

THEIR VOICE

ANIMAL EQUALITY'S MAGAZINE
Nº 11 – SUMMER 2021

FREE

CHRIS PACKHAM

DEMANDING CHANGE FOR CHICKENS

BRITISH BACON

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SALMON SUFFERING

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I hope this message finds you and yours safe and healthy in what has been a difficult time for us all.

At Animal Equality, we are entering this post-pandemic era firmly grounded in the reality that while our lives may be somewhat getting back to normal, the lives of billions of farmed animals are still wrought with suffering and abuse. In just the last couple of months, we protested the deplorable conditions that Spanish calves and cows faced while stranded on ships during a live transport shipment that went horribly wrong. We released separate investigations into commercial fishing on three different continents which showed that, regardless of the region, fish are continuously exploited and abused. We brought footage of the plundering and pollution of the planet's natural resources in Mexico and Brazil to the rest of the world, revealing that this destruction's common thread is industrial animal farming. All of this sadness, all of this pain – and yet, I still feel hopeful.

Each and every day, and thanks to your support, our team rose to the challenge. Our campaigns to end practices like the killing of baby chicks and confinement cages gained tens of thousands of new supporters and yielded positive results that will impact millions of animals. Our legal advocacy, including stopping the continued false advertising from companies marketing themselves with terms like 'humane', proved that we can and will use the law to hold producers accountable. The world is watching, and reacting, to our work and calls to action.

I'm optimistic about the future, too. Our departments are preparing for the year ahead, putting the finishing touches on new campaigns and initiatives that will protect animals from cruelty. I look forward to sharing more details of these developments with you in the coming months.

Thanks to your continued support, we've been able to accomplish so much. With you by my side, we will rise into this future together, one step at a time.

With hope,

SHARON NÚÑEZ
PRESIDENT, ANIMAL EQUALITY





If I could choose just one word to define Animal Equality's team it would be 'gritty'.

I am surrounded by passionate people who are determined, focused, and unyielding. No stranger to the terrible atrocities that farmed animals face across Britain and beyond, every day our team witnesses the suffering of these vulnerable animals. We tell their stories, uncover their truths, and fight for justice on their behalf.

Billions of animals are torn away from their mothers each year. Unable to carry out their natural behaviours, they are hidden away in filthy, dark sheds. But they are never alone. We stand strong beside them, unwavering in our quest for a kinder world.

And, slowly but surely, we are winning.

Already this year we have seen huge progress.

After the Government announced that it is 'exploring' a ban on the importation of foie gras, we coordinated an open letter demanding that they make good on their promise and outline exactly when and how a ban would be written into law. Supported by MPs of varying political parties, and backed by 200,000 concerned Brits, our action prompted monthly meetings with Government officials and a ban of this wicked product is now imminent.

Following the release of our truly groundbreaking investigation into a Scottish salmon slaughterhouse – where we discovered fish being clubbed to death and cut while conscious – Waitrose and Co-op struck the producer from its supply chain and the Scottish Government introduced regular fish slaughterhouse inspections for the first time.

Weeks later, we discovered piglets being brutally hammered to death on a pig farm owned by a senior industry figure, ironically responsible for setting industry standards for one of Scotland's largest accreditation schemes. Following widespread media coverage and loud public outcry, the owner resigned as a Board Member, the site was stripped of its accolades and the farm was blacklisted by major supermarkets, Tesco and Lidl.

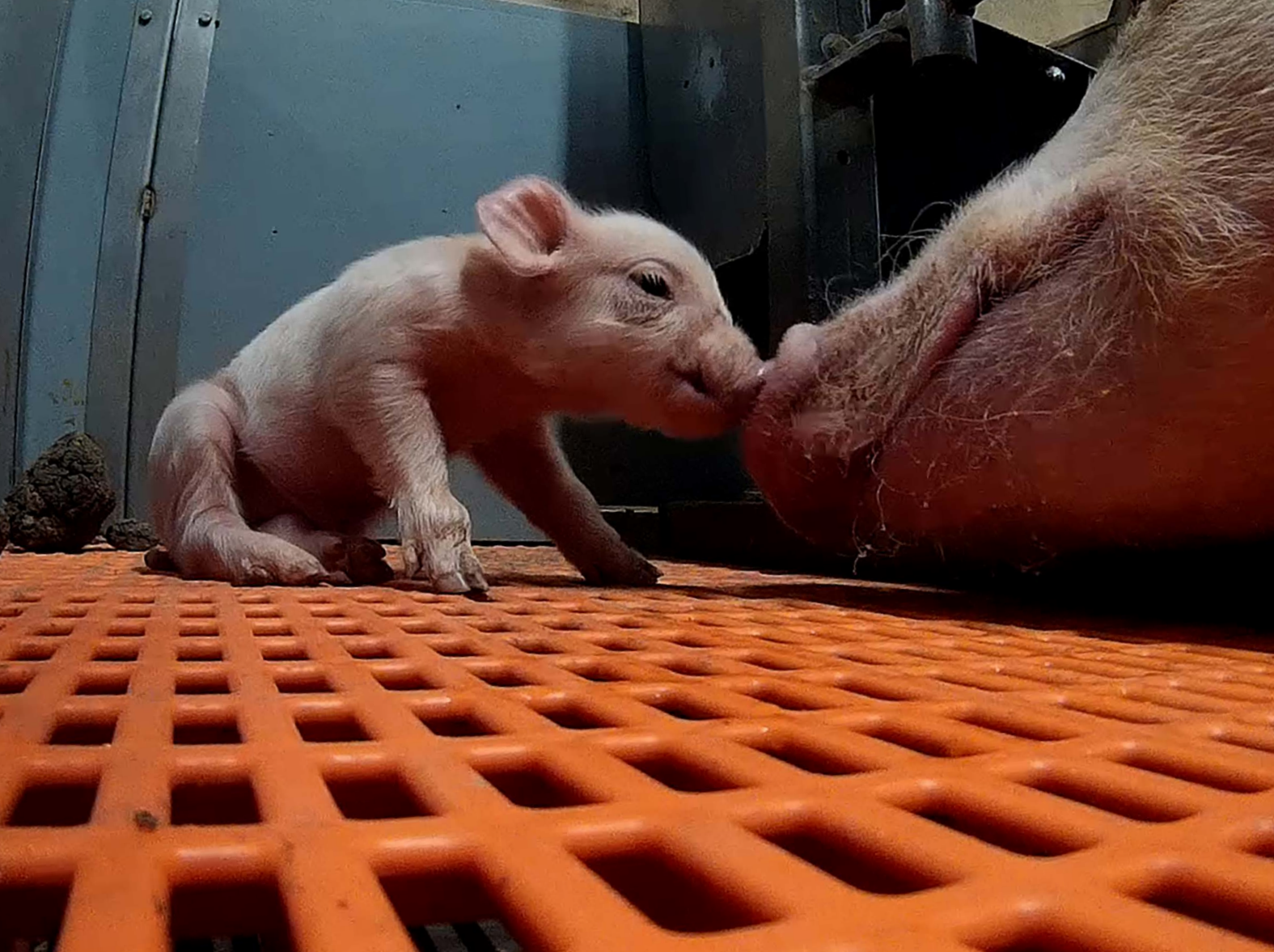
This is just the beginning.

There's a long way to go, but our efforts are paying off. Our strategy is working. It is a privilege to speak up for animals and to see the immense impact that our work has on their lives.

When you watch footage of a chicken struggling to stand or a calf crying out for their mother, it is easy to despair. Thank you for not looking away. Thank you for defending animals in a world that so often ignores their suffering. Thank you for supporting us as we demand better. With every kind donation, every thoughtful email, and every petition signature, we are changing and saving lives together. We couldn't do it without you.

For the animals,

ABIGAIL PENNY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ANIMAL EQUALITY UK



THE REALITY OF BRITISH BACON

In April 2021, Animal Equality released undercover footage of animal abuse at P&G Sleigh Pig Unit in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Our investigator filmed a number of very troubling scenes on the farm, which is owned by a senior pig industry figure.

The covert footage revealed piglets who were deemed too weak being killed by having their heads slammed onto the concrete floor, while others were brutally hammered to death. One farm worker claimed that using a hammer to kill a pig was “as good as any bullet”. We filmed pigs showing signs of consciousness, such as gasping and wriggling, after multiple blows to the head.

Piglets on the farm routinely had their tails cut off with a hot blade and their teeth clipped with pliers. We also found mother pigs who were suffering from torn vulvas and severe prolapses, one of whom was forced to walk for over one and a half minutes, with internal organs hanging out of her body, before being killed.

Animals who survive the horrific treatment on this farm are eventually sent to ‘Quality Pork Limited’, the largest pig slaughterhouse in Scotland. The abattoir is contracted by Pilgrim’s Pride, a company which supplies around a quarter of Britain’s pig meat.

The farm was certified by Quality Meat Scotland, a farm assurance scheme which is approved by the Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Following our investigation, the farm lost its welfare certification and was dropped as a supplier by supermarkets Tesco and Lidl.

Farm owner Philip Sleigh is a senior pig industry figure who, until we exposed the suffering taking place in this facility, was a Board Member of Quality Meat Scotland and Chair of its ‘Pig Standards Setting Committee’.

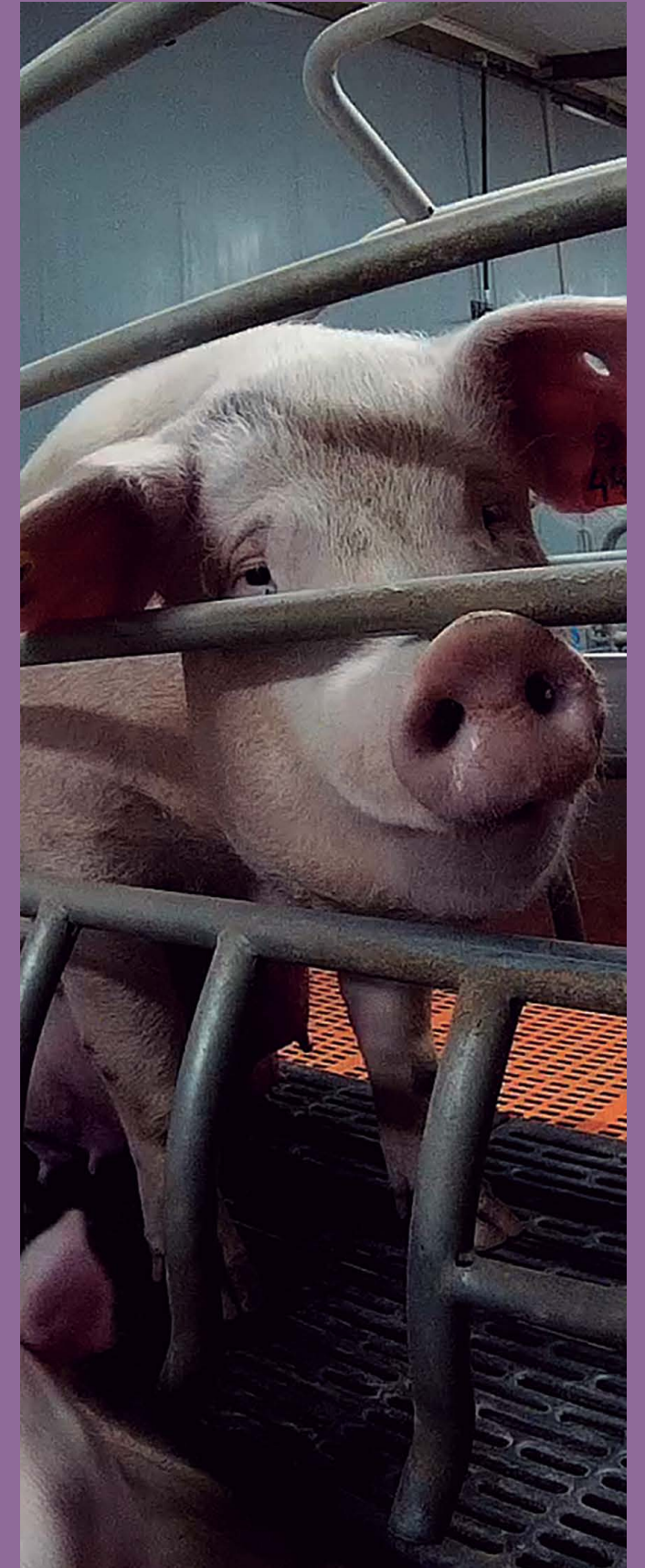
Animal Equality sent official complaints outlining our findings to the relevant authorities and a criminal investigation is now underway.

A rotten industry

“Unfortunately, most of what we see here is typical of the industry as a whole.”

Dr Alice Brough, Swine Veterinarian

The cruelty we exposed on this farm was not an isolated incident. We’ve investigated 10 pig farms in the UK over the last five years – every single time, we have found severe animal suffering and a complete disregard for animal welfare. We cannot allow the pig industry to continue to mislead consumers. Tens of thousands of people have joined our call for increased legal protections for pigs and for improved enforcement of existing laws. Add your name to the petition at: animalequality.org.uk/act/protect-pigs.





SCOTTISH SALMON: SUFFERING AT SLAUGHTER

Earlier this year, Animal Equality released a groundbreaking exposé showing the killing of farmed fish, the first investigation of its kind to be released in the UK. We went undercover at a Scottish Salmon Company slaughterhouse in Arnish, Isle of Lewis, and found extremely serious animal welfare abuses were common.



The pioneering footage taken by our brave investigator revealed the brutal nature in which farmed salmon are slaughtered. Numerous fish were killed while displaying signs of consciousness, by having their gills cut or being clubbed multiple times on the head. Others fell or were thrown to the floor and were left there to suffocate in agony. We also filmed instances of workers tearing salmon's gills with their fingers.

The Scottish Salmon Company supplies major supermarkets Waitrose and Co-op, as well as premium retailers and restaurants. As a result of our investigation, both Waitrose and Co-op suspended the farm from their supply chains.

“This footage is alarming. A significant number of salmon are clearly conscious when their gills are cut, which could result in extreme pain for as long as seven minutes.”

Mark Borthwick,
Head of Research at the Aquatic Life Institute

Concerned by the investigation's findings, 70 world-leading fish experts signed on to Animal Equality's open letter to the UK Government calling for specific and meaningful protections to be put in place for fish and other aquatic animals. Actor Alexander Gould, the voice of Nemo in the much-loved animated film 'Finding Nemo', also got involved in our campaign, calling on the public to support Animal Equality's work to protect fish.

Our investigation prompted official government inspections into fish slaughterhouses in Scotland to take place for the very first time. These will now be carried out routinely.

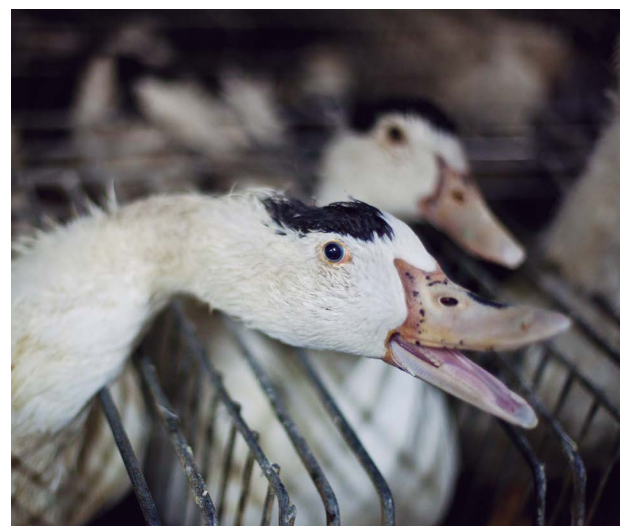


FOIE GRAS: THE FINAL PUSH FOR A BAN

Animal Equality has been campaigning tirelessly for a UK import ban on foie gras produced by force-feeding since 2017, and we're now closer than ever before to achieving our goal!

We've made significant progress on this issue over the last four years, securing political backing from policymakers across the political spectrum, collecting over 225,000 signatures on our petition to ban foie gras, and successfully encouraging a number of restaurants to stop serving foie gras. Additionally, we've gathered support from a long list of animal-loving celebrities, including Alan Carr, Peter Egan, and Thandiwe Newton, who have helped to spread our message far and wide.

In May 2021, Defra (the Government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) announced its 'Action Plan for Animal Welfare' and claimed that it is "exploring a ban on the sale of foie gras". In response, Animal Equality coordinated an open letter from cross-party MPs who are calling for an urgent meeting with Defra to discuss an immediate end to foie gras imports. Politicians stated in the letter that "the UK public is growing impatient, as are we", while the Government delays delivering a confirmation of the ban on this controversial product.



Although force-feeding is illegal in the UK under animal welfare grounds, around 200 tonnes of foie gras is imported from other countries each year. Banning this trade would spare an estimated 250,000 birds from torturous suffering every year.

While we are confident we will see this brutal 'delicacy' banned from our shores, there is still work to be done and we won't rest until the ban is put into place, and enforced, in law. Our team continues to have regular meetings with Defra and is holding the Government to account to ensure that 2021 is the year in which the UK finally ends its support for this cruel industry.

"This practice is known to cause undeniable pain for the sentient animals involved. We have no right to call ourselves a nation of animal lovers until foie gras is banned, once and for all."

**Caroline Lucas,
Green Party MP**



EU TO END THE CAGE AGE!



In a historic move driven forward by animal protection campaigners, the European Commission has committed to phasing out cages for farmed animals across the European Union (EU), with the aim of banning them completely by 2027.

On 30th June 2021, the European Commission stated it intends to put forward a legislative proposal to prohibit the use of cages for farmed animals, including chickens, rabbits, ducks, female pigs confined in farrowing crates, calves in the dairy industry, and others. Once the ban is put in place, this landmark decision will affect around 300 million animals every year who are trapped in cages on farms across the EU.

In addition, the Commission will look at “introducing rules or standards for imported products that are equivalent to the EU’s”, meaning that in the future, products from other countries – such as the UK – may have to comply with cage-free standards in order to be sold in the EU.

The commitment came as a result of the hard-fought ‘End The Cage Age’ initiative, which brought together over 170 animal protection groups including Animal Equality. Together we gathered 1.4 million signatures from EU citizens calling for a ban on cages. The organisations involved in the campaign will now continue working to ensure the European Commission delivers on its promise.

Although cage-free farming systems are not cruelty-free, caging animals causes some of the most extreme suffering in the animal agriculture industry and banning the use of cages is a crucial step forward in the fight for ending animal exploitation.

This is a truly groundbreaking commitment which should set a strong precedent for other countries around the world to follow – particularly the UK Government, which recently promised “the highest standards of animal welfare” and stated it wants to set these standards “for others across the world to follow”.



PROTECTING ANIMALS BY SHAPING POLICY

As part of Animal Equality’s legal advocacy work, we submit responses to official UK Government consultations on issues relating to farmed animals, utilising our expertise to help impact legislation with the ultimate aim of protecting animals. Detailed below are some recent consultation topics that we have advised on.

Live Exports

The Government recently unveiled plans to ban the export of live animals for slaughter and fattening in England and Wales. After decades of hard work by animal advocates, this is groundbreaking progress! However there is still work to be done and the current plans do not go far enough. Animal Equality is urging for the ban to be extended to cover the whole of the UK, to include animals exported for breeding purposes, and to be put in place with immediate effect.

Gene Editing

We are concerned by attempts to use gene editing technologies to increase the ‘productivity’ of farmed animals, due to the extreme suffering animal agriculture causes. There are also discussions around using gene editing to address illnesses that animals kept in confinement are vulnerable to, however crowded conditions are an issue for other reasons too – they are inhumane, preventing animals from carrying out many of their natural behaviours, and increase the risk of infectious diseases emerging, which can threaten both animal and human health. Animal Equality is calling for the Government to put in place thorough regulations to protect animals from adverse effects of gene editing, including prohibiting any genetic modifications that would cause them harm.

National Food Strategy

The National Food Strategy is an independent review, commissioned by the Government, which could potentially change the future of farming in the UK. While the review was in the public consultation stage, we responded – and encouraged our supporters to do the same – citing evidence of the benefits a plant-based food system would bring to animals, the environment and public health. The review has now been published and it recommends, amongst other measures, that the UK Government takes steps to ensure a 30% decrease in public meat consumption over the next decade.

CHRIS PACKHAM: DEMANDING CHANGE FOR CHICKENS

We've joined forces with passionate wildlife TV presenter, Chris Packham, and fellow animal groups to urge UK supermarkets to end some of the worst abuses happening to chickens raised and killed for the meat they sell.

Approximately 800 million chickens per year live and die in misery to be sold on UK supermarket shelves, meaning that these companies have a huge influence over the way chickens are farmed across the UK and beyond. While our end goal is a world where no animals are killed for human consumption, if these major retailers make changes which will reduce the suffering of chickens raised for meat, it would have a significant impact on not only the individual animals who are tragically trapped in the current system, but also on the entire animal agriculture industry.

Earlier this year, Chris Packham launched a petition – which has now surpassed 195,000 signatures – and appeared live on Sky News to draw attention to the extreme suffering that chickens in typical UK factory farms experience.

Our campaign hit the headlines and gathered huge public support in a matter of months, but despite unwavering efforts by activists, all eight major supermarkets – Aldi, Asda, Co-op, Iceland, Lidl,

“I think this is the biggest cause of hidden animal suffering in Britain. Chickens outnumber all the wild birds in the country but we never see them – because they're suffering behind the closed doors of factory farms.”

Chris Packham



Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco – are still refusing to eliminate the worst cruelties that chickens in their supply chains are subjected to.

As a result, this has brought us to the next phase of the campaign – persuading each supermarket to do better for chickens one by one. Once the first household name commits to making these critical changes, we are sure to see others follow suit.

We've chosen to place particular focus on Morrisons, as the chain recently announced that it will launch a range of products that meet the set of animal welfare standards that we're asking retailers to commit to as a bare minimum for the chickens whose flesh they sell. Morrisons' announcement may sound promising at first, but it's actually incredibly deceiving. The range will only affect a small proportion of the chickens that are killed to be sold on Morrisons' shelves, leaving countless others to continue suffering from the most extreme abuses.

We won't allow Morrisons to get away with misleading consumers. We know that it's possible for supermarkets to make meaningful changes for chickens and we will keep demanding action until we see progress!

PROGRESS FOR CHICKENS

Our Corporate Outreach team continues to work behind the scenes, encouraging companies to implement meaningful policies which will reduce the suffering of animals trapped on factory farms.

Following talks with Animal Equality, influential hospitality company GLH Hotels has pledged to end some of the worst abuses for chickens raised for meat in its entire supply chain. GLH Hotels – whose brands include The Clermont, Hard Rock Hotel London and Thistle Hotels – joins more than 400 other companies worldwide who have signed up to the Better Chicken Commitment, a set of science-led welfare standards which were developed by animal experts.

Although farming animals can never be cruelty-free, incremental changes are a step in the right direction which positively impact some of the world's most mistreated animals.



GET INVOLVED

Our Corporate Outreach team continues to work behind the scenes, encouraging companies to implement meaningful policies which will reduce the suffering of animals trapped on factory farms.

If you want to get involved with our campaigns, join our team of Animal Protectors! We'll send you regular emails containing easy actions you can take (often from the comfort of your own home) to help persuade the world's biggest companies to end the very cruellest treatment of animals. Sign up today at animalequality.org.uk/animalprotectors.

animal
PROTECTORS

EXPOSING ANIMAL CRUELTY WORLDWIDE

In 2021 so far, Animal Equality has released a total of eight undercover investigations. Here are two exposés from our international teams which we wanted to share with you.

Mistreatment On Italian Pig Farm



Investigators from Animal Equality Italy, in collaboration with a major television station, documented horrific suffering on an intensive pig farm in the Northern Italian province of Brescia. The footage revealed several pigs who were unable to walk as a result of severe open wounds, while others were left to die in corridors. Based on our findings, a formal complaint was submitted to the authorities.

The cruelty we filmed is yet another example of the brutal reality of the pig meat industry. Around 60% of the pig meat consumed in the UK is imported from countries in the European Union, including Italy, therefore could come from farms just like this one.

Cows Slaughtered While Pregnant



Animal Equality's team in Brazil released footage from a shocking investigation into the slaughter of pregnant cows. Our investigator filmed distressing scenes including a pregnant cow whose unborn calf struggled inside her while she died, and live calves being cut from their mothers' bodies and discarded on the floor.

In 2017, the Brazilian Government approved a regulation which allowed the slaughter of pregnant cows for human consumption, and the number of cows killed while pregnant in the country has been increasing significantly ever since. The slaughter of pregnant cows is also permitted by UK law, with an estimated 150,000 killed every year here.

Animal Equality is campaigning to end the cruel practice of slaughtering pregnant cows in Brazil, as well as urging the country's lawmakers to increase inspections at slaughterhouses and introduce fines for facilities that do not comply with animal welfare regulations.

INTERNATIONAL SUCCESSES

UNITED KINGDOM

Animals are to be recognised as sentient beings in UK law for the first time! In 2019, Animal Equality joined forces with fellow animal organisations to form the 'Better Deal For Animals' coalition, and we have been campaigning for the UK Government to put this crucial protection in place ever since.



BRAZIL

After four years of intensive campaigning and negotiations from Animal Equality and other groups, GPA – the second largest retailer in Brazil – has committed to going cage-free, impacting an estimated 5.7 million hens a year. The company also pledged to end the use of cruel gestation crates for pregnant pigs.

MEXICO

In a historic move following talks with Animal Equality, the Government of Puebla, Mexico, passed a law which will criminalise unregulated slaughterhouses and slaughter at live animal markets, as well as make it illegal for land animals to be slaughtered without prior stunning.



ITALY

In collaboration with a major television channel, Animal Equality released an investigation into pig farms in Northern Italy, shedding light on what happens in a region that markets meat products with the stamp of 'excellence of Made in Italy'. We have launched a petition demanding more frequent unannounced inspections to be carried out on farms.

INDIA

In India, Animal Equality revealed how the aquaculture industry is cruel to animals and uses important resources, such as water and land, inefficiently. The investigation included footage from several fish and shrimp farms, hatcheries, and fish markets, filmed in multiple states across the country.

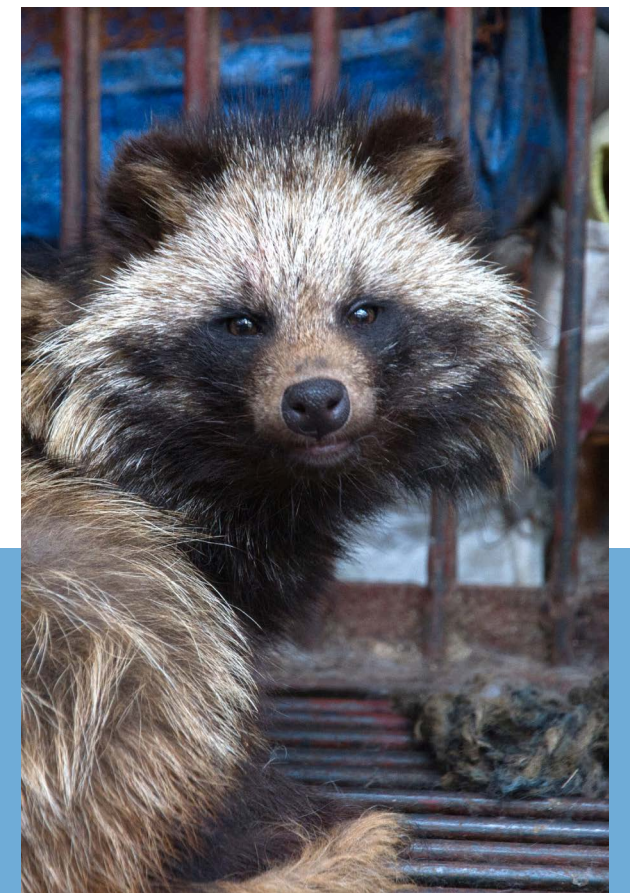


UNITED STATES

Animal Equality helped to secure the passage of a bill in the US state of Nevada which will ban cages for hens exploited in the egg industry. The legislation also requires eggs sold in the state to be from cage-free facilities, no matter where they were produced. The law will impact around 3.5 million hens per year.

SPAIN

In response to thousands of cows and calves being stranded on a ship in the Mediterranean Sea for months on end, Animal Equality held numerous impactful demonstrations in Spain to protest the cruelty of live animal transport.



GLOBALLY

Animal Equality's campaign to ban live animal markets won the prestigious #Campaign4Animals Award 2020. The award was presented to us by Eurogroup for Animals – a pan-European organisation whose key focus is to improve the wellbeing of as many animals as possible through effective legal advocacy and public awareness work. Our campaign was highlighted for its tremendous impact on animals, as well as how it responded to the COVID-19 crisis and mobilised supporters to take action.

SPOTLIGHT ON: THE EGG INDUSTRY



Chickens are naturally social animals who love to forage for food, take dust baths, and bask in the sun. Sadly, hens in the egg industry are denied these important natural behaviours. Many spend their entire lives packed into metal cages which are so crowded that they cannot even spread their wings.

Hens used for eggs have been selectively bred to produce far more eggs than is natural, and they often suffer from debilitating diseases as a result. No matter what type of farm they are kept on, they'll be sent to slaughter when their egg production declines – usually at around 18 months old.

As male chickens cannot lay eggs, they're deemed worthless by the industry. In the UK, after being separated from the females, they are gassed to death when they're just a few hours old.

Over the years Animal Equality has released several investigations into egg farms around the world, revealing the shocking truth about egg production.



Here are some fun facts about chickens which show just how fascinating these animals are:

- 1** Chickens communicate using over 30 different vocalisations, including purring when they're relaxed, just like cats!
- 2** They form complex social structures, quickly establishing a 'pecking order' and recognising their status in it.
- 3** As capable logical thinkers, chickens display better reasoning skills than toddlers.
- 4** Mother hens and their babies start communicating with each other before the chicks have even hatched out of their eggs.
- 5** Chickens show empathy with others and appear to mourn the loss of their flock mates.
- 6** Inquisitive with a playful streak, they explore their surroundings by pecking and observing one another.

In each edition of our Their Voice magazine, we'll be shining a light on a specific species or issue, revealing the ways in which current practices cause suffering to farmed animals.

EGG-FREE ALTERNATIVES

Aquafaba



The liquid from a can of chickpeas makes an excellent alternative to egg whites, particularly in recipes for meringues or chocolate mousse.

Crack'd

Perfect your plant-based Yorkshire puds with this handy liquid egg replacer.

Squeaky Bean Scotch Egg Style Bites



Yes, you read that right – vegan Scotch 'eggs' have finally hit supermarket shelves!

Oggs Cakes

Whether you're celebrating or just fancy a slice of something sweet with your cuppa, Oggs has a wide range of egg-free cakes and bakes for all occasions.

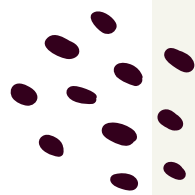
The Tofoo Co. Scrambled Tofu



For a twist on a breakfast classic, you can't go wrong with this tasty tofu scramble on toast.

Keen to get cooking?
Check out the recipes in our free e-cookbook:
animalequality.org.uk/egg-free-cookbook.

A new report by Chatham House concluded that a shift towards a plant-based food system is necessary to combat the climate crisis, with a reduction in the consumption of animal products also crucial to reducing the risk of pandemics and disease.



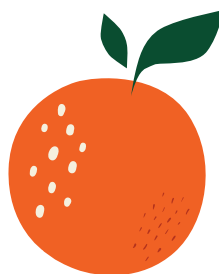
Fast food chain Burger King added a Vegan Royale to the menu in all its UK stores! The plant-based chicken burger is cooked separately from animal products and comes with a creamy egg-free mayo.



THE **PLANT-BASED** REVOLUTION

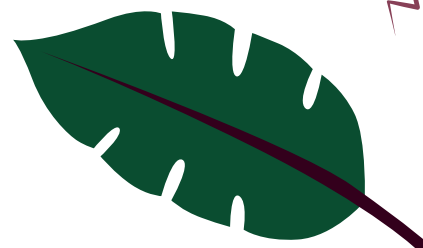


Eye-opening documentaries such as Seaspiracy and My Octopus Teacher are changing how people think about aquatic animals, leading many to make more compassionate food choices.



Innovative and animal-friendly food company OmniFoods has landed in UK shops and restaurants. Its plant-based pork is already a major phenomenon in countries across Asia.

Vegan cheese brand Violife has teamed up with hip-hop artist RZA to support Black-owned restaurants which have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with grants and guidance on increasing their plant-based options.



SUPPORTERS IN FOCUS

When you donate to Animal Equality, you can rest assured that your gift is in safe hands. We deeply value the generosity and trust that our donors place in us, which is why we use data-driven, strategic approaches which ensure all funds are used effectively and protect as many animals as possible.

Here's what Marios, one of our compassionate donors, has to say about supporting our work.

"Sometimes as an animal lover I can feel a little helpless as I know what goes on behind factory farm doors. When I donate to Animal Equality, I feel a little more at ease as I have total faith that they are doing an absolutely amazing job creating direct, real change for animals."

- Marios, Animal Equality Supporter



Every single donation helps us make a real difference for animals. You can give today by visiting animalequality.org.uk/donate.



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