

The truth about animal slaughter

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Perhaps the most controversial, important, serious and devastating facet of the meat industry is the horror of animal slaughter. Some people claim that they aren't bothered by these methods. Most people don't want to hear about them. But every human with some kind of warmth in their soul is at least somewhat affected by them.

Animal slaughter is my least favorite part of the meat industry to discuss, but it is my responsibility as an ethical human being to inform as many people about it as possible. All land livestock "live" absolutely miserable existences on factory farms, covered in their own filth, blood, urine and feces. Nearly all of the animals are sick or mutilated in some way. Birds, turkeys and sometimes pigs are often kept in cages so small that the animals cannot turn around. Because chickens become so stressed that they peck at and eat each other, their beaks are seared off with hot knives when they are chicks.

Cows and pigs often stamp in frustration, cry and scream with grief when their young are taken from them. There are four methods that are used to slaughter land livestock. The chemical method stipulates that sheep, calves and swine can be asphyxiated, or choked, essentially, by carbon dioxide gas. The mechanical method involves the use of a captive bolt stunner to immediately incapacitate sheep, swine, goats, cattle and horses. With the use of the mechanical method, animals are simply shot. Finally, in the electrical stunning method, swine, sheep, cattle and goats are stunned and/or slaughtered through electrical shocking.

Most of the time, these four methods do not work completely, and the animals are left half-alive in excruciating agony. After chickens spend the

wretched first 45 days of their lives in extremely overcrowded warehouses, they are shipped to slaughter, thousands of them in one truck. They are dumped onto conveyor belts and shackled by their legs. Oftentimes, while they are completely conscious, their throats are methodically slashed by machines or people as the birds move down the line. Chickens are usually still conscious as they are dumped into gigantic tanks of boiling water.

Cattle are first stunned by an electric shock of 300 volts and 2 amps, which is still often ineffective. Pigs and cattle are first strung up by their heels upside down on assembly lines. They are stabbed repeatedly, beheaded and/or slit on the throat. The blood is left to pour out of them while they kick and scream. They are usually still alive after these first attempts at slaughter.

Pigs are then thrown into huge wooden troughs with scalding water in order to remove their hair. The pigs can often be seen struggling, squealing and trying to swim, which is a particularly heartbreaking sight. The cows and pigs are then thrown onto conveyor belts and literally hacked into pieces. All of the gruesome, excruciatingly-painful ways that humans have thought of to kill as many living creatures as possible, in the shortest amount of time, render me repulsed and speechless. The people who are amused or entertained by this suffering are sick, and the people who deliberately turn away and tell me not to spoil their dinners are cowards who lack the spiritual, emotional and intellectual capacity to face up to the greater effects of their actions on sentient beings and Mother Earth. And the insensitive, selfish and unspeakable cruel nature of humans makes me ashamed to be one.

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