



He's been skinned all the way to his head
his legs have been cut off
... and he's still conscious

Only you can stop it

Imagine being hit on the head and finding yourself dazed but still fully conscious. A chain is attached to one of your legs and you're hoisted upside down onto an assembly line. As you lash out in terror, gigantic clippers are used to snip off the lower parts of your arms and legs. Completely helpless, you feel workers cutting into your thighs, belly, and sides as they strip your skin from your legs to your neck. Even with the skin peeled back all the way up to your head you are conscious enough to struggle.

Atrocities like these are happening to thousands of cattle every week in slaughterhouses in Washington state and throughout the US, according to numerous sworn affidavits from meat industry workers. One Washington slaughterhouse worker says, "Cows can get ten minutes down the line and still be alive. All the hide is stripped out down to the neck there." According to another, "Workers open the hide on the legs, the stomach, the neck, they cut off the feet while the cow is breathing. It makes noise. It's looking around." Still another says, "Their eyes look like they are popping out. I feel bad that I have to do my job on them."

Hidden camera videotape obtained by the Humane Farming Association (HFA)—and recently broadcast on television—shows, among other atrocities, live cows dangling upside down from a moving conveyor, animals being trampled, and a conscious cow having an electric prod held in her mouth.

The Worst Possible Way to Die

How can atrocities like these be taking place in the new millennium and in the United States of America? The answer is simple. A single US pig slaughterhouse can kill as many as 144,000 pigs a week—well over 20,000 a day. When a slaughterhouse boosts the speed of its killing line, it also boosts its profits.

With animals whizzing by at the rate of one every few seconds, workers report that they cannot ensure that each animal is rendered unconscious. But workers say they'll be fired if they stop the production line.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which is entrusted with enforcing the federal Humane Slaughter Act, knows about these abuses but is doing nothing to stop them. According to the US Secretary of Agriculture, it is not a priority. A better explanation is that USDA is charged with both regulating and *promoting* the meat industry.

USDA was made aware of widespread violations more than two years ago when it was provided copies of investigator Gail Eisnitz's landmark book *Slaughterhouse*. This important book documents meat industry abuses based on interviews with workers and USDA meat inspectors representing more than two million hours on the kill floor.

Attorney General Gregoire: Please Enforce The Law

At the Wallula slaughter plant owned by IBP, the world's largest meat packer, more than a dozen workers have courageously come forward. They revealed to investigators that, for years, they have skinned and dismembered conscious cows. "I've seen thousands and thousands of cows go through the slaughter process alive," says one plant worker. "If I see a live animal," says another, "I cannot stop the line. Because the supervisor has told us that you have to work on a cow that's alive."

Like the U.S. Congress, Washington's legislature has passed laws requiring that animals be rendered unconscious before they are butchered. But the State has yet to enforce these laws. As a result, slaughterhouses can violate the law with impunity.

Clearly, now is the time for the State to step in and enforce the law.

Help Stop the Abuses Now

HFA and more than a dozen animal protection, consumer, labor and other public interest organizations recently joined forces to formally petition State Attorney General Christine Gregoire. We are asking her to investigate the allegations of animal cruelty at IBP and enforce state laws at that plant. But the Attorney General also needs to hear from you.

Call Attorney General Christine Gregoire at (360) 753-6200, fax her at (360) 664-0228, e-mail her at emailago@atg.wa.gov, or write her at:

1125 Washington St. SE
Olympia, Washington 98504

Respectfully ask the Attorney General to investigate the allegations of animal abuse at the IBP-Wallula plant and to vigorously enforce all state laws that apply to IBP.

Please do it before one more helpless cow is needlessly tortured.

For more information or to make a tax-deductible contribution towards this campaign, contact the Humane Farming Association, P.O. Box 3577, San Rafael, CA 94912 · www.hfa.org