

Good News!

In a news release dated December 1, 1999, it was announced that the Federal Justice Minister, the Honourable Anne McLellan, was introducing an omnibus bill amending legislation dealing with cruelty to animals. Specific changes to the Criminal Code will:

- consolidate provisions related to cruelty to animals and no longer treat offences as property crimes;
- make it illegal to brutally or viciously kill animals;
- raise the penalty for intentional cruelty to a maximum of five years' imprisonment with no set limit for fines;
- provide that anyone convicted of animal cruelty can be prohibited from owning an animal for any period of time a judge considers appropriate, and
- give judges the authority to order anyone found guilty of animal cruelty to pay restitution to the animal welfare organization that cared for the animal.

In the release, Minister McLellan was quoted as saying, "Canadians have made it clear that they

expect the law to respond forcefully to callous disregard and contempt for the well-being of animals.

BAD NEWS!

Non of this improved protection will benefit animals being used for food (over 600 million slaughtered in 1998).

To quote the press release: "The amendments do not target or modify normal animal care practices (e.g., animal husbandry or practices governed by more specific legislation)." Callous disregard and contempt for the well-being of animals used in food production will not be responded to forcefully. They will continue to suffer from birth to death, for the sake of "cheap meat" and corporate profit. Is this what Canadians expect?



Pigs are very clean animals who take to the mud primarily to cool off and evade flies. Pigs are at least as intelligent as dogs, and, like dogs, are friendly and gregarious.



PHOTO CREDIT: BARRY SOORENKO

Danes sweat details of showers-for-pigs plan

REUTERS

COPENHAGEN — Legislation to set up compulsory showers for pigs in sties throughout Denmark has hit trouble as politicians row over the weight of animals to qualify.

Opposition politicians are threatening to block the minority government's bill unless it lifts the weight limit for pigs qualifying for showering to 30 kilos from 20 kilos, the idea being to cut costs for farmers by reducing the number of animals to be washed.

"The bill is designed as an animal welfare measure. Sweaty pigs love being showered in the sticky summer heat,, national pig production committee director Orla Groen Pedersen said Thursday.

Vancouver Sun, Friday, January 28, 2000



IMAGINE members of our Canadian legislative bodies fiercely debating at what stage hot and uncomfortable pigs must have a cooling shower! Try to imagine a debate over any one of the horrific features in the life of pigs used in North American Agribusiness.

Shamefully, on this continent, the attitude seems to be "Who Cares?" Who cares that breeding sows are confined to narrow crates, never to walk or turn around as long as they live? Who cares that little pigs are taken from their mothers and crowded, with thousands of others, into sheds? Who cares that they will live there

in filth, breathing ammonia fumes and biting one another in frustration? Who cares that they may die slowly and painfully on their way to slaughter from overheating or freezing on inadequately equipped trucks? That they may be terribly injured while being loaded or unloaded, and be punished for their misfortune by beating, electric prodding or being dragged off and left to die? Who cares that, finally, due to sloppy stunning, the pig, paralyzed, but fully conscious, is killed and made ready for our table?

We don't believe that nobody cares. People do care, but they do

not know what goes on. The supporters of agribusiness don't want us to know. When video catches a transport driver beating a food animal in order to get it back onto his truck, that video clip also records bystanders expressing their indignant fury. They are relieved when the animal is taken away by a humane organization. But, sadly, they are unaware that they have observed behaviour that is common practice in animal transport.

We need enforceable regulations in Canada to give our animals the protection they deserve.

SPCA TO MONITOR RODEO EVENTS



CONTROVERSY has erupted over 2 rodeo events to be held near Vancouver, BC. The wild cow milking and wild horse racing events slated for the Cloverdale Rodeo this summer have aroused the concern of the BC SPCA.

In late April, the Cloverdale Rodeo drafted a petition to the BC Supreme Court, asking it to prevent the SPCA from seizing the cows and horses used in the events. In March, the SPCA had told representatives that it could seek a court injunction to stop the 2 events, and that it could seize the animals in question if the events proceeded.

When the dust settled, the rodeo and the SPCA had struck a compromise: neither side would risk an injunction. The events would take place but be monitored closely by the SPCA.

"We have concerns about the

welfare of these animals," Stephen HUDDART of the BC SPCA said. "They're not wild animals really; they're range animals being raised for food. They're also quite different from the broncos which travel the rodeo circuit."

Huddart said the SPCA had received reports of abuse of certain animals, such as ear-biting by handlers to control animals during saddling. But the rodeo had taken positive steps to ensure humane treatment of the animals, he said.

"Rodeo officials have assured us that no amateur will be allowed to participate in these events. Also, the rodeo will strictly enforce the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association guidelines."

Likely the SPCA's monitoring of the Cloverdale Rodeo events will help prevent certain abuses. But the SPCA should not sanction rodeos, which are inherently abusive of animals.

Some humans enjoy the thrills and spills of rodeos, but if they were to look at rodeo events from the perspective of the animals, a different picture would emerge: Unbroken horses are saddled and forced to carry riders. If they fail to buck strenuously enough, they are goaded with spurs and whips. Range calves trying to escape are lassoed by the neck, thrown down and tied up as the crowd cheers.

The spectacle reinforces the dichotomy between treatment of farm animals and treatment of pets. Few pet owners could stomach rodeo-style events that featured dogs and cats.

The need for rodeos has disappeared; today's cowboys ride pickups and snowmobiles rather than horses. The SPCA should continue to speak up about rodeos, in which animals are abused for the amusement of humans.

Dean Lamont

It remains to be seen: Just what are these Canadian Professional Rodeo Association guidelines and exactly how will the SPCA enforce them?

Books Worth Reading



Animals Have Rights, Too

Michael W Fox
1991, The Continuum Publishing
Company
370 Lexington Ave, New York, NY, 10017
ISBN 0-8264-0523-1

Old MacDonald's Factory Farm

C. David Coates
1999, The Continuum Publishing
Company
370 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10017
ISBN 0 8264-0439-1

Mad Cowboy, plain truth from the cattle rancher who won't eat meat

Howard F Lyman with Glen Merzer
1998, Scribner
1230 Avenue of the Americas,
New York, NY
ISBN 0-684-84516-4

Animal Factories Revised Edition

Jim Mason and Peter Singer
1990, Harmony Books
Crown Publishers Inc.
201 East 50th St
New York, NY, 10022
ISBN 0-517-57751-8

May All Be Fed; Diet for a New World

John Robbins
1992, William Morrow and
Company, Inc
New York, NY
ISBN 0-688-11625-6

Eating with Conscience, The Bioethics of Food

Dr. Michael W. Fox
1997 NewSage Press
PO Box 607, Troutdale, OR
ISBN 0-939165-30-9

Ethics into Action, by Peter Singer

Race for Life, by Ruth Heidrich

Healthy School Lunch Action Guide, by Susan Campbell

WAYS TO HELP

You **can** help. Every bit helps.
Here are a few suggestions.

- **Inform yourself** on specific issues
- **Pass on information** or news-letters to someone you know
- **Contribute to welfare of hens.** Buy only free range eggs. They are available at most supermarkets as well as at specialty stores.
- **Donate** to your favourite farm animal group
- **Eat less meat.** Over the year, one less animal may suffer. You'll also be improving your own health and helping the environment.
- **Write letters** to the editor, to government departments and to politicians about animal welfare issues as they come to your notice.
- Monitor and **call in to talk shows** when food animal issues are involved.
- **Document animal abuses** at local farms or stockyards. While travelling, report abuses of animals during transport. Tell CETFA about it.
- **Arrange exhibits** at public and school libraries, malls, etc.
- **Give talks or show videos** to schools, churches or clubs.

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a pain and stress free life and a humane death.*

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