

# Animals for food and clothing | debate



Living things throughout the world have been abused by loved ones and strangers for no reason at all. Abuse has been apart of our world for as long as we can remember. It is a common thing to hear about in the news and is something that should not be so common. There are many types of abuse in the world, such as emotional, physical, and verbal. It is common to think that only humans suffer from those types of abuse but it is not exactly true.

Animals in this world suffer from emotional, verbal, and physical abuse just as much as humans do. It is even safe to say that in some cases they suffer much more then humans do from the abuse they deal with. One thing that humans have over animals when it comes to abuse is the ability to ask for help. Humans can ask family members, or any one else to help them get through the abuse they are dealt with. Animals, on the other hand, have no way to communicate and to ask for help. They have to put up what they dealt with which is truly upsetting and wrong. This paper is designed to broaden ones perspective on the things animal go through when being raised for food, clothing, and in slaughterhouses. It is also designed to explain how places such as factory farms pollute the world.

#### A. Animals Raised for Food

Throughout time animals have been seen as companions and a source of food. The only hope of survival for many, especially in the winter, was to eat meat. Meat gave them protein and was a source of food that was always readily available to be hunted. The days of animals being hunted in their natural environment for food are long gone. For the purpose of this paper it is important to understand how animals were killed for food back in the day and now. Animals are going from living in the wild the way they want to

before being killed for food to being mutilated and treated poorly so that the best piece of meat can be obtained. Raising animals for food has become a cruel and wrongful event.

These animals are put on special diets where they do not get all the nutrients they need to survive. They are neglected and mutilated. They are genetically manipulated, and put on drugs that cause chronic pain and crippling. These animals live in broken down, disease-ridden and filthy sheds. They live in such confined areas that it is impossible to move or get comfortable. They have to travel long distances in any kind of weather imaginable to get to the slaughterhouses. They have to travel these gruesome trips without food or water because it is too much trouble for the owner of the factory farms to supply food and water for the animals before they die (PETA).

Cows are one of the animals that are killed most often for their meat. Dairy cows, for example, have to deal with being pregnant for their whole life so that they will always be able to produce milk. They have to basically go through a never ending cycle of being pregnant and giving birth. They are kept chained to the barn stall for the entire time that they are able to give milk. Once they are emptied of all their milk they are sent to the slaughterhouse so that their meat can be used for hamburgers (Global Action Network). Calves have a different fate. Veal calves have the worst life of them all. They have to stand in a 22" by 54" crate which is their permanent home. In this cage they cannot turn around or lay down. The purpose of these crates is to prevent movement so that the calf's muscles are tender. The more tender the muscles, the more gourmet the veal is. These calves

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are also put on special diets. They are fed milk substitutes that do not contain iron or other essential vitamins. Up to fourteen weeks after birth these calves are slaughtered and the veal is sent to stores so we can eat it(veal: a cruel meal).

Horses are an animal that we humans would never think would be abused for food. Yet people around the world are taking an animal that is meant to be a companion to humans and slaughtering them for their meat. In the United States of America (USA) it is against the law in most states to slaughter horses, but there is still some states that are allowed to do it, Texas and Illinois are examples. These horses are kept in extreme conditions and not cared about. They are sent to the slaughterhouses in trailers that should fit four horses but are stuffed with so many more. The horse meat is used for humans to eat, and is used in dog food. Horses also used to be killed to be used to make glue. Most of the people that live in the areas where slaughtering horses is legal think it is wrong to murder horses and do not want to take part in it. They also find that eating horse meat is repulsive and just wrong (SHARK).

In Canada today there is about 18 million pigs being raised for pork. Sows, which are mother pigs, live a life like those of a dairy cow. They endure constant pregnancies and births, reaching a number of about 8 to 10 births in their life time. They live their entire life in farrowing crates which are just bigger than them and that have no bedding. They live on a concrete floor and have to deal with birth and pregnancy on that cold dirty floor. The piglets live in the farrowing crates for 2 weeks then are moved to a feeder pen. Some of the piglets, about 15%, die off due to the poor living conditions

they have to deal with. The others are sent to be castrated and have their tails cut off, teeth ground, and ears notched, which is all done without any pain medicine used. The piglets live in stalls that have manure pits underneath them; this means they are basically living in their own feces for their entire life. They live up to they reach market weight which is 250 pounds and then are shipped to slaughterhouses (Global Action Network).

Chickens are also commonly raised for food and by-products. Chickens raised for eggs are kept in wired cages measuring 40cm by 45 cm. These cages are not just to hold one chicken, but up to six chickens. The lack of space prevents the chickens from doing anything such as moving or stretching out their wings. Due to the conditions they live in, 1 in 5 chickens die. The other hens are killed after close to 2 years. Broiler chickens live in dark sheds that are extremely crowded. Living in these conditions cause most of the chickens to have hysteria, which causes stampeding and suffocation. The stress the chickens are put under can even bring upon cannibalism. These chickens go through this life for a few years before being sent to the slaughterhouses. (global action network)

## B. Animals Raised for Clothing

Animals have been used for clothing for as long as one can remember. The pioneers of this nation once hunted and killed animals but when they did this they used every part of the animal possible. They ate the meat and they took the fur and used it to make clothing so that they could stay warm. It is important to understand that those days are sadly over. Now animals are being raised just for the purpose of their furs and/or leathers. Millions of

animals are killed every year for the clothing industry (PETA). These animals endure great suffering so humans can have that nice leather jacket or fur coat to wear.

Fur farms are not a four star place for animals. The animals are kept in wire cages with four to five animals in each cage. These animals live in filthy cages and live lives not much better than those that live in factory farms. The owners of these fur farms do not want to put much money into them. They tend to want to keep the money for themselves and leave all the barns to ruin and fall apart. They also tend to pick the cheapest and cruellest ways to murder the animals for their fur (PETA). There are many fur farms in Canada that have been around since the beginning of the 1900's. These farms raise fox, mink, racoon, marten, and lynx. (Canadian Encyclopedia). Canadian fur farms have to operate under certain Codes of Practice developed by the Provincial and Federal Government. (appendix) (candian...)

The most common and valuable Canadian fur bearer is the mink (The Canadian Encyclopaedia). The mink is a member of the weasel family and was first raised in the Canada during 1866-67 (Canadian Encyc. P. 1). Mink are aggressive and have to be held with a certain care because they tend to bite often and have thick leather mitts. At first the mink are housed in wire cages with two or three of them per cage. Once they become adults they are housed one mink per cage (ency p. 2). These minks are properly fed their meat based diets and also the vitamins they need to survive (Ency. P. 3). They also receive proper bedding and nesting to survive (ency. P. 4). When the time comes the mink are killed by carbon monoxide poisoning and then

skinned for their furs. This type of practice, where the animal is given some dignity, is only given in Canada and not all animals are as lucky.

Animals in China are not so lucky. Most of the fur that is found in stores comes from Chinese fur farms due to the fact that China is one of the largest distributors of furs. Back in 2005, an investigation was done by the Human Society International in the Hebei province of Eastern China. The investigation by the Human Society International (2005) brought about the following evidence

Investigators witnessed a significant number of animals that were still alive when the skinning process began-starting with a knife at the rear of the belly and ending with the fur being pulled over the animal's head. After the skin was removed, investigators taped animals being thrown on a pile of other carcasses. These animals were still breathing, had a heartbeat, and continued moving and blinking for between five to ten minutes after their skin had been ripped from their bodies.

Before these animals even go through the skinning process they are forced to live in cramped cages with more than one animal in each cage. These cages are tiny enough and the more animals that are in it the more anxiety that builds up in the animals. They pace, nod, and circle their heads in such a way that shows they are helpless and scared.(human international). These animals are forced to live outdoors in all types of weather conditions. The mothers that give birth often kill their litters before they have the chance to live the life that she is going through.(PETA)

Leather is one of the most common clothing elements that all humans have. Leather made in Canada and the USA is made in conditions that are healthier for the animals than the farms in India. India is a larger supplier of the world's leather. Cows in India go through the process of having their throats cut and the skin ripped off their bodies while still alive (PETA). Leather is not a by-product of cows. It is a way of adding to the value of a dead animal at the slaughterhouse and adds support to the industry.(animal equality). Humans do not really understand how much leather is apart of their lives and the pain and anguish that the cows go through to give them that leather, if it is from India that is.

Wool is another common element used in clothing from animals. Most people think that the wool from sheep is obtained by shaving the sheep down. That is the proper safe and proper way to take care of the sheep and get the wool but is only done in countries such as Canada. Most of the wool that is used in clothing is from countries such as Australia. The domestically raised sheep are bred in such a way to allow them to produce more wool than needed which causes illness to the sheep (animal equality). The sheep then undergo “mulesing” which is a form of shearing that causes large amounts of skin and flesh to come off the body with the wool. This is all done without the presence of pain killers for them. These sheep are packed onto ships to from Australia to places such as East India. If they survive the voyage they are dragged off the trucks by their ears and legs and beaten until they dead and then skinned for their wool. (PETA)

### C. Slaughterhouses



The slaughterhouse is the last stop on the journey of life for an animal being raised for food and clothing. It is the end to their suffering in some ways but brings upon a horrific experience for them as well. The animals that painfully made it through the hardships in the factory/fur farms and then the journey to the slaughterhouse without food or water are dealt their last leg here. They go through being skinned and dismembered alive so that their meat and furs can be sold for human use. Slaughterhouses pick the easiest and cheapest ways to kill the animals. These ways include suffocation, electrocution, slicing of throats, and beating. After they go through these methods they are then hung upside down so that all the blood can drain out of their bodies, this is sometimes done even when the animal is still alive. Slaughterhouses have employees quitting left and right because the conditions are so bad and they don't want to torture the animals like that. Because of this there are low-paid workers with no experience at all killing the animals. This means the animals are going through more pain than ever because the employees do not clearly know what they are doing (Global Action Network).

#### D. Pollution Caused by Factory Farms

Factory farms do a great deal of harm on the environment and communities surrounding them. Due to living in small confined areas and having so much live stock in one barn the owners do not want to clean out the manure caused by the animals. Therefore it is funnelled down below into a holding tank until emptied. These holding tanks are usually poorly made and break often leaking the feces into the water system which then harms the citizens in the neighbouring townships (NRDC para1). These factory farms also emit

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harmful gasses, such as ammonia, into the air so that surrounding townships breathe it in. Factory farms emit greenhouse gasses into the air which cause the ozone to deteriorate and put harm on the whole world. It has been found that towns around factory farms have shown an increase in chronic sickness, brain damage, cancer, poisoned waterways, and death plagues.

In conclusion, there is so much that needs to be done to help stop and prevent the terrible things that animals have to go through. It is understandable to wear leather shoes or eat meat but there is an alternative to everything. Having two days a week where meat is cut out of daily meals saves a few more animals and brings down the pollutants released into the atmosphere. Even getting furs and leathers from places such as in Canada where the animal is treated with the dignity they deserve is a step up. When purchasing meats and clothing made from animals be sure to read the labels and know where you are getting it from before purchasing it. Humans can ask for help when being abused, animals cannot. Just looking into what you purchase to make sure the animal was treated with dignity is giving a voice to that animal who could not speak for itself and making a difference.