

WINTER 2000
Issue 34



NEWSLETTER

CANADIANS FOR ETHICAL TREATMENT OF FOOD ANIMALS

website: www.cetfa.com • email: care@cetfa.com

P.O. Box 18024
2225 West 41st Ave.
Vancouver, B.C.
V6M 4L3
(604) 261-3801

UBC Research Offers Hope for Food Animals

Several universities in Canada offer courses dealing with animal issues, and a few have animal welfare programs.

In 1997, the University of B.C. established its Animal Welfare Program. This fall, one of the professors came to a CETFA meeting with several grad students and gave us a presentation on their ongoing work.

At first I was skeptical about a program which is funded in part by organizations such as the Dairy Farmers of B.C., the Beef Cattle Industry Development Fund, and the B.C. Egg Producers Association. Also, Canadian universities 'use' millions of animals every year for questionable teaching and research purposes. However, after listening to presentations by Dr. David Fraser and his students, I was convinced that their program will help reduce the suffering inherent in factory farming systems.

One problem that animal activists often have to deal with is the undue importance given to 'experts' (often industry or government officials). As Charlotte Montgomery, author of a new book *Blood Relations* said in a recent talk, "In Europe, most people assumed that immobilizing sows to the extent that they cannot turn around is a bad thing. But in Canada, activists are asked to provide scientific evidence that sows need to turn around....Putting the onus on animal advocates to prove their case has been a very successful strategy for food animal industries in this country."

If experts such as Dr. Fraser and his students can prove that food animals are suffering unnecessarily, management practices may change. Better yet, if experts can prove that existing practices are negatively impacting industry's bottom line, food animal reforms can be achieved.

Take, for example, the painful hoof disease laminitis, the scourge of dairy herds across Canada. One of Dr. Fraser's students is studying the causes and treatment of this disease.

"Laminitis affects 55 to 90% of dairy cows," Erin Bell told us. "Milk producers are therefore interested, as the disease often leads to poor milk yields and, in some cases, to culling of cows."

"Laminitis, she told us is an inflammation of the lamina, the soft tissue inside the hoof. Affected cows limp and, in serious cases, have trouble supporting their own weight.

What causes laminitis? Some would answer, "Factory farming". Certainly, keeping overweight, unhappy cows standing on hard surfaces for long periods of time would almost guarantee hoof problems. As Erin explained in one of the pamphlets from UBC program, "My theory is that their stalls, floor surfaces, distance walked to be milked and other welfare factors will influence the incidence of laminitis."

Another student in the program was studying the effects of late separation of dairy calves: "Standard practice in the dairy industry is to separate calves from their mothers several hours after birth. This saves money and reduces land requirement, but the welfare of the cow and the calf are impaired and their health is compromised," Frances Flower told us.

In her research, mothers and their calves were kept together for 2 weeks, which led to better weight gain and improved social skills later on.

Art Cebalos is studying changes in adult cow housing practices to improve comfort and cleanliness. Varying stall dimensions, different bedding types (including cow mattresses!) and other

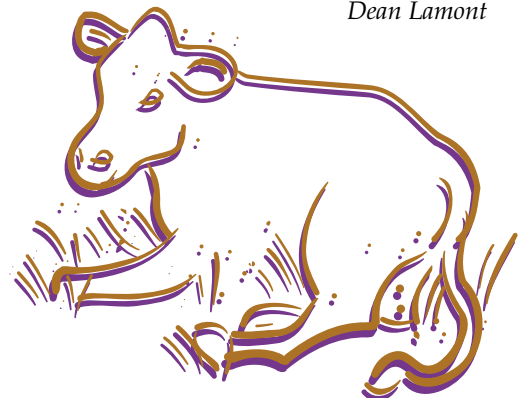
factors were being studied. Understandably, this research was funded by the dairy industry, which realizes that a happier cow will give more milk and have fewer problems.

Listening to the presentations by Dr. Fraser and his students, I was struck by the simple fact that minor changes in management practices will often give significant benefits to food animals. For example, laminitis can be greatly reduced if cows' hooves are trimmed twice per year. "Unfortunately," Erin Bell said, "most hoof trimmers are only called to treat a problem instead of to prevent it." However, if her research can prove that modifications to existing methods will save farmers money in the long run, management practices will change.

Dr. Fraser stressed the important role of groups such as CETFA: "We are researchers and information generators; groups such as yours are information multipliers."

University-based animal welfare programs can be potent allies for animal advocacy groups, to help combat what Charlotte Montgomery described as "the often successful attempts by food animal industries in Canada to marginalize and discount animal activists."

Dean Lamont



“Be Kind to Hens”



“The recent “Be Kind to Hens” campaign by hamburger giant McDonald’s could put pressure on other food companies and on farmers to change rearing practices that critics say are cruel to animals, experts said.”

From an article by Sue Schwendener, in the Manitoba Cooperator, Sept 14, 2000



This is an encouraging small step towards recognition that food animals deserve freedom from suffering.

The organization PETA has brought public pressure to bear on McDonald’s, in the US, to the point where the organization has acted to protect its benevolent image. Recently, CETFA joined with a large group of animal welfare organizations in urging McDonald’s Canada to do the same.

Quotes from McDonald’s American Animal Welfare Guiding Principles

“McDonald’s believes in the ethical treatment of animals and that animals should be raised, transported and slaughtered in an environment free from cruelty, abuse and neglect.”

To ensure the proper treatment of laying hens used for egg production, McDonald’s professes to have established the following goals:

“Goal: By end of year 2001 McDonald’s will purchase eggs from producers that support our corporate guidelines related to animal welfare and the Scientific Advisory Committee recommendations. Specifically, we require dedicated facilities to achieve a minimum of 72 square inches of space per bird, providing a minimum of 4 inches of feeder space per bird. It is McDonald’s recommendation for non-dedicated facilities to achieve these same minimum requirements.

Goal: Effective immediately, all new construction of laying hen operations for dedicated facilities will be constructed in such a manner as to comply with minimum space requirements of 72 square inches per bird and 4 inches of feeder space per bird. It is McDonald’s recommendation that non-dedicated facilities follow the same guidelines for future construction.

Goal: By the end of year 2001, for shell eggs that are sourced from non-dedicated suppliers, we will implement a purchasing preference policy to buy shell eggs from those suppliers that are able to comply with the minimum space requirements.

Goal: Effective immediately, McDonald’s will not support the withdrawal of food or water to facilitate molting as it violates our guiding principles for animal welfare. We will work with producers and researchers to promote alternatives to feed withdrawal with the understanding that alternative methods will take time to develop. In the interim, we will ask our dedicated facilities to discontinue this practice as soon as practical, and no later than the end of Q1, 2001. It is McDonald’s recommendation for non-dedicated facilities to achieve this same status.

Goal: Effective immediately, McDonald’s will not support the unregulated practice of “beak trimming” as it violates our guiding principles for animal welfare. We will include in our laying hen guidelines specific requirements for beak trimming established by the Scientific Advisory Committee of the UEP, and hold producers accountable for compliance.”

Suffering en Route – “Found Dead” Animals

According to figures provided by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, during 1999, the following animals arrived at federally inspected slaughterhouses either dead or ‘not acceptable for slaughter’: 494 cattle, 151 calves, 18,785 swine and 3,452,940 poultry. Although these animals represent a small percentage of the over 600 million animals slaughtered annually, each one of the nearly 3.5 million individual animals experienced suffering, as did the many animals who, though injured, made it to the killing floor, and so do not appear in the data provided by the Agency. Many of these would be “downers”, those so badly hurt that they could not walk off the vehicle.

To quote from accompanying information:

“‘Found dead’ animals represent those which are found to be dead at the time of delivery to the abattoir or those which have died in the holding pens prior to slaughter. While stress of transportation may contribute to the death of these animals, there are certainly other factors which contribute to their death, particularly in the red meat species. Such factors as the presence of disease or the genetic makeup of the animal will contribute significantly toward a reduction in the animals’ ability to withstand transportation stress.

“Animals condemned at antemortem are usually condemned because of illness resulting in extremes of temperature and other symptoms which result in an animal considered unfit for human consumption. These animals are destroyed and not permitted into the human food chain. In contrast, most animals which arrive as ‘downers’ would be sent for immediate slaughter provided other physical attributes are within acceptable limits.”

W O R T H R E A D I N G

Blood Relations: Animals, Humans, and Politics

Charlotte Montgomery

2000, published by Between the Lines

720 Bathurst Street, Suite #404 Toronto, ON M5S 2R4

ISBN 1-896357 – 39 3

I found this book to be an eye-opener.

Ms Montgomery has managed to wrestle into a very readable book, the enormous complexity of the animal rights/ animal welfare issue in Canada. She also manages to convey the depth of commitment, and the ethical considerations that drive those who work in the field.

Her coast-to-coast research embraced the entire spectrum: from terrorists, through activists and lobbyists to the established and socially acceptable societies empowered by law to act on behalf of animals. She seems to have missed no-one, from a middle class woman who has liberated and rehabilitated hundreds of abused dogs, to Tina Harrison of Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals, to representatives of provincial SPCAs.

In *The Outlaws*, the author puts in perspective the world of the activists who, when other remedies prove useless, are willing to break the law and risk being jailed and branded as terrorists. In *Polite Company*, we are given an insight into the politics of the government-supported and publicly-funded SPCAs and Humane Societies and of the work of individuals within these organizations.

The chapter on *Agriculture* presents a good picture of the abuses endured by food animals and of the efforts of those who are trying to make progress which, according to one expert, “is excruciatingly slow”. The positions of farmers, agricultural officials, welfare scientists, welfare organizations, and many others are well represented, with informative quotes from all.

Ms Montgomery also thoroughly describes the harm done to animals in the fields of research, hunting, agriculture and entertainment and the efforts at alleviation made by concerned people.

I recommend this book as valuable reference, useful to any individual or group.

Dorothy Hahn

An Animal Sanctuary

Peggy Schmid is a long standing supportive member of CETFA. Over the years, on their acreage in Langley, she and her late husband, Ernst, offered a loving home to farm animals and pets. Upon their deaths, the animals have been buried in a graveyard on the property and many of them have been the subject of memorial contributions to CETFA.

As Peggy says, "All departed lived out their lives up until the time arrived when illness struck and our veterinarians were unable to save them, when they were humanely put down. All the goats lived into their teens, also the dogs, cats, some hens & roosters, turtles and sheep. The horses were in their late twenties or early thirties, except Chaukie, who must have been at least 42 or 43.

"We still have one rooster and two hens, two doves, one very old duck, four cats and the wee dog to care for.

"I do know that each and every one enriched our lives."

ACTION CORNER

TAKE a copy of the American McDonald's 'goals' to your local McDonald's and say you want McDonald's Canada to require the same standards.

SEND a copy to McDonald's Canada asking them when they are going to adopt similar standards.

Mr Peter Beresford, Executive Vice-President
McDonald's Restaurants of Canada, Ltd
McDonald's Place
Toronto, ON M3C 3L4

With the calling of the recent federal election, the omnibus bill amending legislation dealing with cruelty to animals (see our Spring Newsletter) has died on the order paper. The Federal Government needs to know that we want the present legislation to be improved. We want that bill to pass.

Please write again to the Justice Minister to demand that the legislation be introduced and passed.

Hon. Anne McLellan
Justice Minister
284 Wellington, 4th floor
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H8

(A copy to your MP will ensure that your request will be noted, and hopefully supported, by someone who needs your vote.)

NOTE: Postage is not necessary for letters to a member of Parliament. Call 1-800-463-6868 for the name and address of your MP.

In Memory of these Animals:

Budgies: Bidy, Fritz, Buddy, Nickie

Cats: Penny, Grey Beard, Groucho, Stumpie, Shedian, BJ, Inky

Dogs: Mij, Kip, Tad

Ducks: Whitey, Jeremia, Trapper, Hawkeye, Mother, Trooper, Dapper, Clemintine, Matilda Abigail, Jezabel, Duke, Dutchess Tubbs, Yackie, Tyke.

Goats: Lisa, Heidi, Fritz, Trudy, Trinket, Briget, Monique, Jake, Chico

Gerbils: Snoopie, Bitsy, Betsy

Guinea Pigs: Puffy, Kelly, Squeakie PS

Hampsters: Patches, Misty

Hens: Giblets, Nick Nack, Goodie Two Shoes, Two Toes, Rockie, Speckles, Hanna, Henny Penny, Crossbow, Bidy, Solo, Cock-a-doodle doo and others

Horses: Cricket, Toby, Chawkie, Lisa

Mice: Whiskers, Smokie, Duffy

Pigeons: Ike, Pj, Lucky, & others

Rabbits: Tammy, Pogo, Hopie, Bumpkin, Buba, BunBun, Bugs

Quail: Dan, Elsie and others

Sheep: Petra

Turtles: TuTu & ToeToe

In our Fall Newsletter, we asked you to tell us of sources of humanely produced food.

Diana Knowles, of Cobble Hill BC, sends us this list and writes:

"I have enjoyed meat from these three farms and have found them to be of the highest quality. I have also visited the farms and have been impressed by the treatment of the animals and the caring attitude of the owners."

Cherry Point Fold, Wayland Read
851 Cherry Pt. Rd
Cobble Hill BC, V0R 1L0
(250) 743-2279
Highland cattle beef

Cowichan Bay Farm, Lyle Young
1560 Cowichan Bay BC
(250) 746-7884
Pasture raised chickens

Kilrenny Farm,
Russell & Deborah Fahlman
1470 Cowichan Bay Rd,
RR3, Cobble Hill BC, V0R 1L0
(250) 743-9019
Home grown chicken & turkey and free range eggs.



Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Food Animals

Annual Membership
\$10.00

Application for New ___ Renewal ___ Membership

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

We believe that animals raised for food should have a pain and stress free life and a humane death.

I might be able to help with:

- Writing Letters
- Assisting at information tables
- Maintaining Website

Please make your membership fee payable to:

Canadians for the Ethical Treatment of Food Animals
Box 18024, 2225 West 41 Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6M 4L3