent of cows giving birth every year, it seems safe to conclude that at least four million male dairy calves are born every year on U.S. dairy farms. Because male dairy calves are not used in milk production and few dairy farmers raise them for beef, most male calves are considered "surplus" and are abruptly separated from their mothers and the farm of their birth. They may be transported and sold directly for slaughter or to feedlots specializing in dairy beef



All photos by Marlene Halverson/AWI

*In one part of the experiment, calves are raised with their mothers on pasture.*



*Unlike the calves confined to crates on specialized veal farms, the male dairy calves in this part of the experiment have room to frolic and groom themselves.*



*Calves should have a source of fiber and something to suck on between meals.*

rearing. Others may be sold to formula-fed veal factories where they live for four months, tightly confined in body-sized, individual crates. Alternatively, they may be shipped to auction houses where buyers from the specialized veal factories bid for them. In any case, their welfare is extremely poor.

The farther a calf is taken from the environment of his mother, the less his mother's colostrum can protect him from disease. The calf raised on the farm of birth is at an advantage over calves that are removed from the farm. Therefore, it is important for calf welfare to create incentives for dairy farmers to raise male calves on the farm.

Last winter, Tera Johnson, CEO of White Clover Dairy, a Wisconsin dairy feeds processor, approached AWI about cooperating on an experimental project to help create

economic incentives for certain Wisconsin farmers to raise male dairy calves on their farms under conditions approved by AWI. Wisconsin has approximately 16,000 dairy farmers, around a quarter of which operate grazing systems. Rather than being confined on cement or dirt lots and barns, their cows are permitted to live outside on carefully managed pastures, with access to bedded shelters in winter. Many of these dairy "grazers" have developed welfare-friendly methods of raising dairy heifers. Routinely, however, they still sell the young male calves shortly after birth.

Johnson reasoned that because farmers who graze their cattle do not have the heavy capital investment in buildings and equipment that dairy factory operators have, their production systems are more flexible, and it would be easier to integrate into them a new enterprise of rearing male calves.

In the White Clover project, calves on several farms are raised under three different experimental protocols: (1) with their mothers on pasture until they are sold, or (2) separated after the colostrum period and raised in social groups with other calves. The separated calves are fed either (3a) milk formula or (3b) fresh milk. Unlike formula-fed calves in veal factories, all calves in the project have space to frolic and access to grass or hay for fiber and to straw-bedded shelters. Calves have a strong need to suck, and a frequent industry criticism of keeping calves in groups is that they suck on each other. In this project, special buckets attached to the sides of the pens of calves in groups are used to feed the calves. The buckets have specially designed rubber teats that satisfy the calves' instinct to suck, even when there is no milk in the buckets.

Because most U.S. animal scientists specializing in calf nutrition do so from the formula-fed veal perspective, Johnson and colleagues have been working with scientists in the Netherlands to formulate quality diets for the male calves that are more in keeping with the calves' natural digestive needs.

The project is in the process of developing a customer base for these young male calves so that more restaurants and chefs will choose to purchase meat from calves raised in high welfare environments. Preliminary market tests at upscale restaurants and with chefs ethically committed to purchasing food that comes from humane, sustainable sources have indicated that the chefs are pleased with the results of their decisions to support the project's aims, and they welcome the opportunity to choose meat from calves raised with humane husbandry.

AWI is grateful to contribute its expertise and guidance to this project to improve the conditions under which male dairy calves are raised.

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## **AWI Dairy Husbandry Standards**

The premise of AWI's humane farm husbandry program is that animals must enjoy sound physical and psychological health in environments that permit constructive expression of natural behaviors. Housing and management should consider the biological and behavioral characteristics of the animal and





*Cattle in this dairy factory spend their days on cement floors standing in their own urine and manure. Lameness is prevalent in dairy factories.*



*AWI dairy husbandry standards require that herds be allowed to graze on healthy, well-maintained pastures in season.*

include sufficient space and opportunity for performing self-protective (e.g., avoiding pain or injury), self-maintenance (e.g., grooming), and other important behaviors (e.g., care of young and social interaction). Animals should be free from pain, fear, hunger and thirst, discomfort, disease, and distress.

Small family-owned and operated dairy farms, where cows are traditionally released from straw-bedded barns to graze on green pastures as soon as Spring weather allows, are disappearing from the American landscape. Mega-dairies confine thousands of cows on concrete and dirt lots year-round, using bovine growth hormone and manipulating genetics to force higher milk production, and creating new animal welfare problems in the process.

The Animal Welfare Institute's forthcoming Humane Dairy Cattle Husbandry Standards require that the animals graze pasture in season, have freedom of movement when sheltered from inclement weather, be provided straw or similar suitable bedding to protect the animal from a hard or abrasive resting surface and to help keep the animals clean. Shipping newborn calves to auctions or other farms, tail-docking, electric cow trainers, tie stalls or stanchions, and administration of bovine growth hormone and non-therapeutic administration of antibiotics are prohibited.

AWI's protocol addresses the need to preserve family-owned and operated dairies characterized by high welfare standards. This form of agriculture tends to preserve the identity and value of individual members of the herd and

avoids the growing dependence of dairy operators on the cheapest unskilled hired labor available.

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## **AWI Ruffles Feathers to Help Friends**

An astonishing 25 million ducks are raised and slaughtered for human consumption each year in the United States. Pekin and Muscovy ducks are the most commonly farmed breeds, and, like other farm animals, they descended from wild ancestors. Left to their own devices, these social and inquisitive animals would spend substantial portions of each day foraging for food, swimming, resting, mating, and caring for their young (see *AWI Quarterly*, Winter 2002).

Ducks raised for meat are subjected to the same atrocities endured by other factory farmed animals such as restriction to inadequate flooring, overcrowding, solitary confinement of breeding animals, and mutilations. In the case of ducks, the most common mutilation is debilling, the removal of part of the top bill with scissors or a hot blade. Scientists acknowledge debilling causes acute and chronic pain. Confined to factories, ducks, who are waterfowl, are prohibited from accessing adequate amounts of water. Furthermore ducks, like all poultry, are exempt from the federal Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, which requires that animals be insensible to



*The Pekin duck, like all waterfowl, evolved to thrive in an aquatic environment. In factories they only have access to dispensed drinking water.*



*Muscovy ducks prefer to rest and sleep in trees, but in factories they are overcrowded and confined to sheds with inadequate flooring.*

pain before they actually are killed. Two of the largest and most notorious duck factories are Maple Leaf Farms, with facilities in Indiana, California, Wisconsin, and Ohio, and Grimaud Farms, located in California.

In direct contrast to the cruel status quo, AWI continues to establish humane husbandry standards and has now developed criteria for ducks. AWI's standards allow ducks the opportunity to express natural behaviors essential to health and well-being such as swimming, bathing, and foraging for food. The water requirement also enables ducks to express natural sieving behavior. A duck has a row of toothlike serrations along the edge of the bill that are used to strain food out of the water. As for foraging, ducks naturally spend a substantial amount of time searching for food. AWI standards require ducks be fed nutritional feed and require that the food be distributed, or occur in the environment, so that the ducks search for it thereby providing enrichment and exercise. Additional criteria include outdoor access, shelter from extreme elements and predators, and minimal group size. Furthermore, wire and slatted flooring as well as debilling are prohibited.

AWI's guidelines are not only humane but practical, and past experience illustrates that public demand has the power to abolish cruel factory practices. One example is the case in England in which consumers refused to buy ducks that had been debilled. Farmers who had previously espoused that it was impossible to raise ducks without debilling responded to the pressure and stopped the practice of debilling Muscovies.

Contact AWI and visit [www.awionline.org](http://www.awionline.org) for copies of our humane husbandry standards. Pass them along to grocery store and restaurant managers. Do not purchase products from duck factories, and educate others about humane alternatives.

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## **Will AVMA See the Light? Sows Should Not Be Confined to Crates**

It has been estimated that about 70 percent of the almost six million breeding sows in the US spend three-quarters of their adult lives confined in narrow, two foot by six and one-half foot gestation crates or stalls, and the other one-quarter in equally narrow farrowing crates, constructed to limit their mobility in the presence of their piglets.

As a consequence of their confinement, and despite being given preventative doses of antibiotics and laxatives in their feed, crate-housed sows live fewer years and are subject to more maladies, including osteoporosis, lameness, muscle deterioration, mastitis and constipation, than their counterparts on humane farms. Industry scientists have estimated yearly sow death rates on some of the largest factory farms, which use crates, at a stunning 20 percent of the farm's herd.

This is the compelling background against which the



*Pregnant sows forced into uncomfortable positions by their crate "homes" at one of the nation's largest pig factories, a supplier to a major US fast food chain.*

ethical appropriateness of housing breeding pigs in crates must be evaluated.

In 2002, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) went on record supporting the use of gestation crates. In response to the furor created over this untenable position, the AVMA decided to reassess its stance and appointed a task force to conduct a review of the current scientific literature with a view to recommending an appropriate position.

The November 1, 2003 issue of the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA)*, referring to "the heightened interest in the welfare aspects of housing for pregnant sows," recommended for its readers' edification a "scientific article comparing injuries sustained by pregnant sows in individual versus group housing" by Anil, et al. To AWI's chagrin the study featured in *JAVMA* was so poorly designed it ensured that crates appeared to be better for gestating pigs than housing them in groups.

The study, which supposedly compared group-housing to crate-housing, assessed the welfare of sows solely by tallying injury scores to quantify and compare pain in the two systems (sows single-housed in crates will not have the means or opportunity to injure each other). Additional parameters of welfare, such as bone loss, lameness, and incidence of mastitis, which also cause pain, should have been used; this would have been less obviously biased in favor of crate housing.



*Crate-housed pregnant sows in this pig factory wait for their only feeding of the day—4 pounds of concentrate that most of them will have consumed in fewer than 10 minutes.*



Even the authors acknowledged that the feeding system they chose for the group-housed sows, a single electronic sow feeder (ESF), had been cited for causing increased aggression and injuries (Van Putten, et al., 1990). In a 1988 article in the scientific journal *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, Dr. Van Putten described ESF systems as examples of “farming beyond the ability of pigs to adapt,” because they require pigs, who normally forage and eat together as a social group, to line up and take turns entering the feeder. “Obviously,” said Van Putten, “the remarkable improvements in knowledge, obtained by applied ethological research, have not been taken into account in drafting concepts for computer controlled housing systems.... After all, it is an ethical point: either we choose to continue working against the nature of farm animals or, if we accept the introduction of a new era in pig farming, we welcome the opportunity to work with the animals by meeting their needs.”

Anil and her cohorts listed options that might have reduced sow injuries in their group housing system such as providing a separate enclosure or solid walls for the ESF so sows outside the feeder could not see the sow inside; feeding a high fiber diet that might reduce appetite and aggression; and enriching the environment. However, they concluded that the “practicality and scientific value of these options are not yet known.” This statement highlights another shortcoming of their research; they did not build on and extend the work of other scientists whose research has demonstrated the practicality and scientific value of those options.

For example, Professor Peter Brooks, University of Plymouth, has described scientific research undertaken to minimize competition and fighting among sows in ESF systems. He recommended the very options that Anil, et al. listed, but dismissed as unproved: providing protection around the system for the eating sow, making bulk materials such as corn and grass silage continuously available to the sows and enriching the environment with straw bedding to satisfy sows’ hunger and permit a wide range of behavioral activities.

Dr. Ingvar Ekesho has described the Swedish deep-bedded group housing systems (see “A Successful System for Housing Pregnant Sows in Groups,” page 6), enriched with straw and equipped with individual feeding stalls that allow sows to eat at the same time. Contrary to the claim by Anil, et al. that individual feeding facilities are expensive for producers, these systems are cost-effective and provide good welfare. Deep straw beds save on labor costs for cleaning. They compost and provide warmth in winter. Individual feeding stalls provide an alternative lying area for sows, who like to get away from the straw beds when the weather is warm, and serve as a restraining area when the farmer needs to administer medical treatment or wants to close in the sows to clean the pens.

Anil and her colleagues contended that fighting is a permanent feature of dynamic groups, yet Swedish farmers learned ways to promote peaceful relationships in dynamic sow groups, such as housing new sows together where they form stable subgroups before farmers introduce them into established sow groups. In Anil’s experiment sows remained in

gestation crates for 10 days before they were introduced to the established group. Rather than entering as a stable subgroup, new sows entered the established sow group as separate individuals, increasing the likelihood of conflicts and injury.

Unfortunately, the authors of the JAVMA article do not appear to have had sufficient knowledge of scientific and practical advances in group sow housing to design a system that could provide a fair and unbiased comparison between individual and group housing. Instead, their study repeated what is known from earlier studies: sows housed in groups with a single ESF on fully slatted floors without environmental enrichment have high injury rates.

It cannot be concluded from Anil, et al. that it would be unwise or premature to support a resolution banning gestation crates. Effective alternatives to crate housing of pregnant sows exist and render crate housing of sows obsolete, as well as morally objectionable.

AWI urges the AVMA membership and task force not to accept studies on their face value but to scrutinize carefully the authors’ assumptions, methodology, and command of the scientific literature. This is particularly critical on such a politically charged issue as sow housing, which calls into question a clearly cruel method of housing with scientifically dubious origins that nevertheless has been embraced and fiercely defended by the pork industry.

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## A Successful System for Housing Pregnant Sows in Groups

In August 1997, an Alternative Swine Systems Task Force (ASSTF) was created at the University of Minnesota. State legislation had been introduced to fund research on technologies to deal with noxious odors from the state’s industrial-style pig farms. Family farm advocates reasoned that if any tax dollars were to be spent on odor research, it was only right that some of them should be devoted to demonstrating pig rearing systems that were already environmentally friendly. Led by Minnesota’s Land Stewardship Project, they convinced the legislature to appropriate funds to study better systems, among them the Swedish deep-bedded group housing systems for swine (see Fall 1994 *AWI Quarterly*). The ASSTF was created to see that the legislative directives were carried out. Marlene Halverson, AWI’s farm animal economic advisor, who first advocated the Swedish deep-bedded systems in the US for welfare reasons, serves on the task force as one of its original members.

After several years of planning, examples of the Swedish systems of deep-bedded group housing for gestating sows and for lactating sows and their litters are operating at the University’s West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) at Morris, Minnesota. (The group housing system for sows and their litters will be discussed in a forthcoming *Quarterly*.)



*A pregnant sow in the deep-bedded hoop at University of Minnesota.*

Dr. Rebecca Morrison

In 2001, a hoop structure was built to house the Swedish system for gestating sows. Preferred by farmers, this housing system is based on the sow’s biology and natural social behaviors and has been used in Sweden for nearly three decades. Along one length of the structure is a row of individual feeding stalls, one for each sow in the group, that the sows can enter at will. The stalls can be locked behind the sows while they are eating, allowing sows to be fed individually, eliminating competition for feed, and ensuring that each sow gets a full ration. This feeding method satisfies normal sow preferences to eat simultaneously as a social group. Behind the feeding stalls is a deep-straw bedded lying and activity area with nearly 30 square feet of space for each sow. New straw is added daily, providing natural material for occupation and munching between meals. Sows are kept in stable groups. New sows are only introduced to an existing group in stable subgroups of six or more new sows, never singly. This permits sows to form and maintain normal avoidance relationships that minimize fighting and promote peaceful group relations. These accommodations to the sows’ natural behaviors demonstrate the Swedish farmers’ philosophy of “fitting the system to the animal, rather than the animal to the system.”

Before leaving for a new post in Australia this May, Dr. Rebecca Morrison, the University’s former sustainable swine scientist reported “we have been overwhelmed by the success of this alternative housing system for gestating sows...and we have received many positive comments from the stock



*Deep-bedded group sow housing on a Swedish pig farm.*

Marlene Halverson

people working with the sows.”

Swedish farmers’ experiences raising pregnant sows in groups in this system as well as the results at WCROC demonstrate that group housing of pregnant sows is successful when the natural behavior and biology of sows are both understood and accommodated in the design.

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## The Cormo Express: Australia’s Latest Live Export Shame

BY CAROLE DE FRAGA,  
COMPASSION IN WORLD FARMING

Australia’s international trade in live animals reached new heights of notoriety recently when 57,937 sheep on the M.V. Cormo Express were rejected by Saudi Arabia on the grounds they were diseased. The sheep then spent an additional eight weeks at sea amid frantic negotiations by the Australian Government and industry with over 30 countries in search of an alternative port. Ultimately the public were led to believe that the animals were on their way back to Australia when an agreement already had been reached with the East African State of Eritrea, which accepted the animals as a gift of food aid coupled with substantial food for the sheep and funds to cover associated costs. Officially, 5,691 sheep who left Australia on 6 August died during transport.

While somewhat relieved that, after 11 weeks at sea in cramped conditions and exposed to extremes of temperature and humidity, the animals were on dry land, observers, one of them a veterinarian sent by the international non-governmental organization Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), documented: dead sheep and a foul smell on board the ship, sheep leaving the ship with legs dirty from manure, stressed sheep in the hot and humid port, sheep lying down and panting in the hot and arid feedlot, sparse shade (a mixture of large thorn bushes and added cover), many lame animals including one with a possible fracture.

Responding to the news that sheep had arrived in



*This trading of live animals is inhumane and must end. At the very least, journey length should be limited and contingency plans instituted.*

CIWF



Eritrea, CIWF's Joyce D'Silva said in correspondence to Australia's UK High Commission that "...the whole appalling tragedy must surely render it imperative that the Government undertakes a major review of policy and takes into account the inherent uncertainties of the long distance transport trade and the consequent disastrous effects on the welfare of so many sentient beings. A trade in meat is the only humane solution."

Australia's live sheep trade with Saudi Arabia is currently suspended. The trade was also suspended some 13 years ago when Saudi Arabia rejected 11 shipments and the death rate climbed to an average 6 percent on transport ships. At that time, the trade ceased for almost ten years. Australia typically exports more live sheep to Saudi Arabia than to any other country. In 2002, Saudi Arabia bought 31 percent of Australia's 6,062,923 exported sheep. That same year 73,700 sheep, 2,081 cattle and over 3,000 goats died during transport. While the majority of deaths occur at sea due to starvation and salmonellosis, in 2002, more than 17,000 sheep and cattle died because of the heat and humidity. Furthermore, most animals are exported for slaughter to countries with no or ineffective animal welfare laws.

This current crisis highlights the inherent cruelty of the trade in live animals and the intermittent disasters that cause additional animal suffering and mortality. Animals Australia is heading a hard-hitting national campaign to stop the live trade and CIWF is adding vital international support. So prominent is the topic that it is fast becoming an Australian federal election issue.

For further information contact: [www.animalsaustralia.org](http://www.animalsaustralia.org) and [www.ciwf.co.uk](http://www.ciwf.co.uk).

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## This Mad Cow Went to Market...

With a brush of (perhaps false) bravado, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Ann Veneman defiantly declared plans to serve beef at Christmas dinner, while admitting the presence of mad cow disease in the US. Meanwhile, more than 50 countries from Australia to Venezuela have banned imports of American beef.

The cavalier attitude with which USDA handled the situation is downright shocking, especially considering that the diseased cow's meat made it to market—the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reports that meat from one of the affected cows was likely consumed by a family in Mercer Island, Washington. Frighteningly, no one really knows how many Americans may have eaten beef from sick animals.

The disease eats holes in afflicted animals' brains, undoubtedly causing tremendous suffering. Mad cow is a human-caused malady created by intentionally turning cows—natural herbivores—into cannibalistic carnivores. In 1997, feeding parts of cattle, sheep, or other cud-chewing animals to cows was banned. But the US Food and Drug Administration

publicly has admitted that the ban is not actively enforced and some feed distributors are unaware that it exists. Regardless, regulations do not prohibit feeding cows to pigs and chickens who, when rendered themselves, are then fed back to cows.

Sadly, in the immediate aftermath of the mad cow hysteria, hundreds of cows were slaughtered prematurely, their shortened lives completely wasted and their carcasses dumped in a landfill. There are wiser ways to ensure a safe food supply: follow Europe's lead and ban the feeding of all slaughterhouse waste to livestock; follow Japan's lead and test all cattle for the disease.

USDA is prohibiting "downer cows"—animals too sick or injured to walk—from entering the food supply (immobility is also a symptom of mad cow disease). This decision may spare tens of thousands of these sentient creatures from being brutally dragged to slaughter. USDA must also require that they be expeditiously and humanely euthanized, while extending the ban to other farm animals, including sheep and pigs.

We have long fought the inhumane transport and sale of downed animals, only to be shunned by a greedy livestock industry and a shortsighted, beholden USDA and Congress. We had it right all along. Downers don't belong in the American food market, and we didn't need this incident to prove that simple fact.

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## Government Report Confirms Slaughter is Not Humane

### Widespread Animal Suffering at Slaughter

Ineffective stunning of animals is the most frequent violation of the Humane Slaughter Act (HSA) according to a General Accounting Office (GAO) Report released earlier this year. Slaughter of conscious animals, the most inconceivable of atrocities, was the third most common violation. HSA violations including dragging sick and/or disabled animals, excessive use of electric prods, improper stunning and the



*Livestock being moved inside slaughter facility.*

Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA



*A cow being stunned with a mechanical captive bolt.*

Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA

shackling and processing of conscious animals, were identified at nearly one-third of all slaughter plants in the US.

The abysmal failure of industry to comply with the HSA was first exposed by Gail Eisnitz in her landmark book, *Slaughterhouse*, in 1997. In April 2001 following its own investigation, *The Washington Post* ran a dramatic front-page series reporting that animals at slaughter plants across the country continued to be skinned, scalded and dismembered while still conscious. The GAO has confirmed that the plight of cattle, pigs, sheep and other animals continues unabated.

### Basic Facts About Slaughter

More than 125 million cattle, sheep, hogs and other animals are slaughtered for human consumption at approximately 900 federally inspected slaughter plants across the country. Forty-nine of these plants, which are located principally in the Midwest, are responsible for slaughtering about 80 percent of the animals. The HSA, passed in 1958 and amended in 1979, requires that animals be humanely handled and rendered unconscious prior to being shackled, hoisted up on the production line, bled, skinned or scalded, and dismembered.\* The US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the law and is supposed to stop the slaughter process when serious violations are observed and cannot continue until they are addressed. In some plants, more than 1,000 animals per hour are killed by individual workers, making the likelihood of violations almost certain; if FSIS inspectors stopped slaughter operations every time major violations were observed it would serve as a weighty enforcement tool because of the resulting financial losses to the plant.

### Food Safety and Inspection Service: Shoddy Enforcement and Shady Behavior

Following Gail's exposé, it has been clear that FSIS suffers from a lack of interest in enforcing the HSA; FSIS inspectors spend the majority of their time conducting meat inspection and HSA enforcement is a mere afterthought. The GAO confirmed the problem, citing ongoing and systemic problems with enforcement of the humane requirements by FSIS. Some

inspectors have failed to document violations altogether while other inspection records indicate a failure to provide complete and consistent information regarding the scope and severity of violations that have been witnessed.

The GAO noted that FSIS had somehow "lost" at least 44 inspection records that document violations of the law, and there will be no effort to locate them—forever protecting the identity of the scofflaws.

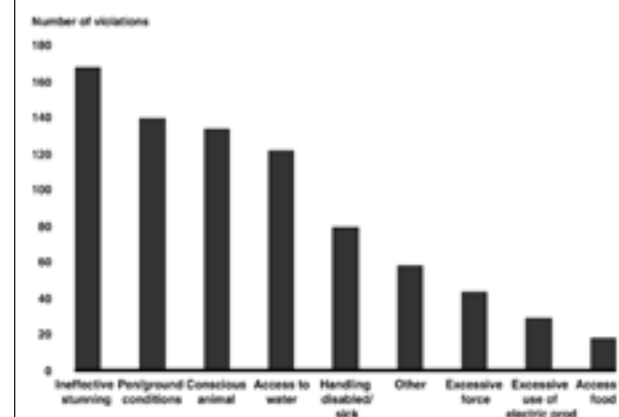
Inspectors were more likely to stop the slaughter line when there was ineffective stunning of a single animal than when multiple animals were ineffectively stunned the GAO reported. And, the line was stopped in less than half of the cases of ineffective stunning of multiple animals. In addition, GAO reported that some inspectors failed to utilize their ability to suspend operations at a plant.

Following an impassioned oratory by Senator Robert Byrd (see Fall 2001 *AWI Quarterly*) FSIS was provided an additional million dollars by Congress to help it better enforce the law. The funds were used to hire 17 veterinarians who initially spent much of their time on other activities such as biosecurity and food safety. When this apparent misuse of the appropriation came to light FSIS shifted responsibilities so that 12 of the veterinarians are now dedicated to HSA enforcement.

Last year Congress, still deeply concerned about enforcement of the HSA, appropriated \$5 million to FSIS to hire at least 50 inspectors "solely dedicated" to ensuring compliance with the law. However, it appears that FSIS has failed to hire any new inspectors, and instead merely reappropriated the funds.

In one of its boldest acts of transgression, FSIS provided a report to Congress on its enforcement of the HSA in March 2003 stating that its records indicate "very few infractions were for actual inhumane treatment of the animals (e.g. dragging or ineffective stunning)." FSIS suggested that the majority of violations were facility problems such as slippery floors and failure to provide water or food for animals. Following an analysis of FSIS'

### Violations Documented in Noncompliance Records between January 2001 and March 2003



*Source: GAO's analysis of FSIS noncompliance records.*



own records, the GAO concluded that by far, “the most prevalent noncompliance documented was the ineffective stunning of animals, in many cases resulting in a conscious animal reaching slaughter.”

Increased pressure on FSIS over the past few years has led to an increase in the number of violations documented by inspectors, however, the vast majority of animals handled and slaughtered at plants are not observed by FSIS inspectors until after they have been processed into meat.

### What Does the Future Hold?

GAO made a number of recommendations intended to improve FSIS enforcement, but unless there is a change in attitude from within, FSIS will continue finding ways not to get the job done. It is time for Congress to take stronger action against FSIS for its failure to do its job.

If FSIS were truly willing to enforce the law, the agency would have done as Congress and particularly Senator Byrd specifically requested and hired no fewer than 50 individual inspectors to serve as permanent fixtures in each of the largest slaughter plants to observe the handling, stunning and slaughter of animals for compliance with the law. All inspectors who spend time on HSA enforcement must receive adequate training about the law and, more importantly, must receive a strict mandate from the Secretary of Agriculture to take strong, immediate action against any violators of the HSA and to document properly the work that they are doing for all to see. This would be a modest step toward protecting the millions of animals who are killed for food from unnecessary suffering.

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## Farrowing and Weaning Pigs in Deep Straw

In May 2003, West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC), University of Minnesota, completed a new housing system for sows and piglets. Formerly a dark, smelly structure for housing pigs over a liquid manure pit, the newly remodeled building underwent a remarkable transformation. Modeled on a Swedish system, it houses pigs in amply lit rooms, amidst an abundance of straw, with plenty of room to roam, socialize, root, and give birth to their young. AWI’s Farm Animal Economic Advisor Marlene Halverson contributed to the design.

The 45 foot by 120 foot building is divided into four spacious rooms. Each of three rooms houses eight sows and their piglets, while one room houses gilts (young female pigs) “recruited” from the WCROC pig herd to become breeding sows. At one end of each room, “garage” type doors permit easy cleaning and rebedding with a small tractor.

Individual feeding stalls and a deep straw bed in the gilts’ room mimic the layout of the Center’s gestation hoop (see Winter 2004 *AWI Quarterly*). Gilts gain experience living in groups and using feeding stalls before joining the main sow herd. Fresh straw added daily provides material for occupation and is consumed by the gilts between meals.



*A roller over the threshold protects the sow’s udder as she enters and leaves her farrowing pen.*



*Removing the birthing pens simulates the process in nature, when sows leave their isolated farrowing nests and lead piglets to join the larger, communal group.*

In the farrowing (birthing) rooms, staff set up eight portable farrowing pens, four along each sidewall, with pen entrances facing a spacious area in the middle. They bed each pen with straw. Sows are brought into the rooms a few days before they are due. Soon after, each sow chooses a pen in which she arranges a nest and gives birth. The seven foot by ten foot pens are roomy enough that sows can enter, lie down to nurse, rise, and leave again with a low incidence of injuring piglets. When all piglets can climb out of the pens, the pens are dismantled and removed so piglets and sows can mingle freely.

Sows naturally begin to wean piglets by reducing the number of nursings they initiate. Because feed is continuously available in the farrowing rooms, piglets learn to eat by their mothers’ sides. Their digestive systems become accustomed to solid feed. Staff complete the weaning process

when piglets are five to six weeks old by taking sows to the gestation hoop for rebreeding. Sows’ scents are left behind in the beds, reducing piglets’ stress associated with their “loss.” A five to six week nursing period allows young pigs’ immune systems to develop. Reducing the stress of weaning helped Swedish pig farmers adjust to Sweden’s legal prohibition on subtherapeutic antibiotic use. By contrast, industrial production entails weaning piglets abruptly at one to three weeks of age.

WCROC is pleased with the system. Sows farrowing in October 2003 weaned an average of 10.5 pigs per sow. Because the Center remodeled an existing building rather than building new to Swedish specifications, getting the ventilation system to work properly has been a challenge as has learning to manage deep straw beds, but workers are adjusting. If successful, the remodeling can provide an example for farmers who have buildings they would like to convert. The systems elicited favorable responses from farmers attending a November 2003 “open house.” AWI applauds this progressive research to improve pig welfare.

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## New Initiative for Global Animal Welfare

This year a virulent bird flu spread across much of Asia killing 22 people. Over 100 million birds, including chickens, ducks, and lovebirds, died or were hurriedly slaughtered and then buried or burned to prevent the disease’s spread. Many of these living creatures were burned alive. In February 2003, an avian flu outbreak resulted in slaughter of 11 million chickens in the Netherlands. Fifty Dutch workers became ill and a veterinarian died.

In the United States, avian influenza resulted in the slaughter of 328,000 chickens in Maryland in March, while over 80,000 were killed in Delaware in February. In Texas, a highly virulent strain resulted in slaughter of 6,600 broiler chickens. In 2001 and 2002, over 4.7 million chickens were killed in Virginia when avian influenza struck the region.



*In a traditional ceremony, villagers in Bali, Indonesia, kill 2,500 chickens in a huge bonfire intended to send off the evil spirits that they say brought on this year’s massive bird flu outbreak.*

In the United Kingdom in 2001, in a prolonged, mass slaughter intended to prevent spread of foot and mouth disease, over ten million animals were killed, perhaps 90 percent of whom were not infected. Two Cardiff law professors charged that pressure to kill so many animals caused them to be “killed in ways which were almost always unacceptably, indeed criminally, inhumane and very often so horribly cruel as to be an occasion of lasting national shame.”

While the numbers of animals affected by disease outbreaks are staggering, the effects on farm animals of illness itself, as well as the fear, distress, injury, and pain to animals associated with collection and transport of millions of birds and other animals to mass slaughter points, are of deep concern. Economists assess the costs of such diseases and disease eradication measures in the billions of dollars, yet it is the animals themselves who pay the highest price, a cost that is too often disregarded.

Against this backdrop, the Animal Welfare Institute welcomes the initiative by Office International de Epizooties (OIE), the World Organization for Animal Health. The 2001-2005 strategic plan mandated OIE to prepare an international guide to good practices for animals. Subsequently, OIE identified an immediate need to address welfare issues surrounding killing of animals for disease control purposes; slaughter of animals for human consumption; and land and sea transport of live animals. Ad hoc expert groups were appointed to advise the OIE Working Group on Animal Welfare and to prepare detailed guidelines and recommendations.

The international standing of OIE places it in a unique position to improve the welfare of farm animals. OIE is the official standards setting organization for animal health and zoo noses under the World Trade Organization (WTO), drafting standards for WTO relating to all “animal production food safety” risks. Animal diseases, noted OIE Director General Dr. Bernard Vallat, “are a major factor affecting animal suffering, poverty and the risk of food-borne diseases.”

In fulfilling its new mandate, Dr. Vallat declared, “we have had to delve deeper into the heart of the relationship between animals and humans. The OIE, formerly open only to a circle of experts and specialists, is now moving closer to consumers and citizens.” From February 23-25, the OIE convened in Paris an assembly of OIE representatives and scientific advisors and animal welfare stakeholders to respond to reports from the ad hoc expert groups. AWI participated as an animal welfare nongovernmental organization (NGO).

The effort by OIE represents the first time an international organization, having the standing to set definitive animal welfare standards recognized by WTO, has agreed to consider not only the physiological health and disease status of farm animals but also animals’ subjective experience of the conditions in which they are raised, handled, transported, and slaughtered. The OIE has selected internationally recognized animal welfare scientists to contribute to the OIE deliberations. AWI is also gratified that OIE seeks continued involvement of NGOs having specific experience and knowledge in the area of farm animal welfare. We look forward to further cooperation





QAF Meat Industries

A temperate climate permits use of "eco-shelters" in much of Australia. Sows are given rice hull bedding which provides a substrate for rooting with OIE in this important effort for animals.

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## Pigs in the Pan-Pacific

The Pan-Pacific region of the globe holds more than half of the world's domestic swine population. At the request of the trade association Australian Pork Limited, AWI's Farm Animal Advisor, Diane Halverson, delivered the keynote speech at the Pan-Pacific Pork Expo in Brisbane, Australia in March, entitled "Responding to the Public Demand for the Humane Treatment of Pigs: On the Farm, in the Marketplace and in the Law."

Young pigs in Australia are often found in shelters open to sunlight and fresh air and with floors bedded with rice hulls, in contrast to US factories where pigs are subjected to concrete slatted floors and toxic gases emitted by liquefied manure. But a large percentage of Australia's 300,000 pregnant sows languish in crates that prevent movement and socialization. Others are kept in groups with room to move; some don't have bedding, while others do.

Researchers at QAF Meat Industries are looking at adapting Swedish sow group housing (*AWI Quarterly*, Winter 2004) to Australian conditions. In addition, this year the voluntary "Australian Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals—the Pig," will be reviewed. Indications are that restrictions on crating pregnant sows will be adopted.

A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the US and Australia signed in May will give US agricultural exporters duty free access to the land down under. Tragically, FTA threatens to further entrench US pig factories by providing an additional destination for their pork. Australian senators are concerned the import of pork will expose Australia's pigs to diseases that do not yet plague the country's swine population. FTA also threatens to undermine Australia's welfare advances unless Australian consumers are able to identify and reject US factory pork in the marketplace.

## "With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility"

—Uncle Ben to Peter Parker in *Spider-Man*

With the June 30 release of *Spider-Man 2*, the Animal Welfare Institute proudly recognizes actor Rosemary Harris—Peter Parker's "Aunt May"—for her deep commitment to relieving the suffering of animals confined on factory farms. Ms. Harris, a Broadway legend and winner of a Tony, an Emmy and a Golden Globe Award for her work on stage, television and in film, was a close friend of AWI's founding President, Christine Stevens, and her husband, former AWI Treasurer, Roger Stevens. A Broadway producer and Kennedy Center Chairman, Roger produced a number of the plays in which Ms. Harris starred. Recently, Ms. Harris and her husband, North Carolina author John Ehle, accompanied AWI staff to several farms raising pigs according to AWI's pig husbandry standards, which she strongly supports. She expressed her appreciation to the farmers for their willingness to raise pigs in ways that permit them to live more natural lives. Speaking in a video that AWI prepared for the Waterkeeper Summit on Sustainable Agriculture held in New Bern, North Carolina, Ms. Harris eloquently expressed her concerns for the welfare of one of the most severely and widely abused of all animals breeding sows:

"What concerns me and moves me more than anything is the plight of the animals in these factory farms....Particularly, the predicament of the sows who are incarcerated in their crates for the duration of their pathetic lives. After all, they are mothers and not production units and machines. Please pause and think about the animals who are causing, through no fault of their own, the horrendous environmental problems



Martene Halverson/AWI

"I love this sweet sow on the Wright family farm. She is one of the fortunate few sows permitted to breathe fresh air and walk with the earth beneath her feet and the sun shining on her back."

that we are suffering now. Insist on products from animals raised on animal-friendly family farms. Not only for the sake of the animals but because all our troubles are rooted in the way that we raise the animals now—denied the light of day and the basic needs of movement and motherhood."

AWI is delighted to acknowledge such a distinguished and compassionate actor.

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## Biogas from Manure: How Green?

On May 4, Secretary of Agriculture Veneman announced availability of \$22.8 million in grant funds to farmers and rural businesses for renewable energy projects, including biomass, wind, geothermal, and solar. Last year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded \$21 million to 113 farm energy projects. Thirty involved anaerobic digesters to capture methane (biogas) from confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) that manage manure as a liquid. Increasingly, biogas production from liquid animal "wastes" is being touted to boost farm incomes, achieve independence from foreign oil, and solve massive environmental problems associated with CAFOs.

While AWI applauds efforts to develop renewable energy sources, we are concerned that subsidizing energy production from liquefied manure artificially creates a demand to continue an extractive and exploitive relationship with animals and nature and perpetuates a form of animal production that has proved detrimental to public health and rural communities (see [www.iatp.org/hogreport/](http://www.iatp.org/hogreport/); [www.apha.org/legislative/policy/2003/2003-007.pdf](http://www.apha.org/legislative/policy/2003/2003-007.pdf); and [www.factoryfarm.org/press/docs/Methane\\_Digesters\\_2003final062703.doc](http://www.factoryfarm.org/press/docs/Methane_Digesters_2003final062703.doc)).

In a recent *San Francisco Chronicle* article a California Energy Commission spokesman estimated that, if all the dairies in California (which subsidizes methane digesters) were hooked into the state's utility grid, they would produce only "100 megawatts or so" of energy. But CAFOs have public costs that exceed their energy potential. CAFOs flush manure from buildings with water, a scarce resource in some regions. Besides methane, anaerobic decomposition of liquefied manure emits other gasses, including hydrogen sulfide, a potent neurotoxin. Hydrogen sulfide from manure pits and inside CAFO buildings has killed animals and people, including three California dairy CAFO workers. Methane is highly explosive and has asphyxiated workers repairing equipment in manure pits. Local governments' health care services and community food shelves too often are forced to "subsidize" CAFOs that hire unskilled workers at wages well below the cost of living.

Commercial biogas production requires skilled and attentive management and top of the line equipment. Most sources indicate that investments in manure digesters are not possible without subsidies. Some contend that manure digesters may never be profitable without them and that equipment life



Diane Halverson/AWI

Pigs in a confined animal feeding operation (CAFO) being raised to market weight. CAFO practices that are already unhealthy for farmed animals will be entrenched by the need to collect enough manure to make energy.

may be little longer than the payback period, necessitating further capital investments. The farmer soon finds himself on an even faster treadmill than the one on which he was running to keep up before. CAFOs' continuous need to expand to pay capital costs has driven industry structure to fewer and larger CAFOs, displacing smaller operators. Additional capital costs of manure energy are likely to exacerbate the trend.

CAFOs house pigs and dairy cattle on solid concrete or slatted floors from which manure is scraped into gutters or flushed into under-floor collection pits. Laying hens live in wire cages through which manure drops onto conveyers and into pits. CAFOs do not provide bedding that would interfere with liquid manure collection and anaerobic digestion. They submit farmed animals to lifetimes of breathing polluted air, without the possibility of performing healthful natural behaviors such as grazing or flapping of wings. Such inhumane practices will be entrenched by CAFOs' need to collect enough manure to produce energy.

Government programs should support farming practices that are inherently sustainable rather than inherently demanding of remediation. A first positive step is to stop liquefying manure. Composting bedding-based manure is safer for people, animals, and the environment than anaerobic digestion. Sustainable farms raise animals in proportion to the land they have for spreading manure. Rather than a "waste," composted manure is a valuable soil amendment needed by crops. Raising animals on pasture contributes to animal health, reduces veterinary expenses and antibiotic use, conserves energy, and helps prevent soil erosion. Requiring low capital investment, sustainable practices keep farmers off the high-tech treadmill and can provide comfortable livings for farm families and better lives for farmed animals.



## Egg Industry Happily Markets Cruelty

Packaged food from agricultural animals is increasingly identified by appealing claims such as “natural” and “happy” as if to suggest that the animals from which the products come were treated humanely. With no regulation on such terms, producers can easily deceive customers. Such is the case with United Egg Producers’ (UEP) “Animal Care Certified” label. UEP, the egg industry’s trade association, labels its products as “Animal Care Certified” and describes the program as the customers “assurance that the eggs you are buying are from hens receiving the highest level of care...we care about the welfare of our hens...the guidelines place top priority on the comfort, health and safety of the chickens.”

Nothing could be further from the truth. Over 225 million laying hens are subjected to abuse frighteningly codified by UEP’s misnamed program. “Animal Care Certified” eggs come from hens who are: 1) intensively confined in barren, wire cages so small the birds cannot spread their wings and which prohibit them from dustbathing, 2) beak trimmed, in which an unanesthetized bird’s beak is cut off, and 3) force-molted or starved for up to two weeks to artificially induce the laying of additional, larger eggs.

Fortunately, Compassion Over Killing brought this



Photos: Compassion Over Killing

Many brands use the “Animal Care Certified” logo which implies humaneness, but hens raised according to the applicable guidelines are tightly confined, mutilated, and starved, like those shown here.

disingenuous marketing to the attention of the Better Business Bureau (BBB), and in May, the BBB’s highest authority on advertising issues determined that the UEP label is in fact misleading and should not be used considering most consumers would not consider the treatment of the hens, under the program, humane. Compliance with the ruling is voluntary, but groups that refuse are referred to federal agencies, such as the Federal Trade Commission, which could stop the advertising and levy fines. Evidently non-compliance is so infrequent that, if referred, the case would be highly scrutinized. We hope strong action is taken against this dishonest labeling.

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## Industry Wants You to Eat Downers

Less than three months after the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) banned “downed” cattle (animals suffering immobility due to injury and/or illness) from being consumed, the cattle industry has initiated a federal bill, H.R. 4121, misleadingly named the “Consumer and Producer Protection Act of 2004,” which seeks to allow downed cattle back into the human food chain. This ill-conceived bill, which blatantly undermines USDA’s commonsense and long overdue ban, would allow the consumption of cattle unable to stand or walk due to “fatigue, stress, obdurator nerve paralysis, obesity, or one or more broken or fractured appendages, severed tendons or ligaments, or dislocated joints.”

Citing extensive data from other countries, USDA states that downers are at significantly higher risk of having BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy or “mad cow disease”) than other cattle. USDA also asserts “downer cattle infected with BSE often cannot be found by looking for the typical clinical signs associated with BSE, because the signs of BSE often cannot be differentiated from the signs of the many other diseases and conditions affecting downer cattle.” Case in point, the cows detected with BSE in Canada and the U.S. were identified as non-ambulatory due to calving injuries, pneumonia, and a broken leg.

H.R. 4121 recklessly suggests USDA inspectors can distinguish between diseased and injured downers, and by encouraging the consumption of downed animals, it poses a direct threat to human health. H.R. 4121 also exacerbates animal cruelty since downed animals are often in pain and cannot be moved gently. Rather than being brutally prodded, pulled, and pushed to the kill floor, these animals should be humanely euthanized for their sake and for our own health and morality.

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## Inertia at the US Department of Agriculture

Japan and more than 50 other nations continue to ban American beef due to the unwillingness of the US

Department of Agriculture (USDA) to test each animal slaughtered for mad cow disease. As one might expect, a growing number of proactive, independent, niche market cattle ranchers desperately want to maintain their Japanese customers and seek to test all of their animals. In fact, Creekstone Farms, which exports to Japan, spent \$500,000 on testing facilities only to have USDA prohibit the purchase of the chemical kits necessary to conduct the testing. Creekstone is appealing this decision, but USDA hypocritically prohibits this initiative on the grounds that allowing the tests would imply that the products from companies that don’t test all of their animals are less safe. Not surprisingly, the staunchest ally the USDA has in its opposition to universal testing is the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, the beef industry’s trade association.

USDA claims that by testing less than 1 percent of the cattle slaughtered each year it is doing the testing deemed appropriate by science and asserts it has enacted reforms to protect against mad cow disease. Yet on-going revelations demonstrate inconsistent implementation of regulations and breaches of protocol that jeopardize human safety. For instance, an agency veterinarian and an attorney representing federal veterinarians recently charged that USDA officials pressure their veterinarians to sign documents that falsely certify food items are safe for export. Separately, in May, the agency acknowledged policy was broken when a cow who exhibited signs of a central nervous system disorder was not tested for mad cow disease. It has also come to light that USDA issued permits that led to the importation of banned Canadian beef products. Furthermore, the agency will not identify the companies that imported the banned items.

USDA, engaged in the conflicting tasks of promoting and regulating animal products, does more to appease industry than to ensure food safety and animal health. A May 23 Denver Post article noted the Bush Administration has appointed more than 100 top government officials who were once lobbyists, attorneys, or spokespeople for the industries they oversee, including more than a dozen high-ranking USDA officials who have ties to the meat industry. USDA should follow the lead of other countries and increase its diligence in protecting human health by reestablishing food safety as its highest priority and halt its preoccupation with protecting the image of the cattle industry.

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## AWI Exhibits at AVMA

A life-size sow replica in an actual gestation crate was displayed at the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) booth during the American Veterinary Medical Association’s (AVMA) Annual Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania this July. Our impetus was the AVMA’s unacceptable endorsement of the gestation crate, which individually confines female pigs during their pregnancy; in the U.S. more than 4 million sows are forced to live in this deprivation. AWI’s Wendy Swann and



Wendy Swann/AWI

The AVMA veterinarian’s oath promises to “protect animal health and relieve animal suffering.” Yet, the AVMA endorses the cruel gestation crate.

Paul Willis, who raises pigs according to AWI’s husbandry standards, worked the exhibit.

There were three promising developments for animals at the convention. First, the AVMA revised its policy regarding forced molting of laying hens and now advocates that neither food nor water be withheld. Second, the AVMA began reviewing the practice of force-feeding ducks and geese to produce foie gras. Although the Association neglected to adopt a policy against this cruel practice, we anticipate that they will vote on it next year. Last of all, as part of her commencement speech, incoming President Bonnie Beaver stated, “It is important for each of us to recognize that we may at times become too close to the industries we serve, losing our objectivity about what is the best welfare and adopting instead that suggested by the industry.” Undoubtedly this is what happened when the AVMA endorsed the gestation crate.

More than a year ago the Association called for a task force to reconsider the existing policy, but they still have not met. AWI is encouraging the AVMA to revise its position by acknowledging that sows need to engage in natural behaviors including rooting in natural substrate such as straw, exploring, moving around, and socializing with other pigs. We hope the AVMA will recognize its primary responsibility to serve the animals, not the industry.

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## Petitions Document Hog Factory Horrors

Investigations into agribusiness cruelty, led by Gail Eisnitz, Humane Farming Association (HFA), have culminated in the filing of petitions with the Attorneys General of South Dakota and Nebraska. Generally, both complaints document failures to provide food, water, adequate shelter and veterinary care for pigs of all ages as well as deficient sanitation and ventilation, and an insufficient number of employees at “Sun Prairie” in South Dakota and “HKY, Inc.” in Nebraska.





Humane Farming Association

*As documented in the "HKY, Inc." petition, piglets frequently fall through dilapidated flooring to the liquid manure pit below and slowly drown.*

The specifics, however, are far more horrific. The petitions delineate horrendous mistreatment of animals and apparent violations of animal cruelty laws. In a taped interview, a Sun Prairie worker states: "I saw [the supervisor] hitting a lot of pigs...with a hammer...I saw him a lot of times use a long...steel rebar type of rod...He would use that to hit them behind the head, especially the large pigs. And these pigs would not die after the first hit and they would be kicking...trying to move and run and you could hear them squealing. Then he hit them again...until they finally don't move anymore."

The petitions provide a glimpse into the lives of millions of pigs bred and raised for meat and request that each Attorney General initiate an independent investigation and prosecute violations of state anti-cruelty law. While most states have anti-cruelty laws, many include exemptions to "accepted" or "common" farming practices, but even in states where exemptions do not exist, it is extremely hard to prosecute violators. Infuriatingly, Attorney General Long of South Dakota ignored the incontrovertible evidence presented by HFA and instead defended Sun Prairie.

HFA is doggedly pursuing legal action against both hog factories. Each petition is available at cost price of \$8.00, email [wendy@awionline.org](mailto:wendy@awionline.org) or call 703-836-4300.

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## AWI's Standards for Cattle and Sheep Put Other Criteria Out to Pasture

Tens of millions of cattle and lambs are raised for meat each year in the United States. Large numbers of these sentient beings are subjected to barren feedlots, painful mutilations and unnatural diets that most consumers do not wish to acknowledge. But with the development of AWI's husbandry standards for cattle and sheep, we have one more weapon in our arsenal to reject farm animal cruelty.

AWI's criteria require that husbandry, housing and diet



Patty Mark/Animal Liberation Victoria

*These gentle sheep have had a large chunk of skin brutally cut off from under their tails to prevent blowfly strike.*

allow the animals to behave naturally. Unlike agribusiness, which views animals as inanimate objects and cruelly subjects them to industrial systems that lower production costs and maximize profits to the animals' detriment, AWI requires that farms accommodate the animals' needs. Animals must be able to perform behaviors essential to their physiological and psychological health and well-being.

AWI's standards for cattle prohibit them from being restrained in close quarters on bare ground without shade or wind breaks, hot-iron branded, implanted with hormones, treated routinely with antibiotics or fed a high-grain diet or questionable feed ingredients. The Institute's standards for sheep dictate life in stable social flocks with the freedom to graze on pasture. Typical industry practices such as confinement on slatted flooring and mutilations like mulesing (removal of a large portion of skin around the anus to prevent blowfly strike) are prohibited. AWI also requires a minimum weaning age of four months, in contrast to the industry standard of five weeks or less. In addition to guidelines for lambs from birth to market, AWI also addresses the husbandry of rams and ewes.



Nicolette Hahn Niman

*Quality pasture offers enrichment and nutrients. Among other things, AWI's standards ensure cattle can graze, exercise, access shade and rest at will.*

AWI's standards are the gold standards for humane treatment, and they have three requirements not mandated by any other set of criteria. AWI prohibits liquefaction and storage of manure beneath slatted barn floors to protect animals from its toxic effects and forbids the operation of "dual" systems in which any number of a species are simultaneously kept in ways that do not meet the standards. Finally, AWI will only endorse independent family farms that own their animals, depend upon the farm for a livelihood and participate in the daily physical labor of caring for the animals and operating the farm.

We continue to develop and strengthen our husbandry standards as we work with a growing number of family farmers who raise animals in accordance with the criteria; these farmers may use AWI's name in the marketing of products from those animals. We also educate retailers, consumers and chefs about the treatment of farm animals. There are fewer animals kept in cruel confinement and an increased opportunity to purchase products from animals raised humanely thanks to the growth of our program.

AWI's standards are available online at [www.awionline.org/farm/standards.htm](http://www.awionline.org/farm/standards.htm). Please share the criteria with the companies you patronize and urge them to support compassionate farming.

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## Glynwood Harvest Award

AWI and some of its colleagues were honored with a Glynwood Harvest Award last October in New York City for "Connecting Communities, Farmers and Food." A prestigious selection committee chose a project conducted by AWI, Wisconsin farmers Bert and Trish Paris and former CEO of a Wisconsin dairy company Tera Johnson. The Parises own and operate a 90-cow dairy farm using rotational grazing practices (See *AWI Quarterly*, Fall 2003).

Typically, male dairy calves are removed from their mothers and hauled to an auction where they are sold only a few days after birth. Some are slaughtered; others spend four months confined in crates before they are sold as "white veal." Although the bull calves in the joint project will also be slaughtered for veal, there are two significant differences from typical veal production methods. The Parises' calves will remain on the dairy farm where they are born, and they will benefit from an enriched life spent on grass pasture.

Glynwood Chairman Dr. Henry A. Jordan and President Judith LaBelle presented the award, describing the project as an "inspiring example of...creativity and cooperation." The Glynwood Center is based in Cold Spring, New York; its agricultural initiative helps sustain small and midsize farmers whose work generates public benefits. Learn more at [www.glynwood.org](http://www.glynwood.org).

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## Horrific Treatment Captured at Kosher Slaughterhouse

Workers at AgriProcessors kosher slaughterhouse in Postville, Iowa rip the trachea from conscious cows and dump the animals onto a concrete floor—as blood streams from their throats and they writhe in agony—in footage documented in a recent investigation by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). Hundreds of animals are subjected to unbelievable cruelty each day at this animal torture facility; cows are mutilated while fully sentient, and chickens ride conveyor belts to an inhumane death.

In the United States, the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA) stipulates that animals used for food production be "rendered insensible to pain" or properly stunned before death and shackling. This loss of consciousness and a swift death virtually eliminate pain and fear in animals, but the law makes two exceptions. It does not require the stunning of animals killed by religious methods, and it does not extend its protection to poultry. Fortunately, there is an initiative underway to obtain inclusion of poultry under the Act (<http://upc-online.org/alerts/72204slaughteract.htm>).

Performed correctly, kosher slaughter—slaughtering according to Jewish law—is kinder and quicker than traditional slaughter. It recognizes that taking the life of an animal carries great responsibility, and the rationale for the religious laws behind it was to improve hygiene in primitive conditions by ensuring the slaughter of healthy animals. The footage PETA obtained from AgriProcessors, however, shows a clear violation of Jewish law and the HMSA, which requires the humane killing of animals, even in the case of its religious exceptions. Therefore, we are asking the US Department of Agriculture to prosecute the plant for its violations of the law.

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## Great Danes? Not in Poland. Danish Agribusiness Seizes Poland's Former State Farms

BY TOM GARRETT

On a quiet Sunday morning last June, Marek Kryda and I drove west from Gdansk through the forests and farm villages of the former Polish Corridor. Our focus was Poldanor, a Danish hog factory operation that preceded Smithfield Foods in Poland—arriving in 1998—and has grown alarmingly.

The area in central Pomorskie voivodeship where Poldanor operates is marked by no boundary, yet one has an immediate sense something has changed. Rural Poland's characteristic diversity is gone; in its place are immense fields bounded by





Marek Kryda

Rows of hog sheds line the enormous fields at Poldanor, a Danish hog factory in Poland.

walls of mature forest. The fields, in contrast to Polish practice, are monocultural; most are in maize.

The first stop was outside the town of Koczala, 70 miles from Gdansk, where Poldanor's largest hog factory is located. It is, as usual, a reconstructed state farm. The compound contains at least 25 large hog sheds, each painted a distinctive yellow-orange. This is the Poldanor color. We walked around the compound to the immense open concrete cesspool in which the effluent is stored; the concrete apron was covered with black residue.

By evening we had scouted and photographed three more large hog factories: automatic feeders whirring, pigs squealing. In two of them, effluent was being stored in corroded iron cisterns left from state farms. The next day we stopped at another Poldanor operation—the fields were so enormous that plowing tractors looked like insects.

After two days, Marek and I were convinced what we had observed was beyond the capacity of the owners of record, a Danish farming cooperative with 160 members. In central Pomorskie alone, Poldanor farms over 230 square miles and slaughters 300,000 pigs each year.

The months since our June reconnaissance have richly vindicated the impression that Poldanor had—lurking somewhere—a more massive partner. It does indeed: The Danish government! Poldanor's initial funding came from interest free loans advanced by the Danish Investment Fund for Central and Eastern Europe (IO), supervised by the Danish Foreign Ministry. Further, it now devolves that sitting members of the current Danish government, along with prominent ruling Liberal party members are among Poldanor investors. IO funds are also behind the malodorous Danish Farming Consultants hog factory in southwest Poland, and similar Danish operations in Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

When the Poldanor story finally broke last fall in the Danish magazine *Fagbladet*, Marek flew to Copenhagen for meetings with opposition MPs and heads of Danish trade unions. The Social Democrats attacked Poldanor's "blatant disregard for environment" Denmark's SiG trade union, interpreting both Poldanor's operations and the takeover of slaughterhouses in Eastern Poland by "Danish Crown" as outsourcing of Danish jobs, has called for a boycott of Polish meat.

On the face, Poldanor appears to be in trouble. Open cesspools are illegal under Danish law, EU regulations and

the Polish Fertilizer Act. Only one Poldanor hog factory has an EU mandated "integrated permit," four—long after the deadline—have not even applied. Other infractions have come to light. The Naclaw hog factory, for example, is confining 12,000 pigs under an outdated state farm permit authorizing 3,000. If the laws are enforced, most of Poldanor will simply be shut down.

But the laws are not being enforced, and neither Poldanor nor its backers in the Danish government have shown the least sign of contrition. On the contrary, Poldanor has just announced a joint venture with Tikon, Denmark's second largest hog butcher, to purchase a bacon processing plant and a slaughterhouse with a capacity of 1.5 million pigs annually at Nowe, south of Gdansk.

What now seems underway is an unabashed attempt by Danish industrial agribusiness, with the full cooperation of the Danish government, to seize as much of Poland's former state farm system as they can, in any way that they can. We are faced with a new battle: one that we did not want but that we cannot avoid.

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## The New Muckraker Investigator Extraordinaire Gail Eisnitz Wins AWI's Albert Schweitzer Award for Standing Up to Government and Meat Industry Giants

Gail Eisnitz, chief investigator of the Humane Farming Association (HFA), is determined to expose injustices so huge many people in positions of power won't even admit the problems exist. Facing such odds, others might have given up. But not Eisnitz.

Since 1992, she has devoted herself to documenting the atrocities committed day after day in America's slaughterhouses. Frustrated by the media consistently turning a cold shoulder to her story, she wrote *Slaughterhouse: The Shocking Story of Greed, Neglect and Inhumane Treatment Inside the US Meat Industry*.



Matthew T. Cavanaugh

Eisnitz (middle) holds her medal as she stands next to John Mackey and Cathy Liss.

Eisnitz interviewed meatpacking workers as well as US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspectors. She visited bars on the edge of slaughterhouse towns to listen to workers' experiences. She went on killing floors, sometimes undercover, but always with the courage to get the photographs, tape-record the conversation or establish the trust of a whistleblower nervous about losing his or her job. Even facing threats of violence, she delivered.

The meat so abundant in America's supermarkets belies a host of appalling federal crimes and public health risks. Her evidence proves that cattle are routinely skinned and dismembered while still conscious; live hogs are lowered into tanks of scalding water; crippled animals are whipped, kicked, strangled and beaten to death with lead pipes; diseased meat often finds its way into the processing plant and E. coli and salmonella have skyrocketed since the USDA reduced its number of inspectors.

This kind of investigative journalism is crucial to the success of the animal protection movement because it sets the record straight. Top officials at USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service can no longer claim ignorance or underestimate the extent of the problems that run rampant in the meatpacking industry. For this outstanding work, as well as her investigations into greyhound racing, the theft of companion animals for laboratory research, puppy-mills, factory farm violations and more, Eisnitz truly deserves AWI's 2004 Albert Schweitzer Medal.

In Eisnitz's 23 years of working on behalf of animals, two accomplishments rise above all others in her mind. Getting unprecedented front-page coverage in *The Washington Post's* April 2001 article "They Die Piece by Piece," an exposé by Pulitzer-prize winning author Joby Warrick, was one milestone. Eisnitz provided the bulk of evidence for the story and was delighted when it became *The Washington Post's* second highest reader-response piece.

Eisnitz also takes satisfaction in the critical role she played in stopping construction on tribal trust land of what was planned to be the world's third largest pig factory. Working with Lakota and other local activists in South Dakota, as well as HFA's lawyer Jim Dougherty, Eisnitz succeeded in gathering damning evidence needed to shut down the factory on Rosebud Reservation.

At the awards presentation, held on November 8, 2004 at the Russell Senate Office in Washington, DC, AWI President Cathy Liss acknowledged not only Eisnitz's courage in helping all animals, but her compassion for people as well.

"During the course of her investigations, she has had to work with some of the very people who have committed heinous acts against animals, or who witnessed such acts without trying to stop them....She has listened intently to their stories, without condemning them, and through this patient restraint, she has earned their trust," Liss said.

After Liss' introduction, Gary Dahl, a leader in the American Federation of Government Employees Federal Meat and Poultry Inspectors Union, gave Eisnitz an award on behalf of his union. "Gail is all about making a difference," he said.

She has "a drive second to none in doing what's best and right for all humanity."

John Mackey presented the Albert Schweitzer Medal. As president of Whole Foods Market, now 166 stores strong in North America and the United Kingdom, he's built his store's reputation on selling natural and organic foods. Eisnitz and Mackey had never met before the awards event, but they share a mutual respect and understanding that the success of each person's work depends upon the other. Mackey sees Eisnitz's investigations as deeply important and filled with integrity. Eisnitz, in turn, sees Mackey's initiative to develop humane standards for all farmed animals as a huge part of the solution to inhumane factory farming.

Products from animals raised according to those standards will be marketed under the label "Animal Compassionate" in Whole Foods' stores. "Animal Welfare Institute has been by far the biggest contributor to the process," Mackey said. AWI's Farm Animal Advisor, Diane Halverson, has been involved in the work from the start, providing Whole Foods with the framework for the standards created thus far.

Eisnitz recognized Mackey's "enlightened approach" to food marketing and production by saying it gives her tremendous hope for the future. She also noted that AWI's founder, Christine Stevens, was the first person in animal welfare to hire her.

In sizing up her own contribution to the animals she said: "... these issues are now on the national radar screen. And a lot of people who never saw past the cellophane packages in supermarket meat cases are thinking about what sentient animals go through to arrive on America's dinner plates."

Eisnitz's book *Slaughterhouse* has often been compared to the 1906 historical novel *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair. She clearly deserves as much credit as Sinclair for opening the eyes of ordinary citizens and condemning the collusion of public officials with big business. Like the original muckrakers, Eisnitz has stirred America's conscience and her work will long have an impact in helping make our country a more just and compassionate nation.

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## The End of the Beginning: A Patriot Victory in the Polish Sejm

BY TOM GARRETT

Outnumbered Poles routed an invading Bolshevik army at the gates of Warsaw in mid-August 1920, a victory celebrated as The Miracle of the Vistula. Another remorseless foreign invasion of Poland, that of multinational agribusiness, was decisively defeated in the Polish Sejm on March 4, 2005. Multibillion dollar corporations abetted by international banks and supported by Poland's corrupt post-Communist government were routed by citizens defending their villages and homes. This battle involved an obscure law called the Fertilizer Act. In 2001, Smithfield Food Inc. lobbyists quietly amended the Act to reclassify liquid animal feces from





Edyra Sikora

Marek Kryda, Robert Kennedy Jr., Tom Garrett and Jurek Duszczynski visit a Polish village where local citizens battled a Smithfield hog factory near the town school for years.

“sewage”—subject to rules applying to human sewage—to “fertilizer.” American-style effluent spraying was sanctified as “an acceptable means of application” and effluent storage became unregulated.

Smithfield and Danish interests in Poland operated with reckless impunity in 2002 and 2003, setting up 24 huge hog factories in northwestern Poland alone. Czechy is typical of afflicted communities. Here, “Prima,” a Smithfield front, brought hogs to a former state farm adjacent to the village and filled lagoons with liquid feces a few hundred feet from the nearest houses. Townspeople are burdened with constant stench, and plagued with clouds of flies in the summer. The water tastes foul; children suffer from respiratory ailments and sore eyes; dysentery, in a community that had hardly heard of the malady, is at third world levels.

But while the corporations, confident of government collusion, assailed the countryside, they were weakening politically. Catholic Radio Maryja launched a crusade against the invasion. Local resistance intensified; Members of Parliament (MPs), against a backdrop of plunging support for the government, were besieged with complaints.

In January 2004, Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) consultant Marek Kryda attended a church-sponsored meeting to plan a counter attack. A few days later, opposition deputies amended the Fertilizer Act in the Sejm Agriculture Committee. In a brutal, day-long debate in the Sejm Chamber, member after member rose to attack Smithfield and



Katarzyna Maj

This effluent contaminates the water supply for a Polish city of 400,000 people.

excortiate the Agriculture Ministry. Eventually, the minister accepted amendments requiring liquid manure “must be kept in closed and sealed containers that do not allow any environmental pollution,” and that it must be applied on fields according to “best agricultural practices.” Another amendment prohibited the practice of exporting effluent or dumping it alongside the roads.

After accepting the amendments, however, the Agriculture Ministry ignored them. Nothing changed. Almost a year after passage, Marek walked into the Agriculture Committee to hear Deputy Agriculture Minister Josef Pilarczyk tell the members that all that was needed to comply with the Fertilizer Act was a layer of straw scattered on the surface of open lagoons. Chairman Mojzesowicz turned to Marek, who testified that only 30 percent of Smithfield and Polandanor hog factories have applied for the “integrated permits” required by the European Union, and only 15 percent have received them; hence, the majority are operating illegally. Hearing this, the committee passed an amendment mandating solid hard covers over all lagoons. The bill was sent on to the Senate.

In the Senate, industry found an ally in Senator Henry Stoklosa, one of the most powerful and sinister men in Polish politics. Stoklosa is Poland’s largest domestic hog factory owner. With his interests at stake, he threw his legendary influence—built up over 16 years as a Senator—into the fight. The Senate returned a bill to the Sejm specifying Pilarczyk’s formula of compliance via a layer of straw.

Word spread that the “fix” was in and the battle over. But Marek and fellow AWI consultant Jurek Duszczynski were far from beaten, and Chairman Mojzesowicz was furious over attempts to intimidate him. Several normally stalwart MPs voted with Stoklosa, but the chairman, iron faced, retained control of the majority of his committee. The Senate bill was rejected; the original language mandating solid covers was restored.

At this point, industry elected to take the bill to the Sejm Chamber before we could mobilize with our slender resources. However, Marek and Jurek worked around the clock to notify citizens across Poland, and Radio Maryja issued hourly bulletins. The effort to override the Agriculture Committee in the Chamber failed dismally—every major opposition party stood solidly against the government. The final vote was 232 to 168 in favor of the committee bill.

A battle won; a war yet to be fought.

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## AWI Conference in Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Smithfield Foods Inc. expanded to the Romanian market last year by purchasing an intensive pig breeding farm and one of the country’s biggest refrigerating storage companies. Smithfield is currently conducting advanced negotiations over the purchase of additional farms and meat processing plants in Romania.

In response, AWI recently organized an international conference on the impact of industrial agriculture on food, the environment and animal welfare. The event was held last February in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, with the support of a local university and the Romanian Alliance for Animal Protection.

The Institute believed it was necessary to inform Romanians of industrial agriculture’s implications, and this meeting was a natural solution. Through the participation of both foreign and local participants, all facets of industrial farming and its impacts on the land, people and animals were depicted during the two-day conference.

During the discussions, Romanian farmers had the opportunity to ask farmers from the United States and Great Britain questions on how their problems can be solved. Academic staff from the university and politically involved participants also found out how they can fight to defend Romanian agriculture.

Meaningful sessions conducted by a diverse list of speakers brought the truths behind industrial agriculture to light. AWI is confident that many Romanians are now aware of the atrocious reality of this business.

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## Foie Gras Cruelty Halted in Israel

After a period of phasing out the force-feeding of ducks and geese to produce foie gras, this horrific practice has finally ended in Israel. The Israeli Supreme Court ruled almost two years ago that force-feeding is a violation of the Animal Welfare Act, and would not be permitted in Israel after April 1, 2005. The country was the fourth largest producer of foie gras at the time of the ban.

To produce foie gras, which literally means “fat liver” in French, male ducks and geese are typically force-fed large amounts of corn through the long metal tubes inserted into their throats each day. This causes their livers to become enlarged up to 10 times their normal size because of an illness known as hepatic steatosis. Birds are breathless and experience



PETA

Ducks and geese are force-fed corn through metal tubes to make the “delicacy” known as foie gras.

diarrhea after the feeding, and those who survive this cruelty can suffer from intense pain due to lesions in their throats. Often, the birds’ engorged livers make walking impossible by the time they are slaughtered.

This inhumane food marketed as a gourmet treat is already prohibited in many countries, and Israel has set a wonderful example for others still involved in its production, including the United States. Recently in New York, Hudson Valley, the state’s only foie gras producer, succeeded in having legislation introduced and packaged as a humane measure. The bill would exempt Hudson Valley from existing anti-cruelty laws, and specifically allow it to remain in business for at least another 11 years. We hope the truth behind this pro-foie gras legislation will be recognized, ensuring its defeat.

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## Rosebud’s Struggle

The Animal Welfare Institute previously reported on the Rosebud Sioux Tribe’s struggle to extricate itself from an economically and culturally disadvantageous lease arrangement with Sun Prairie and Bell Farms to create the world’s third largest hog factory (AWI Quarterly, Spring 2003). After the US Supreme Court refused to hear its appeal of an earlier court ruling favoring the Bureau of Indian Affairs and hog factory opponents, Sun Prairie sued the Bureau and the Tribe in South Dakota Federal District Court, demanding financial damages. Inexplicably, Judge Richard Battey agreed with Sun Prairie and ordered the parties to negotiate a settlement.

Tribe members who fought the hog factory did not favor settling. Jim Dougherty, attorney for the opponents, pointed out Sun Prairie had no defensible grounds on which to sue for damages. However, a newly-elected Tribal Council was in place. Sun Prairie’s new owner appeared before the Council and claimed Rosebud would be liable for millions of dollars. Assistant US Attorney General Tom Sansonetti put further pressure on the Council to settle the case.

On April 27, 2005, the Council voted to accept the settlement offer the government negotiated with Sun



Humane Farming Association

Subjected to harsh living conditions at Sun Prairie’s Bell Farms, these pigs responded by cannibalizing weaker pigs at the facility.



Prairie, and on May 19, Judge Battey approved it. Under the settlement's terms, no new hog facilities may be built, but the existing sites, which annually produce about 192,000 hogs, may operate for 20 years. Sun Prairie must pay rent and water use, including past water use. The settlement still does not guarantee environmental justice, safe and fair conditions for workers or safe and humane conditions for the pigs who have received shockingly cruel treatment for years (*AWI Quarterly*, Fall 2004). Several Tribe members say they wish to contest the settlement.

Please visit [www.awionline.org/farm/rosebud.htm](http://www.awionline.org/farm/rosebud.htm) to learn more about this story.

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## Live Transport: Another Source of Suffering

Are we there yet? In the confines of your comfortable car, how often has someone asked just that? Now imagine traveling for hundreds of miles in a bleak, overcrowded space with no temperature control, little or no food or water and few stops, if any. You have likely seen such transport en route, because every year, billions of farm animals travel this way.

Our country has moved from many farms and slaughterhouses to fewer farms crowded with more animals and an even smaller number of slaughterhouses, which means animals are increasingly transported further and further distances. Most beef cattle, for example, are transported from the range to a stockyard or auction. From there, some are hauled directly to slaughter and some are sent to a feedlot and then transported to slaughter. Others may be trucked to grazing land, then moved to a feedlot and eventually transported to the slaughterhouse. A single trip may be hundreds or even thousands of miles.

Regulations for farm animal transportation are weak to nonexistent; animals often arrive at their destination stressed, thirsty, hungry, injured or dead. Practical and humane transport regulations would establish food and water requirements, rest periods, reasonable temperatures, timely veterinary inspections, euthanasia for sick and injured animals and maximum journey length.



Animals' Angels

*Often farm animals are transported in vehicles lacking temperature controls, resulting in heat-induced stress, hypothermia and death.*



Animals' Angels

*During transport, farm animals are typically overcrowded and forced to stand without bedding, food or water for over 24 hours.*

The only US law addressing the subject allows the transport of animals across state lines without food, water or rest for up to 28 hours. Although some industrialized countries have adopted stronger regulations, universally enforceable laws are needed desperately. Seeking to initiate such change is Animals' Angels, a European group devoted solely to raising awareness of the issue and bringing relief to animals in transport.

The organization routinely trails livestock trucks, and upon witnessing infractions of local law, contacts officials with the authority to stop and inspect the vehicles. In a recent investigation, the group documented an eight-day-long pig transport route from Canada to Hawaii. The route is used each week, and the pigs are deprived of food and water during the 28-hour segment of the trip from Alberta to California. For more information about this investigation and the group, please visit [www.animals-angels.de](http://www.animals-angels.de).

The Animal Welfare Institute advocates the transport of meat rather than live animals, and encourages consumers to buy locally raised and processed animal products. Each time an animal is transported, there is the potential for pain and fear. Think about that on your next trip.

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## OIE Releases First Global Standards for Transport and Slaughter of Live Animals

Animals around the world are a step closer to receiving the humane conditions they deserve, after delegates from all 167 member countries of the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) adopted live transport and slaughter standards in May.

The guidelines cover sea and land transport, as well as slaughter for human consumption and humane killing for purposes of disease control. They provide "a framework within which exists the potential to improve the welfare of the billions of farm animals," according to a statement by Compassion in World Farming.

While the standards are voluntary and not legally binding, they are important because they demonstrate

clear global agreement that animal welfare is an important issue. Hopefully they will initiate the adoption of humane enforceable laws in countries that currently have little or no legislation addressing farm animal transport and slaughter.

"It is a significant step forward for the OIE and the international community at large," said OIE Director General Bernard Vallat. "We reaffirm the essential link between the health and welfare of animals."

This action is a follow-up to the historic Global Conference on Animal Welfare, held in Paris in Feb. 2004 (*AWI Quarterly*, Spring 2004). The OIE will next establish production standards for farm animals.

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## Pork Company Sells Expired Meat

After shocking revelations of unsanitary practices at one of its plants, the world's largest pork producer has sent in a team of experts to save its image and its investments. US-owned Smithfield Foods Inc. shut down Constar, its major Polish meatpacking plant, for 11 days because the national media recently revealed its system of scraping mold off of expired sausages and sending them back to its retailers.

In April, the major Polish daily newspaper and the biggest private television channel caught workers at the Constar plant on hidden cameras, debating whether expired products sent back by stores should be thrown out or cleaned up and sent out again.

"The director [of Constar] has been suspended from performing his duties... and production has been halted until the matter is cleared up," said Lidia Zalewska, a spokesperson for Animex, Smithfield's Polish unit and the owner of Constar. In addition to an investigation by government food safety inspectors, the company launched an internal audit.

Smithfield said it is hiring a third party, Poland's former top veterinarian, to oversee an investigation of the incident and the inspection of the Constar plant. The European Commission is awaiting the results of the Polish investigation before deciding whether to take any action.

This scandal proves large, high-tech slaughterhouses do not make a safer food supply. According to Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the closure of small slaughterhouses in the United States and in England coincided with an increase of meat-borne diseases by 300 percent and 500 percent respectively. This is because big, centralized slaughterhouses force pork production onto factory farms where disease is rampant, and because long transport distances stress the animals and spread disease. Furthermore, technologies that increase line speed inside the slaughterhouse multiply worker errors and make proper inspections impossible.

Constar was built in the 1970s by the US plant architectural firm Epstein Engineering, and before it was taken over by both Animex and Smithfield—and then Smithfield alone in 1999—the plant had already introduced a Hazard

Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) programme in 1996.

In the United States, the health situation of the big slaughterhouses was immeasurably worsened in 1998, when the US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), yielding to industry wishes, introduced a system of HACCP that allows companies to devise their own methods of guaranteeing food safety through self-regulation, said the Animal Welfare Institute's Tom Garrett.

The practical effect of HACCP has been to remove the previously already scarce number of inspectors from the line. The same problem also appeared recently at Constar; the inspectors never visited the part of plant where workers scraped mold from sausages.

The Virginia-based Smithfield, which processes 20 million hogs annually, has unfortunately been bent on expansion since 1999, when it acquired Animex and all its brands, including the famous Krakus. Last year, it acquired Morliny, giving the company Poland's two most-recognized meat brands. It also boasts two subsidiaries in Romania. However, Smithfield Foods' reputation in the region is now under heavy fire, as the Constar scandal is just the latest in a series to rock the corporation's activities in Poland.

"We are making very much of an effort to improve our communication with local communities, to improve our communication with the citizens of Poland in a manner that we hope will result in them recognizing that we are a good company who is out for the good of Poland and not some sort of a threat to them," said Dennis H. Treacy, Smithfield's vice president for environmental, community and government affairs to a Polish newspaper.

However, thanks to Kennedy's visit to Poland in 2003, Polish public opinion already has very little doubt about what to expect from Smithfield—and obviously one of the major issues of this year's Parliamentary elections campaign in the Polish countryside will be animal welfare and the health and environmental problems caused by Smithfield's operations in the heart of Europe.

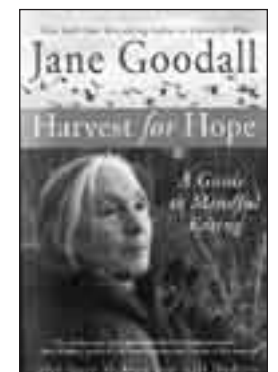
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## Harvest for Hope: A Guide to Mindful Eating

**By Jane Goodall, Gary McAvooy and Gail Hudson**

Warner Books, 2005  
ISBN: 0446533629, 320 pages

In *Harvest for Hope: A Guide to Mindful Eating*, renowned primatologist Jane Goodall inspires and empowers us to eat ethically and healthfully. She explains how our food is secretly laced with poison and pain by detailing the common practices of industrial





agriculture, and she goes on to examine the consequences of these techniques—driving home the point that we are detrimentally disconnected from nature and our consciences. The book teaches us not only how to leave a small footprint on the Earth, but how to make that impression positive.

Goodall attributes many of society's problems to the way food is produced. She scolds the US government for supporting an agricultural policy that makes some of the emptiest and most fattening calories the cheapest and most readily available. But there is hope—in the form of small, humane, organic, local, diversified, sustainable farms. Goodall says it is incumbent upon each of us to use our purchasing power to force those who raise animals and crops to do so in an ethical manner.

Due to the breadth of material presented in this book, some points would benefit from clarification. Such is the case regarding the overstatements of protections afforded to animals by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) organic label. This USDA certification pertains largely to what animals consume and does not guarantee access to fresh air and pasture and the ability to exercise. And while Whole Foods Market is making impressive efforts on behalf of animals, the duck supplier Goodall mentions still trims bills and does not give all ducks access to water for swimming. As Goodall notes, we should stay informed about the practices used by the farms and companies we support.

Sprinkled throughout the book are poignant vignettes and stories of people already making a difference. Considering the mass of information and resources *Harvest for Hope* contains, even the most educated readers will add to their knowledge.

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## Monsanto Invents Pig

Monsanto Corporation, notorious for pioneering the use of genetically engineered crops, has a new invention up its sleeve. Last February, it filed a patent application at the World Intellectual Property Organization—not only on pig breeding methods, but also on the actual herds of pigs it has created. Monsanto is infamous for not caring about the environment and this action proves it certainly does not care about the livelihood of most farmers. If a patent on Monsanto's pig breed is granted, the corporation can legally prevent farmers from breeding pigs who fit the description in the patent claims if they do not pay royalties. This type of corporate control could be devastating to independent family farms.

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## Frank Reese: A Good Shepherd for Turkeys

BY DIANE HALVERSON

"I don't remember not loving turkeys," said Frank Reese, owner of the Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch. "My father told me that when I was real little, 3 years old, I begged to see the turkeys before anything else at the State Fair." While fellow students



At the Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch, Frank Reese holds one of his prized heritage birds.

Photos by Diane Halverson



Turkeys are omnivores, so the tall grass pasture provides a rich environment for the birds' food searches.



Turkeys enjoy grazing on the Williamson farm, part of Frank's network.

wrote with pride and affection about the family dog, Reese's first grade school essay was entitled "Me and My Turkeys."

"I fed and watered the poultry, gathered eggs in the mornings and evenings, and, at dawn, let the birds out of the barn where they roosted overnight," Frank said of his



With the shelter of shrubs close at hand, turkeys spend much of their time on the ranch's pastures foraging for food.



Outdoor and indoor nestboxes are provided to hens.



The healthy skeletal structure and luxurious feathering of this standard-bred tom turkey gives him a regal appearance.

childhood on his family's farm in Kansas. Come July and August, he recalls, "Dad had me walk the turkeys to the fields so they could eat the grasshoppers that came when it was hot and dry." The Reeses never needed to spray crops for bugs.

Today, on his own Lindsborg, Kan. pastures, Frank breeds old lines of standard-bred turkeys like the ones he knew growing up. His turkeys are derived from birds he received

from breeders of the 1920s and 1930s. Norman Kardosh, known as "The Turkey Man" of the poultry world, became Frank's mentor and friend years ago, passing on his wealth of knowledge and strains of Narragansett, Blacks and Slates. In time, Frank received Bourbon Reds from Sadie Lloyd and Bronze turkeys from Cecil Moore. The lines he conserves date from the 1800s. "These strains are the oldest continuous strains of standard-bred turkeys in North America," he said. The birds are born of exacting breeding programs that have preserved the genetic purity of their ancestors. The offspring of Frank's breeding flocks are pasture-raised by a network of family farmers handpicked for their commitment to conscientious husbandry.

Marion Burros, a writer for *The New York Times*, and Heritage Foods USA, a marketing company that specializes in products from independent family farmers raising heritage breeds under good welfare conditions, first brought Frank and his farmer colleagues into the public spotlight. Heritage birds, they say, taste the way turkeys used to taste before factory breeding and raising "denatured" the birds.

Before my visit to Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch, I'd known turkeys only from a distance—from the viewpoint of a child riding in the family car past flocks of large white birds raised outdoors along Minnesota country roads. Local farmers let their turkeys roam on the range, supplying small, movable wooden shelters to protect them in bad weather. Today, most of those farms have contracted with agribusiness giants and confine their birds inside permanent buildings year-round. Minnesota now raises more turkeys than any other state.

At Good Shepherd, Frank placed a turkey in my arms. She was robust and feather-soft and too heavy to hold for more than a minute. His turkeys crowded close to me and followed my path, and I marveled at how sturdy and stately they appeared while parading from place to place. Nearby, other birds dust-bathed in soft dirt under the pines, foraging for food in the pasture or nesting in straw-lined boxes. There is ample land for them, and Frank rotates the pastures to maintain healthy soils and vegetation.

Frank's turkeys only lay eggs in season and are never force-molted. Poults are introduced to the outdoors through sunlit porches attached to their shelter. At 8 to 10 weeks of age, they are moved to pastures where they graze, forage and fly about during the day, then settle onto roosts under the shelter of a canopy at night. Unlike their factory-farmed counterparts, the birds are never de-beaked or de-clawed. Nor are their skeletal systems deformed from breeding programs that select for fast growth and enhanced breast meat. "My mission is the preservation of these old breeds. It is a labor of love," he said.

From an animal welfare standpoint, the Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch is impressive. Only standard-bred turkeys—popularly known as "heritage" birds—are guaranteed to have a normal skeletal structure, growth rate, metabolic system and lifespan. The stressful process of artificial insemination is not required because they still can mate naturally, unlike "modern" turkeys who are so disabled that they could not reproduce and survive as a species without human intervention.



Under the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) husbandry standards program, turkeys must meet the American Poultry Association definition of standard-bred or the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy definition of heritage birds (which has recently been reinforced by the US Department of Agriculture in its rendering of the word “heritage” for labeling and marketing turkeys). This requirement prevents disabilities that result from selection for unnaturally rapid weight gain and other production-related characteristics. All species must be given the opportunity to engage in positive social interactions and perform instinctive behaviors essential to their health and well-being. After witnessing these principles at work on Reese’s farm, AWI is pleased to endorse Frank and the network of farms who share his mission.

For more information, please visit these websites:  
 American Livestock Breeds Conservancy: [www.albc-usa.org](http://www.albc-usa.org)  
 American Poultry Association: [www.amerpoultryassn.com](http://www.amerpoultryassn.com)  
 Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch: [www.reeseturkeys.com](http://www.reeseturkeys.com)  
 Heritage Foods USA: [www.heritagefoodsusa.com](http://www.heritagefoodsusa.com)

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## Factory Farms Create the Environment for Deadly Bird Flu

Mild forms of avian influenza are relatively common, but its mutation into a virulent strain such as H5N1 is cause for a strong scientific and humane international response. To date, almost 200 people have been infected, and over half have died. Nearly a quarter of a billion birds have been killed.

Migrating birds are often blamed for the spread of the H5N1, but another theory is that the disease occurs and travels along corridors used by industrialized poultry producers. The non-governmental organization GRAIN notes that the virus follows man-made roads, not wild bird flyways. Global shipments of hatching eggs and poultry feed (which contains bird feces, a high-risk source of H5N1 contamination) are identified as possible conduits. The World Watch Institute also recognizes the role played by industrialized systems, stating that, “Crowded, inhumane and unhygienic conditions on factory farms can sicken farm animals and create the perfect environment for the spread of diseases, including avian flu.”

By now, H5N1 has surfaced in more than 30 countries, and the majority of birds destroyed as a result have come from animal factories. In addition to reforming the factory production of farm animals, there is a desperate need to end inhumane handling and killing methods. To learn more, please visit [www.grain.org](http://www.grain.org).

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*Workers at a factory in Thailand collect laying hens to be killed in an effort to contain the H5N1 virus. The birds are shoved into trash bags while they are still alive, and the bags are piled in trucks to be dumped into massive landfills. Prisoners have been used to assist with this effort to “depopulate.”*

## Inhumane Slaughter and Misconduct Uncovered at Kosher Slaughterhouse

The AgriProcessors (AGRI) kosher slaughterhouse in Postville, Iowa was documented mutilating still-conscious cows and using improper and brutal handling practices for killing poultry (*AWI Quarterly*, winter 2005). An undercover People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals video of the plant revealed that its slaughter methods clearly violated both the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act and Jewish law.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of the Inspector General has released a report containing details from its investigation, which determined that AGRI employees “engaged in acts of inhumane slaughter” and the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) employees “observed the acts of inhumane slaughter and did nothing to stop the practice.” Some employees at the plant said they had observed animals with their tracheas removed “get up and walk after being dumped from the kill box.”

Additionally, it was reported that, “FSIS inspectors accepted meat products from AGRI and that FSIS employees engaged in other acts of misconduct.” An FSIS inspector was also said to have spent significant amounts of time sleeping on the job and playing games on a government computer.

Despite these blatant violations, the USDA imposed only minor sanctions on just three of the plant’s 10 inspectors and claimed that the information “did not present a prosecutable case.” However, many individuals are still angry about the treatment going on behind closed doors. Rabbi Perry Rank, president of the Rabbinical Assembly, wrote in reference to the case, “When a company purporting to be kosher violates the prohibition against tza’ar ba’alei hayyim, causing pain to one of God’s living creatures, that company must answer to the Jewish community....”

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## AWI-Sponsored Humane Farmers Spread the Word

The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) sponsored a trip to the 6th Congress of the European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics this June in Oslo, Norway for AWI-approved farmers Frank Reese of Good Shepherd Turkey Ranch, Bert and Trish Paris of the grazing dairy farm Peace of Pasture, Tony and Sue Renger of Willow Creek Farm, and Paul Willis of the Niman Ranch Pork Company. At the event, the farmers showed slides of their animals and farms, and they described to the audience how important farm animal welfare is to the enjoyment and profitability of their operations. Marlene Halverson opened the workshop by outlining the AWI husbandry standards program, and Anne Malleau, executive director of Whole Foods Market’s Animal Compassion Foundation, described its research funding opportunities to test and promote humane farming systems.



*Swedish farmers Gun and Martin Ragnarsson employ the deep-bedded system, allowing piglets to benefit from a natural environment. This improved housing method is catching on in the United States.*

Marlene Halverson

AWI also brought Swedish pig farmers Gun and Martin Ragnarsson to the University of Minnesota, West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) this summer to monitor and advise research faculty and university farm workers on how to improve outcomes in their deep-bedded Swedish group sow housing and farrowing system. The focus of the university’s Alternative Livestock Systems Program is development and demonstration of livestock systems that are more sustainable for the environment, more caring of the animals’ behavioral needs, and more suitable to smaller farming operations. The Ragnarssons gave a seminar describing their own farming operation to university personnel and farmers from as far away as Wisconsin and Iowa.

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## Saying “No” to Foie Gras

In August 2006, Chicago will join the growing list of locales that have banned the sale of foie gras, thanks to a campaign by Farm Sanctuary. Israel and a host of European countries, including the United Kingdom, also prohibit the product, which is created by cruelly force-feeding ducks and geese until their livers swell to 10 times their normal size. Inspired by the success in Chicago, Philadelphia and the state of New York are also considering foie gras bans. AWI supports city and state bans that are implemented promptly, with no concessions to this barbaric industry.

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## Sour Milk: Big Industry and Low Standards Move in on the Booming Organic Dairy Market

Organic food production is based on a system of farming that mimics natural ecosystems and maintains and replenishes the fertility of the soil. Many consumers believe this approach to food production ensures farm animal well-being. Indeed, access to pasture—often associated with organic farming—protects foot and leg strength, wards off lameness and hoof lesions, promotes udder health, enhances the immune system and allows the animals to satisfy their natural behavior patterns and alleviate stress. In addition, maintaining pastures benefits the soil and improves the quality of milk. Studies show milk from grazing animals is higher in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin E and antioxidants, compared to milk from conventionally raised animals—who are typically raised in a feedlot system that forces cows to live on dirt or concrete. Conventionally raised animals are often genetically manipulated and given hormones, antibiotics and unnatural additives.

However, a recent report by the Cornucopia Institute shows large, industrial dairy operations are also entering the organic dairy market without adhering to the essential environmental and animal care practices that constitute true organic farming. Under the organic certification program administered by





Large corporation-owned organic farms investigated by the Cornucopia Institute rely on highly refined feed and grains. This practice prevents the animals from expressing their natural behaviors and getting many of the nutrients they would receive by grazing on pasture.



Nebulous USDA organic regulations allow Horizon to benefit from the organic label while keeping dairy cows in poor conditions on barren feedlots.

the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), dairy products labeled “USDA certified organic” may come from animals confined to feedlots, concrete flooring, stanchions or sheds—with very limited access to pasture. According to an official with whom we spoke from the USDA National Organic Program, even tail docking may be allowed, depending on the certifying agent’s review of a farm’s management plan. Though four sections in the USDA organic regulations state organic dairy animals should have access to pasture, the agency says the regulatory language “access to pasture for ruminants” is too vague to legally enforce. Under the program, cows may actually come from farms that confine thousands of animals in substandard conditions at one site.

Two large companies—Horizon Organics (a subsidiary of Dean Foods) and Aurora Organics—are particularly



Photos: Cornucopia Institute

The Alexandre Family EcoDairy Farm proves organic dairy farming can be done on a larger scale while still allowing access to pasture and good welfare practices.

criticized in the Cornucopia report. Their aggressive approach in the marketplace is undercutting smaller farmers who enter organic farming due to commitment to principles rather than for economic gain alone. Dean Foods, the leading company in conventional milk production, obtained 55 percent of the organic milk market by acquiring Horizon Organics. And Cornucopia reports that one Aurora facility had not even undergone the organic certification process, yet was still given organic certification. Cornucopia has filed a formal complaint with the USDA regarding this matter.

Companies like Horizon and Aurora keep organic milk prices low through vertical integration (controlling important aspects not only of milk production, but also of processing and marketing), dual production (simultaneously producing conventional and organic milk), high volume production and other practices that are not in line with organic principles. They sell off their calves, who would have to be raised for two years before they began producing milk, and then buy conventionally raised cows at approximately one year of age. These non-organic cows can be entered into organic milk production after 12 months under USDA rules—a disingenuous practice that saves the producer money at the expense of the animals. Ambitious production goals in combination with the industrialized conditions in which cows are kept create a high death and burnout rate, so the animals often have to be replaced.

Consumer demand for organic milk is growing, even creating a shortage in some grocery stores. Sales are no longer restricted to natural food co-ops or supermarkets; Wal-Mart is now the biggest seller of organic milk. A combination of greater demand, a shortage of suppliers, higher proceeds and loopholes in the USDA organic standards program has led the conventional milk industry to exploit the opportunity to enter the organic market. The fact that organic products have gained such popularity among a broad consumer base is an encouraging development. However, consumers concerned with the environment and animal welfare must stay vigilant to ensure that the organic standards, which make these food choices attractive in the first place, do not further erode due to pressure from the conventional food industry.

For More Information:

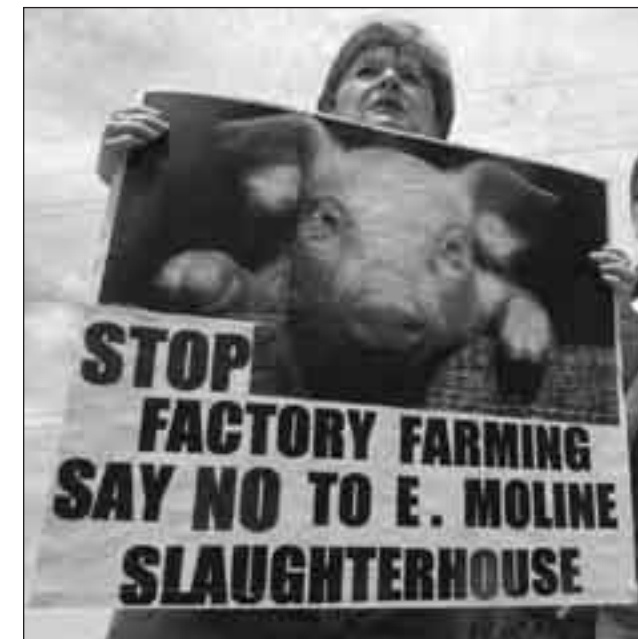
- 1) If you desire genuine organic milk products, shop for items with independent organic standards and enforcement programs that surpass those of the USDA. Consumers may view these programs by state by visiting [www.ams.usda.gov/NOP/CertifyingAgents/Accredited.html](http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP/CertifyingAgents/Accredited.html). Ask farmers about their practices, and if possible, visit their farms.
- 2) In order to support organic farmers following the highest standards, please visit the Cornucopia Institute scorecard to find the companies in your area at [www.cornucopia.org/index.php/dairy\\_brand\\_ratings/](http://www.cornucopia.org/index.php/dairy_brand_ratings/). The report also provides a history of the development of the USDA organic standards and details how factory farms are skirting the federal rules governing organic food production.

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## A Big Stink: Illinois Citizens Fight Plans for Mega-Slaughterhouse

Last summer, a Davenport, Iowa reporter broke the story that plans were underway for building a pig slaughterhouse in nearby East Moline, Ill. The town mayor denied any knowledge about the development. A few months later, residents learned there were plans to annex several hundred acres of land, and over 100 people packed the city hall wanting to know the purpose. By November, East Moline city officials were clearly working on a deal with the pork company Triumph Foods.

In response, local activists came together to protect their community. Calling themselves Supporters of Earth, People and Animals (SEPA), the group set out to educate the public about



Dan Videtich/The Dispatch and The Rock Island Argus

Lois Kuehling is one of many concerned residents who stage demonstrations each weekend to keep the fight against Triumph plant visible to the public.

the effects of the hog industry, particularly slaughter plants and confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). Beyond immediate concerns about the impact of building what Triumph has said will be one of the largest pig slaughter plants in the world—processing around 16,000 hogs a day—these facilities are notorious for attracting inhumane, environmentally destructive CAFOs to reduce transportation costs.

“It will cause all sorts of ripple effects,” said Eagle View Sierra Club Chairman Jerry Neff, citing the destruction of nearby wetlands, major pollution and increased flooding risks as inevitable problems associated with bringing the plant to the area. “In every community where one of these pork processing plants is built, the quality of life goes down,” he said. Regardless of these factors, many local officials view the Triumph plant as an economic opportunity that would bring jobs to the community.

A major financial incentive was proposed in the form of multimillion dollar “enterprise zone” tax breaks to encourage the company to break ground in East Moline. The incentive had to be approved by each city council in the Quad City area, so SEPA members attended city council meetings to give informative speeches and presentations on the issue. The group also held public meetings. East Moline and neighboring Moline and Milan approved the enterprise zone in late February. But in a huge victory for SEPA, the city council in Silvis struck it down 7 to 1 the next month.

Unfortunately, the story doesn’t end there. Ignoring the clear objections of local citizens, Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich offered Triumph another deal—\$16 million in incentives through the state’s Opportunity Returns program—which the company accepted. SEPA activists are continuing to protest the plant. “We believe that we have to take this issue to the courts to stop Triumph from building their plant here,” said member Jimmy Kuehling. “We’re raising much needed money to support this legal effort.”

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## Whole Foods Challenges Conventional Corporate Ideals

Whole Foods Market CEO John Mackey has demonstrated the ever-growing company’s collective dedication to animal welfare and independent farming with two landmark moves. Following an unsuccessful attempt to improve the conditions of its in-store live lobster and soft-shell crab housing and to shorten transport times to an acceptable length, the company has halted the sale of these animals on the basis that current housing and transport are not humane. Typically, lobsters and soft-shell crabs are forced to live crowded on top of each other in feces-contaminated tanks. Whole Foods has prohibited the sale of foie gras for years, and more recently, it stopped selling eggs from hens confined to battery cages. “We place as much emphasis on the importance of humane treatment and quality



of life for all animals as we do on the expectations for quality and flavor,” Mackey said in announcing the decision.

Additionally, Mackey has pledged \$10 million to support locally grown food, responding to concerns from *The Omnivore's Dilemma* author Michael Pollan about the growth of industrial-scale organic and natural food production. Mackey has also vowed to increase efforts to buy products from local farms and to make long-term, low-interest loans to these producers—concentrating on farms that raise grass-fed beef and organic pasture-based eggs. Furthermore, some stores will use sections of their parking lots to feature farmer's markets on Sundays.

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## Contract Farming: The New Serfdom

BY TOM GARRETT

Quite early one morning,” wrote the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, “I heard the cock's crow from hidden farmyards.” For thousands of years, in innumerable cultures, the cock's crow has been synonymous with first light of morning. In the rural America of 50 years ago, the silver of a summer's dawn brought the crowing of roosters, from east to west, farm to farm, all across the heartland.

If one wishes to hear a rooster crow today outside the farms of a few stubborn traditionalists, one must go to the third world. America's clucking barnyard flocks are gone; in their place are huge, lightless factories. As the cock's crow heralded the dawn, its absence signals industrial darkness that has robbed most that was joyous and natural about American agriculture.

The statistics tell the story. In 1950, 95 percent of American farmers had at least a few chickens; rare was the farm on which you could not buy eggs. Today, barely over 2 percent of farms raise chickens commercially. In the overwhelming majority of these cases, those raising the chickens do not own them—the chickens are owned, processed and marketed by corporations. The corporations supply the feed the chickens eat and supervise every phase of production. Farmers are no more than cogs in an industrial machine that now produces 35 billion pounds of chicken annually.

The corporate blitz of poultry, largely consummated in the 1970s, was followed in the 1980s and 1990s by a takeover of hog production. In the period immediately post-World War II—good times for farmers—there were around five million farms in the United States. Well over 2 million farmers raised hogs. In 1986, there were still 670,000 hog farms. Today, as the corporate conquest nears completion, there are barely 80,000 hog farmers remaining. Once again, many are “contractors” who do not even own the hogs they raise.

While mega-projects such as Premium Standard Farms' (being absorbed by Smithfield Foods; see opposite page) huge hog factory complex in northern Missouri draw more public attention, the contract system that began in the American

chicken industry is becoming a prime engine of corporate dominance. It is not only a feature of corporate hog raising, but it is also now spreading into dairy, beef and field crop production, and even showing up in Europe and the Indian subcontinent. Smithfield Foods is aggressively trying to establish contract hog farming in Poland and Romania. “Why buy a farm,” asked one trade journal, “when you can buy a farmer?”

In March, Polish consultant Marek Kryda traveled to the United States for an Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) contract farming workshop with American experts—representatives from Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI) and the Delmarva Poultry Justice Association (DPJA) and Arkansas hog contractors Tim and Christy Hays. Both RAFI and DPJA were established to try to protect contractors from the tyranny of corporate “integrators.” The Hays' are involved in a quixotic and desperate lawsuit against Cargill, the world's largest privately held company. Our hope in hosting the workshop was to learn enough about the tactics of corporate integrators in America to thwart their advance in Central Europe.

A farmer who becomes a contractor commits to being part of a vertically integrated system in which every aspect—production, processing, distribution—“from embryo to market shelf” is controlled by the integrator. According to DPJA President Carole Morrison, herself a chicken contractor, farmers (called “growers”) “provide the land, buildings, equipment, utilities and labor in raising the birds to a marketable age, while the companies supply the chicks, feed and medicine. The grower is also responsible for dead bird and manure disposal.” Hog contracting is essentially the same.

The contracts themselves are stunningly one-sided. The integrator arrogates to itself the right to arbitrarily amend or terminate. Payment is made according to a set formula based on pounds of meat delivered minus company financed “inputs.” But the integrator performs the calculations, and the books are closed to inspection. The grower has no say as to the quality of the chicks provided or the content of the feed



Diane Halverson/AWI



Garrett Sevold/United Poultry Concerns

and medicine. The grower stands liable for environmental damage, though it is the integrator who is eligible for federal disaster relief and farm subsidies. On top of all this, the grower is forced to surrender the right of legal recourse and accept “compulsory arbitration” in disputes with the company.

The economic results of such contracts are about as one would expect. Industry moguls like Don Tyson and “Bo” Pilgrim have grown fabulously rich, sometimes enjoying a 20 to 30 percent annual return on their investments. The contractors, on the other hand, average 1 to 3 percent annual return—despite the fact that their land and buildings equal at least half of the industry's capital investment. A survey by the Louisiana Technical University revealed that 71.6 percent of American chicken growers have incomes below the poverty level.

“But why,” we asked, “would 30,000 chicken farmers and thousands of hog farmers submit to no-win contracts that relegate them to serfs on their own land? Why would they sign them?” Former RAFI President Mary Clouse had the answer. “Most of them didn't!” she said. “The contracts most people signed when they entered the business were much fairer. But the renewal contracts have been progressively more vicious. Once you have borrowed hundreds of thousands of dollars to build 300 to 500 foot long chicken sheds, you must have chickens and a market for them to pay off the loan. Without a contract, there is no market. The grower has little choice but to accept company terms. The alternative is to lose your farm—thousands have—or spend years working to pay off loans on useless empty buildings.”

“When my husband and I began raising chickens,” Clouse continued, “there were a thousand integrators competing with each other for growers. Business was done with handshakes. But as the most efficient and ruthless companies eliminated their local competitors, this changed. Today, there are only 40 integrators left; five of these—Tyson's, Pilgrim's Pride, Gold Kist, Perdue Farms and Wayne Farms—distribute 60 percent of the chicken produced. And believe me, they are absolutely remorseless.”

At this point, I asked a question that revealed how little I really knew. “You say contractor ranks include inexperienced people, farmers down on their luck, even city folks who have

sold their homes to buy land. What possesses banks to loan huge sums to such people? Do the integrators countersign the notes?” I inquired. “Of course they don't,” Clouse responded. “The integrators assume zero risk! At one time, the Farm Home Administration loaned money directly to growers. Today, banks make the loans, but they also take very little risk. Most loans are guaranteed to 90 percent of the principal by the Farm Services Agency of US Department of Agriculture.”

There, like a flash of lightning in blackest night, was the answer to the puzzle of how men like Frank Perdue and Don Tyson could gain control so rapidly and act with such ruthless impunity. They have a partner—a silent partner, but one of enormous power: the US government. There is no way, absent federal loans and loan guarantees, that they could have turned growers, in the felicitous language of the Baltimore Sun series “The Plucking of the American Chicken Farmer,” into “landowning serfs in an agricultural feudal system.”

The iron rule of agribusiness economics is to force others, ultimately the public, to pay much of the real costs. To achieve this, it is necessary to gain control of the political and administrative processes. This is the sine qua non of Big Ag. It always was, through centuries of European feudalism, to the East India Company and the slave-tilled plantations of the New World to the present day. No one, it seems, managed it more efficiently than those who industrialized meat production in the United States. In a repulsive but revealing bit of megalomania, Tyson runs his Arkansas-based empire from an exact replica of the White House oval office.

Corporate chicken is cheap and plentiful, but the real costs of industrialized animal production are staggering. It has brought mass cruelty to farm animals, on a scale and to a degree unique in human history. It led to the elimination of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of independent farmers. And it has created such absurd economic distortions that the state of Iowa—in the heart of the nation's “breadbasket”—imports 80 percent of the food its citizens eat.

Animals in confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) now generate 500 million tons of feces a year, three times more than America's human population. Unlike human sewage that receives primary, secondary and tertiary treatment, this feces is left untreated. Some is strewn on the ground; some is liquefied and stored in fetid “lagoons” that blanket entire rural counties with nauseating stench. Agricultural runoff has created blights—anoxic zones where nothing lives—in scores of estuaries. For instance, Chesapeake Bay was once renowned for its productivity. Today at its late summer peak, 40 percent of the Chesapeake is covered by a “dead zone” fed by the massed chicken factories of Eastern Maryland and Virginia.

Nor do consumers themselves necessarily escape unscathed; since 1970, meat-borne food poisoning has increased by up to 500 percent. A national non-governmental organization called Safe Tables Our Priority (STOP) was founded entirely by mothers of children who died or were made desperately ill by meat-borne pathogens. If this is not enough, it has emerged that 70 percent of chickens raised in the United States are being fed an organic arsenic called



Roxarsone as a growth promoter. Much of the chicken sold has slight but detectable traces of arsenic.

Worse, the compound, which breaks down into metallic arsenic, is present in chicken litter in amounts of 30 to 50 milligrams per kilogram. Twenty to 50 tons of arsenic are “distributed” each year on the Delmarva Peninsula of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia alone, as well as hundreds of tons nationwide. Arsenic is a potent human carcinogen. A lawsuit now underway alleges that a “cancer cluster” in Prairie Grove, Ark., in the state’s “chicken belt,” is caused by arsenic from chicken litter. Whether this lawsuit will open the lid on an enormous scandal or be suppressed remains to be seen.

The hog factory infestation of the 1990s ended public passivity. Afflicted communities are defending themselves, often successfully. Hundreds of groups, local and national, have taken the field against animal factories. At the same time, the demand for organic food now exceeds supply. The giant fast food franchises, scenting the wind, are pressuring their corporate suppliers to reform.

But for all these encouraging signs, the pervasive corruption that lubricated the corporate takeover to begin with is unrelieved. All three branches of the federal government are infected; honest officials and judges are as Prometheus on his rock. Local victories are often drowned in state legislatures, reeking with corporate influence. Companies such as Smithfield and Cargill have shifted the main thrust of their takeovers to Europe and the third world. The system remains rigged in their favor, and there is no sign of general retreat.

Of the many evils that beset us—war, global warming, tropical deforestation, extinctions, declining productivity of the oceans, and the massive third world influx of rural people to urban slums—few are unlinked to the drive by transnational companies to take control of the world’s food supply. Issues currently boiling up in the press, such as the “obesity epidemic” and illegal immigration are intimately connected. Corporate agriculture is a voracious consumer of immigrants—legal and illegal—for jobs too dangerous, unhealthy and poorly paid to draw American workers.

The course of meat processing should surprise no one who knows something of its earlier history or has even read *The Jungle*. But both factory farming and the contract system we must now confront began with domestic fowl—the earliest, most widely distributed, most benignly husbanded of farm animals. How can seemingly beneficial developments, beginning with the invention in 1900 of the electric hatchery by Granville Woods, the self-taught genius known as the “Black Edison,” have combined to such malignant result? A comprehensive history has yet to be written.

But our forbearers, with their sterner view of human nature, would hardly have been surprised. About slave owners, of whom those who now control Big Ag are surely spiritual descendents, Abraham Lincoln said this: “It is the same spirit that says, ‘You work and toil and earn bread, and I’ll eat it.’ No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation

and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle.”

The generations before us could hardly have imagined the nature and magnitude of the planet’s reaction to industrial civilization, converging like a vast, fleeing nimbus front over all the future. But Lincoln, returning, would grasp at once that the Jeffersonian vision of a “nation of virtuous and independent farmers” that seemed to have found its substrate with the Homestead Act of 1862 has been subverted—and the “same tyrannical principle” is again enthroned.

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## Smithfield Foods Swallows Premium Standard Farms

In a startling development, Smithfield Foods, the world’s largest pork production company, announced its intended purchase of Premium Standard Farms—the sixth largest pork producer in the United States, second only to Smithfield in the number of sows it owns. If the deal, reportedly involving \$810 million in stock and cash, is voted for by Premium Standard stockholders and agreed to by the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice (both virtual certainties), Smithfield will add 221,000 sows to its current US herd population of 798,000.

This leaves Smithfield with over a million sows and an annual production of feeder pigs approaching 20 million, as well as 1.2 million sows internationally. The company will own nearly 20 percent of the hogs in the United States and slaughter 31 percent of the animals processed annually. Currently, only 10 percent of the hogs marketed in the United States are sold on the free market; the rest are owned by corporations or “locked up” under contract. Despite the outcry of farm state Senators, this situation is all but certain to deteriorate or become even more anti-competitive.

Premium Standard, whose hogs are concentrated in three northern Missouri counties, has long been notorious for its flouting of environmental laws and domination of the Missouri legislature against the fierce, but unavailing resistance of local citizens. While the circumstances promise to become even worse with Smithfield in control, in the meantime, three families unhappy with the smell associated with one of Premium Standard’s Kansas City facilities have been awarded \$4.5 million in compensation. In a separate class-action lawsuit, a consortium of law firms is seeking to represent owners of property within 10 miles of the company’s Missouri facilities.

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## The Stench Spreads to Central Europe

Whether Big Ag will be able to transplant the extraordinary contractor racket it has perfected in America to Central Europe (where AWI is active) depends on two things. The

first is whether it can corrupt government sufficiently to flout environmental, health and safety, immigration and antitrust laws as they have in the United States. The second is whether it can inveigle governmental institutions into providing loan guarantees and other subsidies. In Poland, the “Law and Justice” government struggling to remain in power as we go to press is dedicated to establishing honest government and rooting out vested interest domination. In Romania, despite the fact that European Union funds can be used for 50 percent of “improvements,” the effort to enlist contractors has fallen on stony soil. There is still a chance to stop the pernicious system in its infancy. We shall surely try.

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## Starbucks: No More rBGH

Starbucks announced in January that it will move to end its use of milk products from cows treated with rBGH, starting with their removal from stores in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, Montana, Northern California and New England. The company has not announced a date when it will completely stop purchasing dairy containing the artificial growth hormone. Organic milk (which is not necessarily humane) is currently available at all Starbucks upon request.

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## The Animal Welfare Institute Introduces a Visionary Way to Fight Animal Factories: One animal, one farmer, one field, one family at a time.

Food labels are packed with information, but some words can be confusing, if not downright misleading. A dozen eggs in a carton boasting the statement “farm fresh,” for example, have probably not come from anything that looks remotely like a farm. A dairy cow is far from “happy” at an industrial facility where she never grazes on pasture. And “natural” is not synonymous with “humane”—in fact, the former term refers only to meat processing, not the animals’ lives. To a growing number of Americans, such marketing strategies cause concern about what these products purport to be, as well as what they try to conceal.

Now there is a label with nothing to hide. We are proud to present our *Animal Welfare Approved* standards, the most humane and progressive care requirements in the nation. Today, hundreds of participating family farms are putting each individual animal’s comfort and well-being first. The program benefits all of us with the simple understanding that our own best interests are intrinsically linked to animals and the environment.

These standards seek to ensure that cattle graze on green pastures, sows and hens can build nests before giving birth, and ducks are always able to swim in clean water. But the *Animal Welfare Approved* seal is not just a list of rules. It is a philosophy of respect that provides animals on the farm with the environment, housing and diet they need to behave naturally, thereby promoting physiological and psychological health and well-being. This is the story behind the label—the animals, the people and the principles that guided us every step of the way.



### Farming with Integrity

*Animal Welfare Approved* is the first seal to guarantee that humanely labeled products do not come from agribusiness-owned operations that raise some of their animals under cruel conditions. In a practice we disallow called “double standard certification,” these companies adhere to certain standards to label some of their products “humane,” while managing other animals of the same species using industrial practices. Such operations typically enjoy financial advantages that enable them to displace independent family farmers who practice a humane ethic throughout their farms. We want consumers to rest assured that when they buy products carrying the *Animal Welfare Approved* label, the farmers have applied our standards to all members of an *Animal Welfare Approved* species.

Only family farms can earn our seal. Families that own the animals, labor on, and earn meaningful livelihoods from their farms have a true commitment and connection to their animals that is lost on animal factories managed by distant, corporate owners and run by hired hands. Revitalizing a culture of humane family farming will help ensure that husbandry knowledge, experience and skills can be passed



*The Animal Welfare Approved Standards require farmers to provide animals the Five Freedoms identified by the United Kingdom’s Farm Animal Welfare Council.*



on from one farmer to another and from one generation to the next, through conversation, observation and first-hand experience. In the words of Patrick Martins, co-founder of Heritage Foods USA, "Small family farms need as much attention as possible, and an organization like AWI will help our farmers greatly."

### Happy tails

Common practices that other labeling programs allow, such as cutting off live pigs' tails and a portion of live chickens' beaks, are prohibited under the *Animal Welfare Approved* standards. Our standards not only forbid these mutilations, but also address the root causes of the practices by requiring an enriched environment in which the animals can socialize naturally and have no fear or stress-induced inclination to harm each other. In addition, cloned animals are not allowed.

### Breaking the Trend

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the 20th century saw the disappearance of one third of the world's breeds of animals raised for food. That is because animals raised on factory operations are selected for uniformity, not diversity. The industry-bred turkey, for instance, suffers from skeletal deformities that may cause gait problems. Due to their oversized breasts, the birds are not able to reproduce naturally, so hens are artificially inseminated. We believe that breeding programs must select not only for certain "production" traits such as growth rate, but for characteristics such as good mothering abilities, sound skeletal structure and fitness, including the ability to mate naturally. Genetic variety is key.

On the *Animal Welfare Approved* Good Shepherd Turkey Ranches in Kansas, heritage turkey flocks forage on range, mate naturally and fly easily to roosts. In Wisconsin, Tony and Sue Renger's Berkshire pigs roam grassy slopes, and the Cates Family Farm beef cattle graze on green pastures. Throughout the Midwest, the family farmers who market pigs with Niman Ranch provide straw-bedded barns, pastures or woodlands. In North Carolina, Mike and Suzanne Jones' Farmers' Hybrid pigs root in the woodlands, Eliza MacLean's Ossabaw hogs cool off in the shade of pine trees, and pigs on small farms that market through William's Pork enjoy rich mud wallows. These are just some of the farms that have earned our seal.

Gathering and evaluating the *Animal Welfare Approved* standards was the result of years of work and dedication by Animal Welfare Institute staff, in collaboration with veterinarians, scientists and farmers. Our standards are constantly reexamined, so they remain up-to-date and true to their purpose of providing the ultimate humane care for animals on farms. But most of all, the *Animal Welfare Approved* label strengthens the power that comes from freedom of choice in the marketplace. In the fight against animal factories, every purchase counts. Visit [www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org](http://www.AnimalWelfareApproved.org) for more information.

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## Smithfield in the News: Progress or Persiflage?

On Jan. 25, Smithfield Foods stated that it will "phase out" gestation crates, the 2x7 foot steel prisons in which sows in hog factories spend most of their lives. The phase-out in the world's largest pork production company's 187 sow factories is to be completed by 2017, while its contractors (who raise a majority of Smithfield's pigs) have until 2027 to complete the transition. Smithfield's announcement has been hailed as a "great victory." But one must ask, when matching the company's gains against the pace of real change, "a victory for whom?" Smithfield has succeeded in escaping much of the opprobrium surrounding it, not only for cruelty, but also for environmental and labor policies, while placating McDonald's and other corporate buyers. Yet given that most retrofitting will inevitably occur toward the end of the 10- and 20-year deadlines, millions of sows, as many as four and eight more generations respectively, will go on living and suffering in their tiny prisons. In the next *AWI Quarterly*, we will examine in depth whether the announcement was a PR coup or a genuine concession.

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## Celebrating 30 Years of Preserving Breeds

The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy (ALBC) has been conserving over 150 breeds of livestock and poultry since its founding in 1977. It conducts a wide variety of programs, including research, education, agriculture policy development, gene banks and rescues. It also provides technical and promotional support to a network of breeders, breed associations and farmers.

Many traditional breeds have fallen out of popularity because they do not excel under the conditions mandated by agribusiness. Modern food production encourages fast



A bantam hen rests in a nest with her chicks.

Harvey Useery/www.themodernhomestead.us

growth and the breeding of animals to produce the maximum output. Some, such as poultry raised for meat, are even bred to have deformities. Traditional breeds, however, retain essential attributes for survival and self-sufficiency, such as fertility, foraging ability, longevity, maternal instincts, the ability to mate naturally, and resistance to diseases and parasites.

The Animal Welfare Institute supports the ALBC philosophy that raising endangered breeds of livestock today is essential to their survival for tomorrow. We mandate our *Animal Welfare Approved* poultry farmers to use traditional breeds, and all others to do so whenever possible. These breeds can be commercially viable in humane, sustainable agriculture. They are finding a good fit in small-scale and pasture-based agricultural systems—the very systems for which they were adapted.

The need to save traditional, historic livestock and poultry is urgent. For more information on ALBC programs, or if you would like to become a member, please visit its website at [www.albc-usa.org](http://www.albc-usa.org) or contact the organization at (919) 542-5704.

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## Farm Owners and Worker Charged with Animal Cruelty

In January of this year, city prosecutor Frank Forchione charged the owners and an employee of an Ohio farm with a total of 10 counts of animal cruelty, including abandoning sick sows without food or water and beating piglets. The Wiles Farm owners and employee pleaded not guilty in their Jan. 30 arraignment and are currently free on their own recognizance. If they are convicted, each count carries a potential penalty of 90 days in jail and a \$750 fine.



Live hogs at the Wiles Farm were repeatedly hung from a forklift and left to die.

HFA

Forchione was not permitted on the grounds of the farm, located in the town of Creston, but after reviewing footage taken by its employees and hearing accounts from witnesses, he decided that "somebody has to speak up for the voiceless." Pigs were particularly mistreated, living in crowded conditions and deprived of adequate food, water and veterinary treatment. According to complaints, they were beaten to death with hammers, shot with guns and hung from a forklift until they finally died.

The abuse was exposed by the Humane Farming Association, which publicized the cruelty in a series of full-page newspaper advertisements and petitioned local authorities to search the premises in November. The farm continues to operate while the charges are pending, but employees are working with the local Humane Society in an effort to comply with the law.

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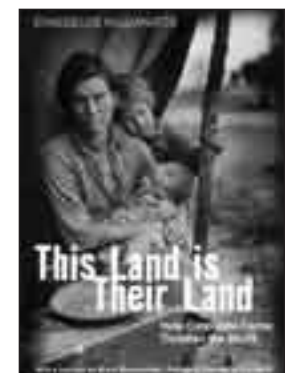
## This Land is Their Land: How Corporate Farms Threaten the World

by Evaggelos Vallianatos

Common Courage, 2006

ISBN: 9781567513585, 315 pages

Drawing from a variety of recent books and studies on corporate agribusiness, *This Land Is Their Land* shows that in such areas as agricultural policy, land ownership, agriculture financing and lending, seeds, chemicals, energy, farm machinery, crop milling and processing, food production, advertising and the wholesaling and retailing of food, corporate agribusiness has become the dominant force both in the US and throughout the world.



Author Evaggelos Vallianatos carefully examines the effect of industrialized farming in such countries and areas of the world as Brazil and Africa, and explores how it has become the Western culture's most aggressive and colonizing impulse. He also warns that "there's going to be hell to pay" over the disregard of the environment, ranging from changing weather conditions to such occurrences as the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

By painstakingly laying out both the evolving crisis that corporate agribusiness is generating while at the same time showing the reader how knowledge may well save family farming as well as the integrity and wholesomeness of the food we eat, Vallianatos has contributed immeasurably to our understanding of not only the history of agriculture and food, but the path we must take to save ourselves from ourselves.



"A well-informed citizenry," he concludes, "is our best defense against the terrors of factory culture. An informed and caring citizenry is likely to put his money where his health is..." I would simply add: "Do you know where your food comes from?"

—By Al Krebs, editor of *The Corporate Agribusiness Research Project* (Review excerpted from the April 1, 2006 issue of *The Progressive Populist*)

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## Behind the Wall: Smithfield and the Victory of Illusion

BY TOM GARRETT

Farmer John's is a huge, odiferous slaughterhouse in Vernon, Calif. that is owned by Hormel Foods and supplies much of the pork consumed in the Los Angeles basin. Incongruously, however, the brick wall surrounding the plant is caparisoned with one of the world's largest murals depicting idyllic farms and pigs roaming happily in green pastures. The murals, painted over the course of 11 years by Hollywood set designer Les Grimes, are locally famous and inspire feature articles contrasting the surroundings from which the pigs have presumably been dragooned with the grim fate that awaits them.

When Grimes was creating this curious legacy between 1957 and 1968, most pigs were indeed raised on family farms; some, at least, on pasture. But times have changed; America's family farmers are in extremis; of over 2 million hog farmers in the 1950s, only about 80,000 remain. Today, the only real contrast between the industrial hell from which the pigs have been taken and the hell awaiting them as they are driven off the trucks or deposited dead and dying into rows of overflowing dumpsters (death loss on trucks is enormous in the summer) is the latter's brevity. Farmer John's largest source of pigs is a place as far from the bucolic as one can imagine, a phalanx of gigantic steel sheds rising eerily in the almost lunar landscape of southwestern Utah's high desert called Circle Four.

Circle Four was initially a partnership set up with grandiose expectations by four North Carolina hog barons as the western terminus of their continental conquest. The partnership ended in 1998 with the cannibalization of two partners by the biggest one. Circle Four is now owned by Smithfield Foods. Smithfield's rise and pastoral America's fall, the eclipse of the wall's bright images on real farms, are very much parts of the same phenomenon.

Two decades ago, there were still 670,000 family hog farms, and Smithfield was a small Virginia company—notorious for polluting the Pagan River, but barely noticed amid the jostling of agribusiness behemoths. In 20 years, however, it has metamorphosed from regional piranha to international shark, operating in seven countries and utterly dominating the American hog industry. At least one of three pigs butchered in America is killed in Smithfield slaughterhouses; with its latest acquisitions it will own a fifth of those raised. Smithfield owns 95 percent of the pigs in Virginia. In North Carolina, where



*Happy pigs on pasture appear on the infamous Farmer John's mural, but the average productive life of a sow imprisoned in a gestation crate rarely exceeds two years. Many still-young sows chosen for culling are too crippled to even walk out of confinement to their deaths.*

there were 27,000 independent hog farmers in the mid-1980s, only a few hundred remain. In Missouri, where there were 22,000, fewer than 2,000 remain.

Smithfield's first quantum leap to dominance came in 1992, when it completed the world's largest slaughterhouse in Bladen County, N.C., bringing on a porcine explosion in that state—from 2.4 million to 10 million animals—and the ecological devastation of its coastal plain. This was followed, as North Carolina became saturated, by a surge of hog factories across the Midwest and by Smithfield's own implacable expansion, crushing labor unions, taking over scores of competing companies. An even more profound transformation occurred in 1998, when Smithfield and another industry giant, Iowa Beef Processors (IBP), took advantage of a meat workers' strike in Canada to shut down three large slaughterhouses, ostensibly for repairs. The processing bottleneck that resulted was so severe that live hog prices crashed to a quarter of the cost of production, plunging hog raisers, large and small, into acute crisis. Within months, tens of thousands of small farmers had been forced from business, and Smithfield had absorbed its erstwhile partners, Murphy Farms and Carroll's Foods, the world's largest and second largest hog production

companies, to own 13 million hogs. At that point, Smithfield became 60 percent vertically integrated and insulated from the perturbations of the market.

Since 1999, Smithfield has invaded central Europe, first Poland, then Romania, flouting laws and regulations, stimulating political corruption, polluting, bringing mass abuse of animals, oppressing citizens, disrupting the agricultural economy, and again, as in America, leaving illness and ruin in its train.

On Jan. 25, 2007, winning in the hard world of death, stench and political control that fills its coffers, but losing in the world of public perceptions, Smithfield made a move that rivals some of its earlier gambits. The company announced, with much fanfare, that it intends to phase out gestation crates in its own installations—such as Circle Four—in 10 years, and to oblige its contractors (who raise most Smithfield pigs) to do the same in 20 years. The gambit worked. The move was widely praised; some opponents not only trumpeted "victory," but also claimed it for themselves, arguing that they had forced the company's hand with anti-gestation crate referendums in Florida and Arizona. Word that Maple Leaf, Canada's largest hog butcher, was following Smithfield's lead brought further triumph.

A victory, but whose? Has Smithfield, long the industry leader in rapacity, now become its leader in animal welfare? Is Maple Leaf, having followed Smithfield's lead before by crushing trade unions, chopping wages, speeding the killing line and adopting vertical integration, similarly "changing its spots?" The Smithfield announcement was a public relations coup that served an economic purpose, to placate its largest purchasers, such as McDonald's, which has become restive over the cruelty issue. It was a mission accomplished at little "upfront" cost. Most retrofitting will—inevitably—be deferred as long as possible, up to two decades in the case of contractors and often past the functioning life of the installations themselves. Few (if any) pigs now living will benefit. Generations of Smithfield sows will live their short lives in the same wretched cages in which they are imprisoned today.

Eliminating gestation crates relieves the worst single aspect of industrial hog raising, but it does not change its overall cruelty and ugliness: crowding, filth, darkness, noise, noxious gasses, bare concrete floors. It is still a hell; every installation is still surrounded by a loathsome garland of dumpsters full of dead pigs. Animals live and die without smelling the earth or seeing the sky or carrying out motor patterns nature has intended for them.

It does nothing to protect the environment. All the disastrous effects of the liquefied manure system—its assault of pig respiratory systems, surface water pollution, air pollution, contamination of aquifers and the spread of resistant pathogens—remain in effect.

It does not relieve the impacts on humans, both those who live near liquefied manure operations and those who work there. Impacts range beyond stench and clouds of flies to eye and skin infections, respiratory infections and dysentery to irreversible pulmonary and brain damage. Lagoons and

sprayfields are major emitters of hydrogen sulfide. There is mounting evidence of widespread, often severe or lethal neurological damage from this gas. Recent out-of-court settlements by industry are tacit admissions of what may be the tip of a medical iceberg.

It does nothing to relieve the corrupt marriage between industrial agribusiness and American officials and politicians. By lessening the opprobrium attached to industrial operations, it may have worsened it.

Finally, foreclosing the use of gestation crates does not inhibit the continuing remorseless expansion of industrial animal raising. Nothing illustrates this fact better than the recent situation in Arizona, where Proposition 204 to ban gestation crates passed by a substantial margin. Nonetheless, beleaguered citizens are struggling against a major hog factory expansion in the state's southwest corner, involving at least 50,000 feeder pigs. The purported owner, Jerry Cullison, is widely regarded as a front for Hormel, the company that owns Farmer John's. In fact, the investor of record calls itself PFFJ, "Pigs for Farmer John's." And we are, thus, where we began: sinister sheds in the desert, a vast and multivorous city, bright images of a bygone America girdling its house of death.

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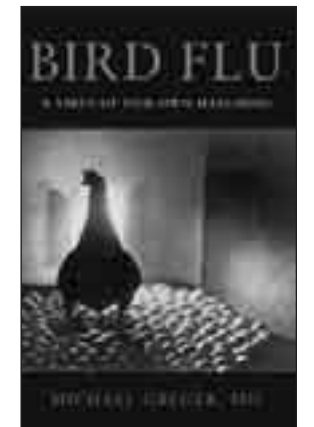
## Bird Flu: A Virus of Our Own Hatching

by Michael Greger, M.D.

Lantern Books, 2006

ISBN-10: 1590560981; Hardcover; 465 pages

In this thoroughly referenced work, Dr. Michael Greger counters common misconceptions about what many believe will be an H5N1 avian influenza pandemic on a scale greater than the 1918 flu pandemic that sickened half the world and killed between 50 and 100 million people. For example, although many believe migrating wild fowl will spread the virus, Greger notes that H5N1 has existed in a "benign" form in these birds for millennia without becoming lethal. Medical literature contains only two reports of human infection from wild bird viruses.



And while many believe that the breeding ground for avian flu will be backyard poultry flocks and commercial outdoor operations, Greger explains that self-preservation dictates a virus should not kill its host unless there is another potential host close by for it to infect. The low population density in outdoor poultry production and backyard flocks makes it difficult for viruses to spread from bird to bird. Under such conditions, it behooves the virus to remain mild enough



to preserve the host. The low-stress outdoor environments help birds maintain a healthy immune response, keeping the virus in check.

In contrast, the crowded conditions of modern, industrial poultry production (where tens and even hundreds of thousands of immune-compromised birds may live in a single shed) are a perfect breeding ground for more virulent flu strains. Here, viruses can easily mutate to become deadly—and subsequently be spread widely by transport vehicles.

Greger does not dismiss the potential for a worldwide flu pandemic. Rather, he makes the case that its source will not be what so many people fear, but something closer to home and potentially preventable, if we have the will to change how food animals are raised.

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## Integrity-Free Monsanto

In a not-so-surprising development, biotech multi-national giant Monsanto is moving aggressively against a group of dairies labeling their products “hormone free.” The agribusiness behemoth that manufactures the cow growth hormone rBGH claims that this type of labeling is damaging its business and has lodged a complaint with the US Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission. Its objection flies in the face of what is known about bovine growth hormone—even Monsanto lists 16 possible health effects for cows on its packaging. Use of rBGH to increase milk production in cows is associated with an increase in painful conditions such as severe mastitis, digestive disorders and chronic lameness.

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## Celebrity Chef Speaks Out

Famed Chef Wolfgang Puck has announced that he is changing suppliers of the egg and meat products served in his fine-dining restaurants, fast-casual eateries and catering venues, avoiding those that use some of the most egregious industry methods. Further, he has stated that he will no longer serve foie gras, a product produced by force-feeding ducks and geese. We applaud Puck’s decision and hope he will insist on a high welfare requirement for all species of animals raised for food that are supplied to his establishments.

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## Provision Would Put Local Authority in Jeopardy

This June, a dangerous provision entitled Section 123 was inserted quietly into the 2007 Farm Bill (H.R. 2419), putting at risk critical state and local authority to ensure food safety, fight against animal cruelty, and protect the environment. The measure sought to prevent a state or locality from “prohibiting an article the Secretary of Agriculture has inspected and passed, or an article the Secretary has determined to be of non-regulated status.”



People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

*Any measure that challenges the legislative authority of local governments could abolish stronger local laws such as state bans on the use of rBGH in dairy cows. The dangerous growth hormone can cause painful mastitis and myriad other health problems.*

“Section 123 provides the USDA with exclusive jurisdiction over public health issues and circumvents the ability of the states to adopt programs that support and promote farmers and rural economies,” said Bill Wenzel, the national director of the National Family Farm Coalition’s Farmer-to-Farmer Campaign on Genetic Engineering.

Under a provision such as Section 123, states could be required to lift their bans on horse slaughter, the brutal production of foie gras, and the sale of bioengineered food. This was a major gambit by Big Ag—driving a knife into the remaining ability of states and counties to control rampaging agribusiness corporations. It was an attack, above all else, against democracy.

While the latest version of the bill, presented on July 6 in the House Agriculture Committee Chairman’s Markup Documents, did not contain Section 123, the Society for Animal Protective Legislation (SAPL) will continue to keep a close eye on the full bill’s progress. The provision’s removal is a tremendous step to protect state and local animal protection laws, but there is no guarantee that similar language will not be inserted into the final version or slipped through via other legislation.

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## Of Pigs, History and Impunity: Smithfield in Romania

BY TOM GARRETT

A train ride from the southwestern city of Timisoara appears to confirm all that has been written in the western press about Romanian agriculture. One can pass for long stretches across one of Europe’s famously fertile regions, the Hungarian plateau, wreathed in mist in the first light of morning, without seeing a farmstead. All were razed during the communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu to make way for giant state



Bihor Online

*These dead pigs are victims of swine fever in Romania.*

farms. This region, along with the country’s other flatlands, the Wallacian plateau and the Danube valley in the south and east, as well as much of Moldavia in the north, was remorselessly collectivized. Today, many fields, returned to owners without the capital to resume farming, are abandoned and overgrown. Flocks of sheep, watched over by shepherds, crop the weeds.

Yet in the hills and mountains making up the central part of the country, one steps back in time to a peasant society unaltered in 60 years. Outside the northern city of Cluj are innumerable narrow valleys clogged with tiny haystacks. There are women in kerchiefs bending over in the fields, men cutting hay with scythes, beautiful teams of horses. The villages are neat and solidly built, but without electricity and running water. Donkey carts make their way from house to house delivering water; every home is backed by an orchard and garden, every yard seems occupied by chickens and pigs. There are 4.2 million peasant properties in Romania. While they average only 2.2 hectares, most of the country’s agricultural production, including pigs, derives from them.

Unfortunately, both peasant Romania, which survived Communism, and commercial farming, still painfully restoring itself, face an enemy that aspires, in effect, to resume where Ceausescu left off. In 2004, Smithfield Foods, already entrenched in Poland, invaded Romania as well. Its initial target was Contim, a huge complex of Ceausescu-



era hog factories—36 large farms, six feedmills, and the country’s biggest slaughterhouse—which it acquired for only 33 million dollars through the socialist government then in power.

When biology student Dana Spinu and I visited Timisoara a few weeks before the Smithfield takeover, we found officials and academics naively unprepared for what awaited them. We were invited to Paderini, one of six Contim farms being operated by a Romanian firm, in its last days of independence before being swallowed up. In contrast to US and Polish hog factories, the operation was scrupulously clean. The effluent was pumped to sewage ponds a kilometer away; the feeder pigs had four times more room than in the United States, twice that required under EU regulations. Piglets were weaned at 36 days and took six months to reach market weight. My description of Smithfield practices—piglets weaned at 11 days and brought to market weight at 120 days, feed doped with growth enhancers and antibiotics, dumpsters overflowing with dead animals—was greeted with incredulity by company veterinarians. “Impossible! Illegal! It can’t happen here”.

Smithfield’s first move upon its arrival was to fire former managers, post guards at hog factory gates, and order employees to say nothing about their work. Evidence of high level corruption was not long in coming. Local officials were ordered to keep “hands off” the company; academic critics were disciplined. Smithfield’s relationship with the neo-liberals who came to power in 2005 was even more intimate. Free of interference, even exempted from EU regulations until 2012, Smithfield moved rapidly to consolidate its position, reactivating the Contim farms, and buying refrigeration and transportation companies. While the government shut down small slaughterhouses (ostensibly because of the EU), leaving small farmers with no place to market pigs, Smithfield flooded the country with pork imported from Poland and the United States.

In July 2007, however, Smithfield encountered an opponent that it could not bribe. At Cenei, west of Timisoara, 3,500 Smithfield pigs died suddenly. The company blamed it on a heat wave, but nauseating piles of carcasses attracted the press, and the county veterinary inspectorate was forced to do its job. On Aug. 3, it discovered classical swine fever, a viral disease long endemic in Romania, among Cenei’s 20,000 pigs. At this point, the “hands off Smithfield” policy came to an abrupt end. The county disease control center halted all movement of Smithfield hogs, freezing its operations; the National Veterinary and Food Safety Authority began emergency inspections of the entire Contim system. Within a few days, two more infected farms with 30,000 pigs were discovered at Igris, on the Hungarian border.

At the same time, it was learned that 11 Smithfield farms had not even applied for sanitary-veterinary authorization and were operating in blatant contempt of Romanian law. Agency head Radu Roatus excoriated local officials and announced that the unregistered farms would be shut down. Agriculture Minister Decebal Traian Remes confirmed that all exposed pigs would be killed and incinerated, and he suggested that



the company “probably” would not be compensated for them. Muzzles removed, lesser officials blamed the Americans. “Our doctors have not had access to American farms to perform routine inspections,” said Timis county veterinarian Csaba Doraczi. “Every time they tried they were pushed away by the guards.” It even came to light that Smithfield workers are paid so little, about \$230 US a month, that the company suffered from a labor shortage.

On our visit to Cenei, we heard harrowing tales; huge piles of rotting pigs left unburied for weeks at the farm a kilometer away, then five intolerable days as 20,000 pigs were shot and burned in the open. At Igris, the government vaporized 30,000 very young pigs, some just weaned, in an electric incinerator brought from the United Kingdom. Both villages were visited by EU observers and privately owned pigs within a 10-kilometer radius were hastily vaccinated.

A “serious investigation” of Timis county authorities is said to be underway. But the impunity with which Smithfield was allowed to operate derives from collusion at the highest levels of government, far above the hapless officials who are likely to take the blame. Nor does one have to look far to find the long arm of the US government. A delegation of American lawmakers (reportedly Senators) came to Bucharest to lobby for Smithfield, and Romanian Members of Parliament were in the United States at Smithfield’s expense—the American ambassador has been persistently involved. Already, there is evidence of an attempt to smother the issue and remove it from public view.

Whether the arrival of classical swine fever, exposing Smithfield as the rogue company it always has been, can halt its takeover remains to be seen. But the trajectory of events, if it does not is perfectly clear. When Walter Goldschmidt, dean of rural sociology, travelled in Romania during the 1980s, through fields of sunflowers stretching unbroken as far as the eye could see, he said he had a sense of déjà vu. He had seen it all before when he studied America’s first corporate takeover of agriculture as a young man in the Central Valley of California. It was perfectly clear to Goldschmidt that the collectivization and corporatization of agriculture are two sides of the same coin. Where rural Romania is going, if the virus does not save it, is back to Nicolai Ceausescu’s vision of complete control, materializing re-clothed, but in an even more tyrannical and malignant form.

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## The Great Pig Debate: How CAFOs Stalk the Future President

BY DAVE MURPHY

Nixon would have thought it undignified. Agnew, a former Baltimore County executive, would have had it down pat, but Truman, a simple farm boy, got it right.

Presidents and presidential candidates have been traveling through Iowa for the past three decades, attempting to court



Beth Hauptle

*Rows of long, windowless buildings, each holding 2,000 to 3,000 pigs, can be seen among the cornfields of the Iowa countryside. Inside these confinement facilities, the crowded animals barely have room to move.*

the native vote and win trust by showing an understanding of all things Iowan. One of those, the mighty hog, happens to not only be a chief Iowa export, but also the source of its leading political controversy.

What was once told by President Harry Truman as an idle joke during the Iowa plowmen’s competition in 1948, exactly 60 years ago, now seems like sage advice.

“No man should be allowed President who does not understand hogs, or hasn’t been around a manure pile,” said the son of a farmer and livestock dealer, two-term Missouri Senator and 33rd President of the United States.

And coming through Iowa on the way to the White House has given plenty of candidates that opportunity in the past four races for the nation’s top office.

### King CAFO

While corn is still king as a commodity crop in Iowa, especially since the rise of ethanol, hogs—specifically hog confinement facilities—are the reigning political issue for rural voters in this Midwestern state. Known as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), hog confinement is an issue that has plagued the Iowa political scene for over the past 15 years. And with each presidential election cycle, a whole new round of national candidates and their staffs are exposed to one of the hottest and most contentious issues in Iowa politics.

Years of mounting and conclusive evidence has shown that industrial animal confinement has caused serious air and water pollution, killed millions of fish across the nation, helped push small family farmers out of the business of tending livestock, harmed the health and economic wellbeing of neighbors and nearby communities, and posed the threat of antibiotic-resistant superbugs. Unfortunately, politicians in the state of Iowa have largely taken a pass at creating meaningful legislation that seriously addresses the real economic, environmental and public health threats that factory farms pose to their constituents.

As a result, Iowans have taken to stalking presidential candidates for their position on this important local issue, asking their positions on hog confinement at town hall meetings, pressing staff members for their candidate’s stance,

and hoping that a strong voice from the national level would actually stiffen the spines of Iowa’s elected officials.

Up to this point, however, Iowans remain disappointed.

### Iowa’s Political Landscape

Despite a number of prominent national politicians tromping through the state, professing outrage over the environmental degradation and lack of a democratic solution, both parties remain stalemated over a simple resolution. A solution proposed by the majority of Iowa’s environmental, family farm and social justice groups is known as “local control.” Local elected officials, namely the county board of supervisors, would have a say (or veto power) over where new confinements would be built within their boundaries, according to a set of determined criteria, i.e., proximity to wetlands, major water source, homes, schools, or the possibility of decreasing community economic development. Sixty-four percent of Iowans agree with local control, according to a 2007 poll by the *Des Moines Register*.

However, the state’s leading lobby groups, led by the Des Moines-based Farm Bureau insurance company, the Iowa Pork Producers, and an industry front known as the Coalition to Support Iowa’s Farmers, have succeeded in stopping legislation with a series of well-timed political contributions, threats of running opponents against local control supporters, and millions of dollars poured into PR and lobbying efforts that stifle any true reform of the state’s laws.

Prior to the 2006 election, the issue of hog confinement and local control had typically played down party lines. In 1995, Iowans had lost local control, when Iowa House of Representatives File 519 was passed by a Republican-led House and signed into law by Republican Governor Terry Branstad.

Since then, Democrats in rural areas have run on the promises of local control. When Democrats won the House, Senate and Governorship in the 2006 election, something not done in Iowa in over 40 years, Iowans thought they had finally found relief. Sadly, Democratic leadership has fallen victim to the same lobbying tactics used by the Republicans they replaced—and Governor Culver, who ran on local control during the election, remained largely mum on the issue during his first year.

While it may seem odd to outsiders that hogs are such a heated issue, Iowa’s history as the leading producer of hogs (slaughtering roughly 32.9 million in 2006 alone) and a change in production methods over the last 30 years has created a collision course at the intersection of agriculture, the environment, economics, public health and politics.

With that many hogs in Iowa, a state with a population of 2.9 million, there are over 11.3 pigs per person and over 5,000 hog confinement facilities distributed unevenly around the state. When one learns that hogs can create up to four times as much waste as humans, there is an understanding behind the growing concern over Iowa’s hog waste problem. A recent article in *The New York Times* calculated that hogs in Iowa produce over 50 million tons of raw waste annually, or 16.7 tons of manure per Iowan. This is equivalent to every person in the state having 11.4 Toyota Priuses stacked on

their front lawns. By concentrating more hogs in smaller and smaller areas, the CAFO industry has succeeded in creating an industrial stench and pollution problem that has outraged Iowa’s normally pleasant citizenry.

For over 100 years, Iowa has been the nation’s leading supplier of ham, bacon and ribs. With its rich topsoil and abundance of corn, from the time before the Civil War until just after Vietnam, pigs were raised in what is now called “the old fashioned way,” roaming freely on pastures or temporarily housed in barns during inclement weather—acting as nature intended pigs to act.

In the 1970s, however, the rise of enclosed buildings with crowded stalls, slatted concrete floors, and massive open cesspools of feces and urine began to steadily outpace the old method of raising hogs. Today, one can drive across the entire state on back roads without seeing a single pig, something Iowa’s ancestors would have thought virtually impossible.

In place of the old pigpen, “modern” confinement systems raise hogs using industrial feeding formulas, genetic standardization, and millions of tons of antibiotics. For rural Iowans and those driving through the state, this has meant getting used to a gag-inducing stench as they drive down its roads and highways.

For politicians, it has meant dealing with an ever-increasing vocal population that has become tired of Iowa’s political class dragging its feet on what is seen as an issue of environmental concern, economic justice, democratic fairness, and growing public health concerns.

### Pigs and Presidents

Like clockwork, every four years, Iowans become tired of their voices not being heard by local politicians and try to bend the ear of someone who could, in very short order, become the most powerful person in the nation.

In 1996, former Nixon speechwriter and longtime political columnist Pat Buchanan found religion on the hog issue and was considered “a defender of small farmers against hog confinement units.” In 1998, when asked what he would do to solve the problem, then New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani artfully dodged the question on his second trip through the state, saying, “It’s something that I would have to spend a lot of time looking at and studying.”

By 1999, then-Vice President Al Gore promised to create “national standards” for industrial animal confinements and took to listening seriously to the concerns of sustainable farm advocates if elected President. However, challenger and New Jersey Senator Bill Bradley countered Gore by saying he had failed to do enough to help family farmers during the Clinton Administration. Bradley himself promised to reduce concentration in the meatpacking and hog confinement industries.

During the 2004 election cycle, rural advocates took a host of Democratic candidates, including Howard Dean, Dennis Kucinich and John Kerry, on “CAFO tours” during their separate visits. When the convoy of trucks and SUVs stopped near a bin of dead hogs rotting in the hot summer



sun and its doors were opened, several of the candidates, their staff and press members nearly vomited from the stench. Kucinich's clothes smelled so horrible afterward that he had to change his suit before attending his next political event.

That same year, Democratic candidate and Missouri Representative Dick Gephardt included the hog confinement issue in a television ad, saying, "I've always opposed corporate hog lots and supported a ban on packer ownership of cattle... As president, I'll fight for America's family farmers."

### **The Latest Positions**

The 2008 election cycle has not been any different than its predecessors, with plenty of conversations taking place on the hog issue by out-of-state politicians. Just as in past elections, all Democratic candidates—including Biden, Clinton, Dodd, Edwards, Kucinich and Obama—came out in favor of local control. Democrats are doing most of the talking regarding concerns over the environment and the plight of the family farmer. Republicans, on the other hand, have kept their focus on the war, immigration and that eternal pig-in-a-poke: taxes. Of those Democratic candidates remaining in the field, their positions and past deeds are summarized below.

### **Hillary Clinton: Starts early, finishes last**

As a native of Illinois, former First Lady of Arkansas, and current New York Senator, there is no doubt that Hillary Clinton has a solid understanding of agricultural issues, as well as the threat industrial hog confinement poses to the environment, rural communities and small family farmers.

Having had a good voting record on agricultural issues as a New York Senator, Clinton came to the confinement issue with a bit of a mixed political history. Executives from Tyson Foods, the world's largest processor and marketer of chicken, beef and pork, contributed heavily to her husband's gubernatorial and presidential campaigns. She also had her own connection to Tyson through a \$100,000 commodity trade on cattle futures, with a Tyson lawyer acting as her commodities broker—a fact that worried some environmental activists from the start.

When Clinton showed up to the Iowa State Fair and donned an apron while flipping pork chops at the Iowa Pork Producers' tent, attempting to win a place in the conservative hearts of the state's 8,700 pork producers, it rankled the ire of rural activists even further.

Iowa's dedicated rural base was further irritated in the weeks before the January 3 caucuses when Clinton appointed Joy Philippi, a recent former head of the National Pork Producers Council who is seen as a cheerleader for corporate agriculture, as co-chair of "Rural Americans for Hillary."

Two days after that debacle, Clinton finally came out in favor of local control over CAFO-siting decisions in an interview with the *Des Moines Register*, saying she believes large livestock operations can be hazardous to public health and the environment. "This is an issue I care deeply about," she

said, describing her feelings as "long-standing" and saying the topic had not been one that Iowans had mentioned during her many visits.

While many Iowans were glad to hear Clinton had come out in favor of local control, few believed it was a topic that was never mentioned to her, especially since her campaign had issued a policy brief in October that said, "In order to protect our health, particularly children's health, the environment, and the livelihood of small farmers, Hillary is deeply concerned about hog lots...[s]he also strongly supports federal rules to control air and water pollution from corporate factory farms."

Clinton has also been fortunate enough to garner the support of Bobby Kennedy Jr., a stalwart environmental defender and a champion on the CAFO issue. But even with the Kennedy blessing, Iowa's rural voters were too skittish to throw their support behind a worthy candidate whose campaign could not quite get their message on CAFOs straight.

### **John Edwards: Starts behind, finishes strong**

John Edwards, former Senator of North Carolina—the nation's second leading hog producing state—knew a thing or two about CAFOs before coming to Iowa. In fact, much of his second campaign through the state hinged on his populist rhetoric and his promise to take on "corporate interests," especially those of industrial hog confinement. This gained him a loyal following of rural Democrats, family farmers and environmentalists demanding change.

Edwards' commitment to the issue went so far that his campaigners even took to handing out bumper stickers that said "Hogs for Edwards" and walked in a parade to the Iowa State Fair grounds with a trailer full of hogs and a banner that read, "Be Kind to Swine."

Of all the candidates, Edwards has proposed the most progressive solution to the CAFO issue. If elected, he pledges to impose a moratorium on the construction of any new confinement facilities. In addition, Edwards promised strict enforcement of anti-monopoly laws, especially those aimed



Dave Murphy

at mergers of packinghouses and unfair price discrimination against independent hog producers.

The problem with Edwards' promises is that they stand in stark contrast to his voting record in the US Senate. He twice voted against a ban on packer ownership of livestock. Edwards also voted against an amendment by Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone to eliminate subsidies to giant hog confinements, as well as a bill to eliminate caps on subsidies for confinement operators. Despite this terrible voting record, Iowa voters appreciated Edwards' admission of past mistakes and the newfound conviction he showed in addressing the issue.

### **Barack Obama: From nowhere to the top of his class**

Walking into Iowa from the Land of Lincoln, Senator Barack Obama faced an uncertain future in his neighboring state, as Iowans are more likely to be skeptical of the folks who live across the river. Despite having been born in Hawaii and serving as an urban State Senator from Chicago, the relative national politics newcomer quickly proved to be a deft study on agricultural issues.

While Obama had taken some Illinois State Senate votes regarding confinement, including supporting legislation that set tougher pollution limits on nitrogen, phosphorous, hydrogen sulfide and ammonia, his true education on confinement came from the nearly 50 rural town hall meetings that his campaign held in Iowa over the summer and fall months. Obama and his staff got together and listened to the concerns of family farmers from all around the state.

The CAFO problem in Iowa is one that Obama thinks needs action. After meeting with farm and environmental leaders, he came out in favor of local control and called for the strict enforcement of the Clean Air Act and Superfund "in exchange for simply reporting air emissions." Obama also supports limiting the amount of subsidies that industrial CAFOs receive and believes that large corporate hog polluters should be required to pay for their own pollution—and not be bailed out at the taxpayer's expense. These policies helped him secure his historic victory on that cold night in January.

### **Looking Toward the Future**

There is little doubt that the candidates' respective journeys through Iowa may finally deliver us a leader who has gained the wisdom to live up to Harry Truman's maxim on hogs. If so, on that first day after taking the oath of office, the next President of the United States may think twice before eating a piece of bacon inside the White House kitchen. And hopefully during these intervening months, Iowans will finally convince their local politicians to act wisely on this issue as well.

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## **Smithfield Chairman Named Biggest Grinch**

Agribusiness giant Smithfield Foods, notorious for causing animal suffering on a vast scale, is damaging the lives of humans as well. National Jobs with Justice has deemed Smithfield Chairman Joseph Luter III its 2007 "Grinch of the Year"—described as the national figure who does the most harm to working families—for permitting workers to be "injured, harassed, intimidated and threatened by Smithfield management." The company's facility in southeastern North Carolina, which is the largest pork slaughterhouse in the world, is also reportedly one of the most dangerous work sites in the United States.

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## **Cruelty Behind Closed Doors**

On the heels of the latest exposé of slaughterhouse cruelty, followed by the largest meat recall in history, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) has released a 150-page report authored by Dena Jones analyzing humane slaughter enforcement at state, federal and foreign slaughter plants. *Crimes Without Consequences: The Enforcement of Humane Slaughter Laws in the United States* reveals an ongoing lack of sound enforcement at plants around the world.

Unfortunately, the horrific treatment that made headlines with the latest recall is nothing new. Not only did roughly 800 separate company recalls take place between Jan. 1, 1994 and Nov. 31, 2007, but cruel treatment of animals has been documented in myriad US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspection reports.

"The hog was lying in the cradle and all four feet had been removed. The hog was observed to be kicking and shaking its head. It exhibited skin twitching and irregular but rhythmic breathing with deep abdominal and thoracic movement. It appeared to be gasping for breath," a USDA inspector wrote about a still-conscious hog at a slaughter plant in Frankenmuth, Mo.

At plants around the country, handling, stunning and slaughter is conducted with little of the needed oversight by federal and state departments of agriculture. Workers who are responsible for ensuring proper treatment of the animals are typically untrained, uneducated and transient. Animals are slaughtered at high speed to maximize profits. And while it is technically banned by federal law, ill and diseased animals may still be sent to slaughter to minimize losses.

Enforcement of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act by the USDA is woefully inadequate. Only 42 enforcement actions beyond issuances of deficiency reports for noncompliances were taken in the United States between 2002 and 2005. Whistleblower accounts and undercover



documentation suggest the majority of crimes are not observed or recognized by inspection personnel, not reported through the proper channel, or the appropriate remedial measures are not being taken.

All poultry are exempted from current law, an egregious situation that should be rectified by Congress. Though species that are covered by law must be rendered insensible with one stunning attempt before they are killed, industry data itself reveals that this is not the case. American Meat Institute guidelines consider an acceptable pre-slaughter stunning effectiveness rating of 99 percent for pigs and 95 percent for cattle and sheep. The National Chicken Council has set an acceptable stunning standard of 98 percent for chickens. Even if every US plant met these *voluntary* industry goals, 185 million chickens, 1.8 million cattle and sheep and 1 million pigs would still be killed inhumanely each year.

At the very least, the 10 billion animals killed annually for food in the United States are entitled to a merciful death. AWI calls on Congress to: 1) extend the federal slaughter law to include poultry; 2) assign a minimum of 50 USDA inspectors the sole task of ensuring the humane handling, stunning and slaughter of animals; 3) reject the notion that sound enforcement can be achieved by use of cameras in lieu of inspectors; and 4) abandon the notion that industry self-regulation is adequate.

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## Shame on Ohio State University

In a show ring fad known as short docking, the entire tail of a lamb is cut off purely for cosmetic purposes. AWI Quarterly readers will remember our spring 2007 article that noted scientific research demonstrating an increase in rectal prolapse in sheep who have been short docked. One of the institutions involved in that research, Ohio State University (OSU), is apparently continuing to short dock, despite both its own research and a university policy prohibiting the practice. AWI has received a series of photographs taken this year at the OSU Sheep Center, featuring lambs and ewes who have been short docked. One image clearly reveals a ewe with a repaired prolapse.

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## Biofuels: Bad News for Animals

BY NICOLETTE HAHN NIMAN

There's been a lot of talk lately about using agricultural products and byproducts to generate energy—so-called “biofuels.” They're touted as environmentally beneficial and even patriotic. But recent studies have exposed major flaws in the environmental and energy independence claims made by biofuel backers. These studies also raise serious concerns about rising prices and shortages in world food supplies that may result from directing grains and soy toward biofuels. What has not been discussed much is that biofuels may also spell disaster for millions of animals.

### Stampede of support for biofuels

Various agricultural crops or wastes can be used for energy, in making fuel for vehicles or as inputs in electricity generation. In the United States, corn is used to make ethanol, a liquid fuel usable for cars. Diesel fuel from agricultural products, referred to as “biodiesel,” sometimes involves creating a gas from manure, then combining it with oil from animal fat or plants (often soybeans or corn). Animal wastes are also used to generate electricity in methane digesters and incinerators.

Supporters claim these various energy forms have multiple benefits. Biofuels, they say, cause less pollution than fossil fuels—so there will be cleaner air and less global warming. They also say biofuels are a smart use of resources because they are made from “renewable” crops, or from agricultural wastes like manure. Finally, biofuel backers often argue that using agricultural products will reduce our dependence on fossil fuels from foreign countries (especially post-September 11) and help us achieve energy independence. (That's where patriotism comes in.)

These myriad purported benefits have helped build broad political support. In 2005, Congress mandated US production of 7.5 billion gallons of biofuels by 2012. In 2007, President Bush quadrupled the goal in calling for 35 billion gallons of biofuels by 2017. To support a domestic industry, Congress has heavily subsidized biofuels and imposed a 54 cent per gallon tariff on imported ethanol.

### Inefficient energy

However, not all biofuels are wise public investments. For one thing, they tend to be terribly inefficient ways to produce energy. Ethanol, for example, yields 35 percent less energy per gallon than gasoline, and a full acre of farmland produces only 375 gallons. Cornell University professor David Pimentel has calculated that even if we committed 100 percent of the US corn crop to ethanol, it would replace only 7 percent of vehicle fossil fuel usage. And a 2007 analysis in the journal *Science* concluded that substituting just 10 percent of the world's fossil fuels with ethanol and biodiesel would require 43 percent of US croplands and 38 percent of the European Union's croplands.

Equally inefficient are animal manures in methane digesters, incinerators and biodiesel plants. Manure simply does not contain enough energy to produce cost-effective power. Research at Iowa State University and elsewhere shows that these expensive projects are generally not viable without large public subsidies, and are likely to remain so in the future.<sup>1</sup>

### Subsidizing factory farms

Additionally, manure power and other biofuel projects carry substantial downsides for animals and the environment. Publicly subsidizing manure power projects is tantamount to subsidizing the waste disposal costs of large concentrated animal operations. Thus, such subsidies bolster the factory farm industry. By lowering industrial facilities' cost of production, public payments for manure power push family farms further toward the brink of extinction. This is a blow to our natural resources because, by the Environmental Protection Agency's reckoning, industrial animal operations are one of the nation's largest air and water polluters. And the intensive confinement pig, poultry, and dairy operations that hold millions of animals in the United States are increasingly recognized as inhumane.

Ethanol may also further degrade diets at cattle feedlots. Ethanol plants are intentionally located near feedlots to sell their byproducts as feed. Yet studies at two Midwestern universities indicate that ethanol byproducts may increase the prevalence of a deadly form of *E. coli* in cattle. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now studying the connection.

### Pollution, erosion and fish kills

Moreover, growing soy and corn crops for biofuels causes tremendous erosion and water pollution. Those crops are now the United States' leading cause of both nitrogen water pollution and soil erosion. University of Iowa researchers warned in 2007 that raising more corn for ethanol would lead to significant increases in nitrogen pollution of drinking water wells, rivers and streams.<sup>2</sup> Professor Pimentel even argues that fuel from corn cannot be called “renewable” because corn production methods are environmentally unsustainable. Soil loss from corn cultivation is 20-times faster than soil reformation and the crop is the United States' largest user of polluting fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, Pimentel notes.<sup>3</sup>

Biodiesel production operations can also cause oil spills. An Alabama biodiesel plant has been sued for spilling oil into the Black Warrior River on 24 occasions. Earlier this year, a Missouri businessman was indicted for dumping biodiesel into a waterway, resulting in at least 25,000 dead fish and a devastated mussel population. In summer 2006, a Cargill biodiesel plant in Iowa Falls spilled 135,000 gallons of liquid oil and grease into a stream, killing hundreds of fish and other aquatic life.

Meanwhile, the stated air pollution benefits of biofuels may be offset by increases in other air pollutants. Manure incineration projects have generated significant air pollution, including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and

particulate matter. And researchers from Stanford University reported in 2007 that fueling American cars with ethanol would actually increase formaldehyde and acetaldehyde levels. Burning ethanol, they also noted, can exacerbate the ill effects of air pollution by adding more smog-forming pollutants to the atmosphere. University of Minnesota researchers have determined that if just current croplands were used, corn ethanol would reduce greenhouse gases only 12 percent per unit of energy generated. Moreover, the researchers concluded that if croplands were expanded for increased ethanol production, there may be a zero benefit to global warming.<sup>4</sup>

### Widespread habitat destruction

But biofuels' greatest threat to animals and the environment is from habitat destruction. Raising the mountains of crops needed for ramping up production of ethanol and biodiesel will require vastly expanding American croplands. And, as one commentator put it, growing corn and soy for biofuels “will come from clearing forests, plowing grasslands, or draining wetlands.”<sup>5</sup> In other words, it will eliminate ecosystems occupied by millions of animals.

In particular, the huge bump in biofuel production is expected to destroy millions of acres of grasslands. With substantial financial enticements to grow biofuel crops, farmers are expected to plow just about every available acre of land and abandon en masse the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a federal initiative that encourages farmers to convert highly erodible cropland or other environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover. In return, farmers receive annual payments for the term of multi-year contracts, usually five or 10 years. Establishing wildlife habitat is specifically listed among the major program goals. CRP is the nation's largest private lands conservation program with more than 36 million acres enrolled.

CRP has been highly successful in conserving land and protecting and even re-establishing wildlife. Government studies document that the program has been critical for many species, including the bobwhite quail, swift fox, short-eared owl, Karner blue butterfly, gopher tortoise, Louisiana black bear, Eastern collard lizard, Bachman's sparrow, ovenbird, acorn woodpecker, greater sage grouse, and salmon.

The program's beneficial impact on wildlife has even been quantified. A 2007 government study showed it was supporting millions of ducks and grassland birds. And, conversely, the research revealed that without CRP land in the Dakotas, there would be almost 2 million fewer sedge wrens, grasshopper sparrows, bobolinks, and western meadowlarks. Likewise, government research has shown that wetlands in CRP land resulted in an annual increase of more than 334,000 additional breeding ducks in the Dakotas from 1992 to 2004. “Grassland birds are declining more than any other bird group in North America,” the research noted.

Biofuel expansion is now perhaps the greatest threat to the prairies and grasslands in which these birds live. Many CRP contracts expire in 2008. The USDA's chief economist



has estimated that 7 million acres under the conservation program's protection could be plowed under in the next few years to grow corn for ethanol. Defenders of Wildlife has warned: "Utilizing [native prairie land] for biofuels production would further accelerate the destruction of this pristine, wildlife rich ecosystem."

### Proper place for biofuels

Biofuels will certainly have some role in America's energy future. However, their benefits have been overstated while their costs to animals and the environment have been largely ignored. The good news is that energy conservation efforts can actually do more national good than ramped up biofuel production. "[F]rom the standpoint of energy independence, even if the entire US corn crop were used to make ethanol, it would displace less gasoline usage than raising fleet fuel economy five miles per gallon, readily achievable with existing technologies," University of Minnesota economist C. Ford Runge has pointed out.<sup>6</sup> The stampede toward biofuels must be replaced with thoughtful energy planning that considers animals and the environment.

*Niman is an attorney and a cattle rancher. She has written extensively about industrial animal production, including the forthcoming book *Righteous Porkchop: Finding a Life beyond Factory Farms* (HarperCollins 2009).*

<sup>1</sup>Hahn Niman, N., "A Load of Manure," *The New York Times*, March 4, 2006

<sup>2</sup>"US Water Under Pressure as Ethanol Production Soars," *Environmental News Service*, Oct. 10, 2007.

<sup>3</sup>Pimentel, D., "Energy and Dollar Costs of Ethanol Production with Corn," *Hubert Center Newsletter #98/2*, April 1998.

<sup>4</sup>Hill, J., et al., "Environmental, Economic, and Energetic Costs and Benefits of Biodiesel and Ethanol Biofuels," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, July 12, 2006.

<sup>5</sup>Avery, D., "Biofuels, Food, or Wildlife? The Massive Land Costs of US Ethanol," *Competitive Enterprise Institute Issue Analysis*, Sept. 21, 2006.

<sup>6</sup>Runge, C. F. & Johnson, R.S., "Ethanol: Train Wreck Ahead," *Issues in Science Technology*, Fall 2007.

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## E. coli Case Settled for \$13.5 Million

Eight years ago, 3-year-old Brianna Kriefall and 140 other people became ill after eating at a Sizzler in South Milwaukee. E. coli-contaminated meat that had come from Excel Corp., a subsidiary of Cargill, had been served at the restaurant. Though Brianna did not eat the meat, she did eat watermelon that had been contaminated by it, and she died as a result. Initially, Excel denied that its product caused the outbreak, but genetic testing proved otherwise. In June, the company agreed to pay Brianna's family \$13.5 million, the second-largest settlement in the nation involving a food-borne illness, and perhaps the largest award for a single victim.

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## Of One Mind As the Yankton Sioux and their South Dakota neighbors oppose construction of a large-scale hog facility, they find a common voice. In their words, "Get the Oink out of here!"

BY TRACY BASILE

When Long View Farm came to South Dakota to begin construction of a large-scale hog facility in mid-April, tribal members from the Yankton Sioux reservation and their neighbors got together and decided to hold a different kind of welcoming party. The gathering took place on the side of a Bureau of Indian Affairs road near Wagner in Charles Mix County, the only paved access to Long View Farm's new address. Of the more than 100 people who attended, two boys held up signs that seemed to sum up the feelings of everyone there. One read: "Save Mother Earth," while the other one said, "Get the Oink out of here!"

Despite a brief announcement in a nearby town's newspaper, few of the local residents had any idea that an industrial pig farrowing facility of 4,000 sows, producing around 70,000 piglets a year, was moving into their neighborhood until the cement trucks and bulldozers started rolling by. Those who joined together on April 15 in defiance of the corporate investors were Native and non-Native, small farmers and teachers, college students from the University of South Dakota, mothers, grandmothers, aunts, uncles, young children, a Catholic nun, and visitors from Spain, Russia and Palestine.

### 50 state troopers and 17 arrests

What happened next is shocking. The following day, as protesters started gathering along the road again, 50 highway patrol officers, each in separate cars, arrived on the scene—reportedly more than are normally on patrol at any one time across the entire state of South Dakota. Two snipers were stationed on top of a trailer to watch the crowd through binoculars. Tom Dravland, state



Pokey Weddell



Pokey Weddell

public safety secretary, said the highway patrol was there at the request of the county sheriff to ensure public safety, but many of those who stood along the road that day in peaceful protest felt that such an overwhelming show of force was an act of intimidation.

A few days later, *Argus Leader*, the prominent newspaper of Sioux Falls, S.D., published an editorial calling the display racist and condemning the state's response. Additionally, it was reported that the electrical contract for the building of Long View Farm had coincidentally been awarded to the county sheriff's son.

As tensions within the community mounted, a town meeting was called on April 21. More than 500 tribal members and residents packed into Wagner's National Guard Armory to hear the hog project's supporters and lawyers. It was a contentious evening with audience members holding signs that said "No hogs!" and "Stop lying!" and booing the speakers as they left.

The next day, 17 tribal members of the Yankton Sioux were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct as they peacefully blocked the road to the construction site. Meanwhile, despite setbacks including a tornado hitting the site on June 5, construction crews have continued working seven days a week. The project is expected to be completed in early 2009.

### Location, location

The site Long View Farm picked in Charles Mix County in South Dakota is on a hilltop on top of a shallow aquifer and the larger Ogallala Aquifer, and is a few miles from a creek that empties into the Missouri River. It's also not far from a Head Start program for young children, the tribal community center, small farms and ranches, churches, a hospital, a college, wetlands and wildlife reserves that are home to several endangered species and hundreds of bald eagles. "In all of creation, they couldn't have picked a worse spot," said Faith Spotted Eagle (Ihanktowan Dakota) in an *Indian Country Today* article.

Long View Farm investors selected this area for the same reasons other investors in large-scale agriculture pick remote areas for development: a lack of zoning regulations. Iowa is the country's top hog producing state. Long View Farm's 11 investors all come from Sioux County, Iowa, which is the third highest county in hog production in the United States and is spotted with manure spills and fish kills due to hog waste run-off. In the background of this situation, there is a growing grassroots movement of concerned Iowa citizens and family farm activists fighting for changes in state regulations.

Contrast this with South Dakota, where zoning restrictions are sporadic, poor or nonexistent, and environmental regulations are passed on to the county level. Without much fanfare, Long View Farm was given a general permit to build from the state of South Dakota, meaning that it was decided that a long and costly Environmental Impact Study was not necessary. Deb McIntyre, director of South Dakota Peace and Justice, describes the lack of zoning regulations in Charles Mix County as "the perfect storm."

### Hogs and disease

Pigs are not indigenous to North America. Their introduction to this continent nearly 500 years ago brought with it dozens of diseases, many of which decimated tribal populations who had no immunity. The effect of these first hogs on North American land was devastating. According to Charles C. Mann, author of the book *1491*, "Swine alone can disseminate anthrax, brucellosis, leptospirosis, taeniasis, trichinosis, and tuberculosis."

Understanding the relationship between disease and hog confinement is an important part of the puzzle in assessing whether an industrial hog facility will do more harm than good for a community. Researchers and scientists have been studying the connections for years. In particular, a 2001 study by Dr. Rustam I. Aminov of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is cause for concern. The investigators found that antibiotic-resistant bacteria had seeped into underlying groundwater downstream of hog waste "lagoons." These cesspools hold massive amounts of waste from thousands of antibiotic-treated pigs. Long View Farm says its waste storage tanks will be secured underground and that every effort will be made to safeguard the environment. But many residents and protesters familiar with concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) have heard these arguments before.

### No word for "pig"

How hogs are treated in CAFOs goes against traditional tribal values. According to Robin Kimmerer (Potawatomi), director of the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment at the State University of New York-Environmental Sciences and Forestry in Syracuse, NY, in the indigenous paradigm, animals and the natural world are seen as "a community of persons... to be treated with the same respect owed to human beings as members of a community with reciprocal responsibilities."

In the breeding barn at a typical hog CAFO, a sow is artificially inseminated and placed in a 2 by 7 foot crate or stall, in which she lives during pregnancy. Shortly before giving birth, she is moved to another building and put in a farrowing crate that has a similarly sized area for her to stand or lie in. This crate has side extensions that are accessible only to her



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piglets, and are intended to prevent the sow from crushing her pigs. When the piglets are a few days old, their teeth are clipped and their tails are docked to prevent damage resulting from aggressive behaviors that come from confinement. After weaning, the piglets are shipped to finishing buildings, where they are kept in pens, each pig receiving just 8 square feet of room in which to move around. The sow is returned to the breeding facility and reinseminated and the cycle starts again. She has around two litters a year.

“Confinement is not good for anyone, definitely not the animals, because they don’t understand. It’s not their way of life, and it’s not our way of life, either,” said Oleta Mednansky (Lakota) of Rosebud Sioux reservation, referring to an even larger hog operation that threatened her reservation several years ago.

Preferring to call themselves “protectors” rather than “protesters,” members from the Yankton Sioux tribe have set up a permanent protest site against Long View Farm marked by a tipi and their nation’s flag. Other tribes, such as the Santee, have sent their flags to express solidarity, but people of any races and nationalities are invited to join.

Gary Drapeau (Ihanktowan Dakota), a Yankton Sioux councilman, is quoted on a youth activist’s blog as saying that the coming of the hog factory was “a message to all our Nations that we need to start using one mind as a people and stand together.” The Yankton Sioux and their allies won’t give up. Long after the newspaper and television reports have died down, the struggle will continue. Eventually, Drapeau concludes, “it will be a victory for all.” But it won’t be easy—it will require every one of us to stand together.

### **You can make a difference**

Last month, the Animal Welfare Institute sent copies of its factory farm documentary “The Pig Picture” and pamphlets about the issue to both Native and non-Native activists in South Dakota. Please help the effort by writing a letter voicing your opposition to Long View Farm. Send your original letter to Gov. Mike Rounds and a copy to Secretary of Agriculture William Evan and Yankton Sioux Tribe Vice Chair John Stone:

- Governor Mike Rounds, Office of the Governor, 500 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.
- Secretary of Agriculture William Even, South Dakota Department of Agriculture, 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.
- Yankton Sioux Tribe Vice Chair John Stone, P.O. Box 248, Marty, SD 57361.

Additionally, if you would like to provide support to the tribe for its legal battle, checks can be sent to:

- Yankton Sioux Tribe Hog protest, Attention: Treasurer Leo O’Conner, P.O. Box 248, Marty, SD 57361

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## **Organic Dairy Breaks USDA Rules**

A supplier to Dean Foods Co., the nation’s largest dairy processor, has been accused of confining its cows on a feedlot instead of letting them roam on pasture—in defiance of federal rules on organic production.

Cornucopia Institute asked the US Department of Agriculture to investigate the Fagundes Brothers Dairy after officials from the Institute and other neighboring organic dairy farmers reported seeing cows being confined, even in good weather. According to federal law, dairy marketed as organic must come from cows who have access to pasture.

Certified organic six years ago after transitioning from a conventional operation, the Fagundes facility milks about 3,000 cows on three sites. The owner says he pastures his cows on about 700 acres roughly from May through September, depending on weather, though Cornucopia Institute reports there is evidence against this claim.

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## **Tyson Deceived the Public to Rake in the Profits**

Last year, Tyson Foods, Inc. began a media campaign using advertisements dishonestly claiming that its chickens are “raised without antibiotics.” The multimillion dollar effort, which resulted in an additional 70 million pounds of chicken sold by the company last year, included posters and brochures distributed to 8,500 grocery stores across the country.

However, Tyson’s efforts to dupe the public were soon uncovered by the company’s competitors. Sanderson Farms and Perdue Farms sought an injunction against the firm, arguing that Tyson’s “raised without antibiotics” claim misleads consumers and has caused irreparable harm by implying products from competitors contain antibiotics or dangerous additives. While the deceptive new campaign was a major success for Tyson last year, Sanderson and Perdue reported respective losses of a \$4 million account and \$10 million in revenue.

Meanwhile, Tyson officials have admitted to engaging in the “common industry practice” of injecting eggs with antibiotics a few days before they hatch. A representative of the company said injecting eggs with antibiotics does not go against the label because the term “raised” only covers the period that begins with hatching. In addition, Tyson puts another type of antibiotic known as an ionophore in the feed given its chickens. Ionophores, which are not used to treat human diseases, are commonly given to industrially raised farm animals. Ionophores are also used by Sanderson and Perdue.

Finally, Tyson was ordered by a US District Court in April to remove all of its advertisements that claim that its chickens are raised without antibiotics. However, since May, consumers in several states have also been filing suit to challenge the marketing claim, alleging false advertising throughout the entire campaign and seeking compensation.



*The conditions under which Tysons raises its chickens are anything but “natural.”*

In addition to the legal actions against Tyson by its competitors and consumers, the US Department of Agriculture’s Food and Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), which had originally supported the company’s request to label its products as antibiotic free, has changed its position. Now that it has all the data available, including the ruling from US District Court, the FSIS has rejected both the original label claim and a revised version proposed by Tyson, which stated “raised without antibiotics that impact human antibiotic resistance.”

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