

World Society for the Protection of Animals Declares War on Farm Animal Cruelty

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) has recently announced a worldwide campaign to “improve the conditions suffered by intensively reared animals”. The following is an extract from a “Special Report” printed in “*Animals International*”, the newsletter of WSPA.

“Factory farming was developed in Western Europe and is currently being taken to intensive extremes around the world. The production- line process of raising pigs, poultry and cattle aims to deliver cheap meat to the dinner table - but ultimately it is the animals that pay the price.

Chickens, kept in overcrowded sheds, are selectively bred to grow at such a rate that all too often their hearts and bones cannot cope with the strain, leading to suffering and even premature death. Egg-laying hens are locked in cages - often with less floor space than an A4 piece of paper, smaller than the page you are reading right now. Pigs which have just given birth are often confined in barred crates for the month that they suckle their young. The crates are so small they do not even allow the sows enough room to turn around.

Intensive rearing is a rising tide of animal misery threatening to flood Asia and it has progressed unchecked. Until now, WSPA is tackling the issue head-on with the launch of one of the largest scale campaigns in the charity’s history - World Farmwatch.”

WSPA Policy on Farm Animals

- A. WSPA advocates that methods used at all stages of farm animal husbandry must be developed so as to preclude avoidable suffering.
- B. Farm animals must be provided with shelter, exercise, food, water and care in a manner appropriate to their physiological and behavioural needs. WSPA is opposed to any methods of husbandry which do not fulfill these criteria.
- C. WSPA is also opposed to farming practices, such as plucking of down from live ducks and geese and force feeding of ducks and geese for “foie gras”, which by their nature cause suffering.
- D. WSPA is in principle opposed to mutilations which are carried out for non-therapeutic reasons, especially those carried out in an attempt to ‘adapt’ animals to an inappropriate husbandry system; in such cases it is the system which should be modified, not the animal.
- E. WSPA advocates that food animals should be slaughtered as close to the point of production as possible.
- F. Transport by sea for food animals destined for slaughter should be forbidden except where it is necessary to reach the nearest slaughterhouse.

- G. No animal which is ill or unfit should be allowed to travel. In addition, proper selection of stock must take place to remove ill or unfit animals. Selected stock should be prepared to help withstand the rigors of transport, and the vehicle or vessel should be specifically designed for carriage of the particular species involved.

- H. All drivers of livestock vehicles should be trained both in necessary driving techniques and the general care of the animals in their charge. They should have their licences endorsed with the species of animals they have been trained to transport.