

Uncaging the Victims of Factory Farming

Remarkable Progress for Reforms



Sows in gestation crates. ©FARM SANCTUARY



Hens in battery cages. ©THE HSUS

Conditions in factory farms are improving. Campaigns conducted by The HSUS during 2006 to change the worst abuses began paying off with significant victories for pigs, calves, and chickens.

In the November elections, The HSUS led the drive for an Arizona ballot initiative that resulted in 62 percent of voters approving a ban on sow gestation crates and veal calf crates. Smithfield Foods Corporation, the nation's biggest pig producer, quickly announced it would phase out the use of the crates for its 1.2 million breeding sows.

Smithfield's decision is perhaps the most monumental advance for animal welfare in the history of modern American agribusiness. A week later, Maple Leaf Foods, Canada's largest pig producer, followed Smithfield's lead. Soon after, Strauss Veal and Marcho Farms announced they would end the practice of confining veal calves in tiny crates.

Our campaign to encourage restaurants, food service providers, and grocery chains to stop selling eggs from hens confined in battery cages made major strides. More than 150 colleges and universities have eliminated or greatly reduced their use of battery cage eggs, a trend mirrored by a growing number of large retailers. Whole Foods Market refuses to sell them and Trader Joe's rejects them for its private line of eggs. Other companies that have made good progress on the issue include Yahoo, Oracle, AOL, Best Buy, Nordstrom, Ben & Jerry's, and Bon Appétit's chain of 400 cafes.

Revealingly, in response to The HSUS's No Battery Eggs campaign, the president of the United Egg Producers was quoted in an issue of *Egg Industry* magazine as saying, "I'm afraid we're losing the battle."

We moved on two related fronts to reform poultry killing methods that cause enormous suffering for many of the more than nine billion birds the USDA claims are exempt from the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA). After filing suit in 2005 against the U.S. Department of Agriculture to enforce the HMSA protections for poultry, we began an intensive lobbying campaign in Congress to require this protection.

Present poultry slaughter methods are unreliable and cruel. Birds are hung upside down in leg shackles on a fast-moving line, electrocuted into paralysis, sliced in the neck with mechanical knives, and dunked in vats of scalding water—some while still alive.

The HSUS is now working to encourage the poultry industry to adopt a better slaughter method called controlled atmosphere stunning in which the birds suffer far less when killed using inert gasses such as nitrogen or argon.



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"The animal movement has long been right about factory farming. This campaign demonstrates that we're no longer just on the right side, we're also on the winning side."

—Paul Shapiro, Director, Factory Farming Campaign



A Gourmet Serving of Cruelty

Measured against the sheer volume of pigs and chickens raised in factory farms, the 500,000 ducks and geese used in U.S. paté de foie gras production are barely a blip on the cruelty radar. But force-feeding them to produce the fatty liver that gourmands purchase for up to \$100 a pound is a nasty business.

Jamming a foot-long metal pipe down a bird's esophagus two or three times a day and pumping a pound of corn mash into the animal's stomach is the equivalent of forcing a human to eat 45 pounds of pasta daily. Veterinary studies show the birds suffer stress, injury, pain, diseases of the respiratory and digestive tracts, and high rates of preslaughter mortality from blood toxicity, nerve damage, suffocation, and other complications.

In the past, attempts by The HSUS to curb force feeding or ban foie gras from menus have been derided by restaurants and their patrons, but in the wake of our growing campaign, attitudes are changing. In 2004, California announced it would gradually phase out foie gras production, and last year our offensive focused on New York State and Chicago.

Joined by other humane and food safety groups, The HSUS sued the Empire State to block more than \$400,000 in taxpayer funds—granted by former Governor George Pataki's administration under questionable legal circumstances—to expand the Hudson Valley Foie Gras company, the nation's largest and wealthiest producer. We also sued Hudson Valley for the facility's alleged violations of the Clean Water Act.

In Chicago, the city council heeded growing pleas for compassion and banned foie gras sales in restaurants and food stores. To date, more than a dozen countries have prohibited force feeding to produce liver paté.

The True Price of Pork and Eggs

Industrial animal agribusiness, the cause of massive degradation of land and water and now blamed for contributing more pollution to global warming than vehicle emissions, is also the single greatest direct cause of animal suffering. Each year in the United States, the meat, dairy, and egg industries raise and slaughter nearly 10 billion animals. More than nine billion are chickens, who are killed with virtually no protection from even the most inhumane slaughter practices.

Nearly 300 million laying hens are packed into tiny "battery cages," each bird accorded less space than a single sheet of 8.5x11 inch writing paper. Unable to spread their wings or act naturally, they suffer immensely. Extreme confinement in barren wire cages causes external injuries to feet and feathers and the development of osteoporosis, leading to bone fractures and chronic pain. They are kept alive for 18 months before they are considered "spent" and are slaughtered.

The 100 million pigs jammed into overcrowded pens in large buildings also endure tremendous abuse. Forced to live in fetid filth and unable to socialize naturally, wallow, forage, or root, these highly intelligent animals become bored and frustrated and develop psychotic behaviors. About five million are breeding sows, isolated and immobilized for months in gestation crates that barely allow them to move. The only sunlight, fresh air, and exercise that factory hogs ever get is at the end of an electric prod between the transport truck and the slaughterhouse kill floor.

No Battery Eggs Campaign

Cage-free egg use and hens affected.

Entity	No. of Eggs per Year	No. of Hens Affected per Year
Andronico's Market	4.8 million	18,461
AOL	500,000	1,923
Ben and Jerry's	100 million	384,615
College of the Atlantic	43,200	166
Dartmouth College	194,220	747
Georgetown University	1.5 million	5,769
Google (cafeterias)	860,000	3,307
JoPa	28,000	107
Mercy Center	more than 21,000	80
MFS Events (major Ohio caterer)	more than 500,000	1,923
New Hampton School	120,000	461
Phillips Exeter Academy	80,000	307
Tufts University	2,320,000	8,923
University of Connecticut pilot program	40,000	153
University of Iowa pilot program	99,840	384
University of Wisconsin-Madison	735,000	2,827
TOTAL	more than 11 million	430,153