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Corporate Campaigns

Victory: PETA Wins 'Murder King' Campaign!

On June 28, 2001, PETA called off its "Murder King" campaign, which involved provocative ads; celebrity support from **Alec Baldwin, James Cromwell, and Richard Pryor**; and—with the help of activists—more than 800 protests at Burger King restaurants worldwide. Since the campaign ended, Burger King has continued to lead the fast-food industry toward improving animal welfare.

"People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) claimed victory last June after more than [800] 'Murder King' protest rallies spread over five months prompted Burger King, the world's second-largest fast-food chain, to announce new guidelines for its meat and egg suppliers, including extra water, wing room, and fresh air for egg-laying hens and mandatory stunning of pigs and cattle prior to slaughter. Surprise inspections by Burger King auditors will help to ensure that suppliers treat animals humanely right up to the end. McDonald's established similar guidelines a year earlier, following a PETA campaign that included distribution of 'Unhappy Meals' with ['wounded,'] ['bloody'] farm-animal toys."
—*Discover Magazine*, Jan. 2002

PETA called off its "Murder King" campaign when the company agreed to do the following things:

- Conduct announced and unannounced inspections of its slaughterhouses, including chicken slaughterhouses, and take action against facilities that fail inspections
- Establish animal-handling verification guidelines for all the slaughterhouses of its suppliers
- Confine no more than five hens in each battery cage, require that the birds be able to stand fully upright, and require the presence of two water drinkers per cage (although confining five hens to a tiny cage is still horribly cruel, this number is two less than the industry standard and represents a marked improvement for animals)
- Stop purchasing from suppliers who force-molt hens (i.e., starve them for up to two weeks in order to force them to lay more eggs)
- Develop auditing procedures for the handling of "broiler" chickens
- Institute humane handling procedures for chickens at slaughterhouses
- Begin purchasing pork from farms that do not confine sows to stalls

Burger King also petitioned the U.S. Department of Agriculture to enforce the Humane Slaughter Act.

Update: Burger King Adopts New Industry-Leading Animal Welfare Policies in 2007

In the years following PETA's successful "Murder King" campaign, PETA continued to hold behind-the-scenes discussions with Burger King about how the company could further improve its animal welfare guidelines. In March 2007, Burger King announced a groundbreaking new plan, placing it at the forefront of the fast-food industry with regard to animal welfare. The company committed to the following:

- Immediately begin purchasing some pig flesh from suppliers that do not use **cruel gestation crates**—metal enclosures that confine mother pigs and are so restrictive that the animals cannot even stretch a limb or take a step—and double that amount by the end of 2007
- Immediately begin purchasing some eggs laid by hens who are not confined to **tiny wire "battery cages,"** and more than double that amount by the end of 2007
- Issue a statement to its egg suppliers stating that it will give purchasing preference to those that do not use battery cages
- Issue a statement to its chicken flesh suppliers stating that it will give purchasing preference to those that use or switch to "controlled-atmosphere killing" (CAK), the least cruel method of chicken and turkey slaughter in existence




PETA applauds Burger King for this groundbreaking step and will continue to work with the company to improve its animal welfare requirements.

Tragically, some of the biggest fast-food companies, like KFC, have refused to make even minimal animal welfare changes. For information about PETA's current campaign against KFC—urging it to eliminate the worst abuses suffered by the more than 850 million chickens killed for its buckets each year—visit KentuckyFriedCruelty.com.




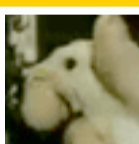
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