

## EGGS

95% of eggs come from hens imprisoned in “battery cages.” Usually between 4 and 11 birds live cramped in a wire cage the size of a folded newspaper – even though each bird has a wingspan of 32 inches. These cages are tiered, so feces and urine fall onto the animals below. Chickens’ feet often grow around the slanted wire floors of their cages because the birds are packed so tightly together they cannot even move.

Almost all egg-laying hens, even “free-range” birds, have their beaks cut off to prevent cannibalism and injury from stress-induced fighting. Many birds are also “force molted” – their food and water are removed for up to 2 weeks to shock their bodies into another egg-laying cycle.

Hens are killed when they can no longer produce eggs profitably. Baby chicks are hatched to replace them. If the babies are males, and thus unable to lay eggs, they are killed at only a few days of age. Approximately 280 million male baby chicks are killed every year by egg industry hatcheries.

Unless your eggs come from companion chickens that freely run around your yard, you are most likely supporting intense animal cruelty every time you buy or eat an egg – about 26 hours of caged cruelty per egg, to be exact. Consuming eggs, even “free-range” eggs, supports de-beaking, forced molting, killing of baby male chicks, cruel transport, and eventual slaughter of the laying hens.

## DAIRY

Most cows used for dairy live the majority of their lives in concrete stalls and attached to automated milking machines that pump them for milk three times a day.

Cows are repeatedly impregnated to make them produce the maximum amount of milk. Once a year, they are either “serviced” by a bull or artificially inseminated on what the dairy industry commonly refers to as a “rape rack.” Their calves, if male, are usually sent to live in a veal crate. Female calves are either raised to replace their moms or are sent to be raised for veal. Without the supply of calves from the dairy industry, the veal industry would not thrive.

After 4 - 6 pregnancies and 4 - 6 years of milk production, dairy cows are sent to slaughter. Healthy cows live 20 - 25 years. 10% of cows are so sick after 4 - 6 years of commercial milk production that they cannot even walk. These “downers” are literally dragged or pushed into slaughterhouses by forklifts.

## MEAT

Every year in the USA, over 10 billion land animals and billions more aquatic animals are slaughtered. An additional one billion land animals die every year from stress-induced disease or injury before slaughter. The average non-vegan will eat about 40 land animals and about 55 aquatic animals every year.

Fish often experience decompression when caught. Their eyes can pop out of their heads and their stomachs can be pushed out through their mouths. Fish have developed nervous systems, like humans and other land animals, and suffer when they are hooked or netted and forced to die of suffocation when pulled from the water.

Fishing is raping our world’s oceans – killing not only fish, but other life as well. Shrimp trawling has devastated sea turtle populations worldwide.

Industrial fishing results in enormous “by-catch” – non-target animals caught (and usually killed), but tossed overboard and not counted in a ship’s quota. By-catch can range from 50% of the catch in long-line fishing to as high as 90% of the catch in drift netting.

90% of all land animals killed for meat are chickens. Cutting out red meat but increasing chicken and fish consumption will only increase animal suffering.

Chickens killed for meat suffer the same painful de-beaking as egg-laying hens, but they usually are not in battery cages – they must live in filthy, crowded sheds sometimes with as many as 100,000 birds (similar to the conditions “free-range” hens live in). Chickens cannot establish a pecking order over about 100 birds, so the crowding and stress leads to constant fighting, causing injury and often death.

Most pigs are raised in factory farms. They live their lives in crates stacked on top of one another, or in crowded group stalls. When they are piglets, their tails are cut off to avoid tail-biting due to boredom and stress. They also have their teeth pulled out or ground off to reduce loss from fighting caused by stress. Males are also castrated without anesthesia when they are babies to make them less aggressive.

Mother pigs live much of their 5 year lives in “gestation crates.” They give birth and nurse their young on grated steel floors – literally turned into baby-making machines.

Pigs often develop pneumonia from living in their own waste. The ammonia from their urine burns their sensitive noses and causes many piglets to die.

All land animals used for eggs, dairy, and meat are transported to slaughter when they are no longer profitable or when they reach slaughter weight. The animals are often forced to travel for several days without food or water and are usually exposed to the elements. Animals in the middle of the transport truck can die from suffocation while animals on the outside can freeze to death, and sometimes even freeze to the steel sides of the truck, in the winter.

Most animals are slaughtered on an assembly line – with little attention given to each suffering individual. Chickens and turkeys have their legs forced into shackles before their necks are funneled between two whirling blades. If their necks miss the blades, as often happens, they are scalded to death in the feather removal tank. Pigs, cows, and sheep are usually shackled and hoisted by one leg. As the kill line moves, they are first stuck in the chest or throat with a knife, then they have their limbs cut off, and finally their skin is ripped from their bodies. They are sometimes still alive when this happens.

## SOME ALTERNATIVES

Try Ener-G Egg Replacer in cooking and Fantastic Foods Tofu Scramble instead of scrambled eggs. There are many vegan ice cream, milk, and meat substitutes that are comparable in price and taste great! Try Boca Burgers, Yves and Lightlife Veggie Dogs and Cold Cuts, Soy Delicious and Tofutti “ice cream”, Imagine Foods’ Rice Dream moon pies and vegan pudding, Silk Soy Milk, and even Veganaise! Visit Trader Joe’s, Whole Foods, Puget Consumers Co-Op, Madison Market, or other natural foods stores. Most supermarkets now have natural foods sections or at least carry soy milk, fake meats, etc.

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