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THE 'HUMANE SLAUGHTER' MYTH

In January 2009, Animal Aid started to film secretly inside Britain's slaughterhouses. We have now gathered footage from seven 'red meat' establishments - all of which were



randomly selected - and have found terrible suffering and many breaches of animal welfare laws in six of them. The problems are serious and widespread. Our films reveal animals being kicked, slapped, stamped on, and picked up by fleeces and ears and thrown into stunning pens. We recorded animals being improperly stunned and going to the knife while still conscious.

We are calling for CCTV to be installed in all UK slaughterhouses and for the footage to be made available to independent parties outside of the slaughterhouse. We also want better independent training, regular retraining and assessment, rigorous enforcement of the laws and an end to those with outstanding convictions for violence or animal cruelty working in slaughterhouses.

As a result of our investigations, one slaughterhouse lost its supermarket contract, another has closed permanently, and legal action has either been taken or is underway against nine workers and four slaughterhouse operators.

We are making progress (see below) but even if all our key recommendations were enacted - and we will continue to campaign for their introduction - only the worst cruelties would be stopped. Even when acting within the law, slaughterhouses are places of fear and suffering, and the only way to prevent this is to stop eating meat.

Three Slaughterhouses Exposed

Between January and June 2009, we filmed secretly inside three randomly chosen slaughterhouses: JV Richards in Cornwall, AC Hopkins in Somerset and Pickstock in Derbyshire. At two of the three, we found terrible animal suffering and breaches of the law.

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 [Watch the 10-minute film](#)

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Organic Slaughterhouse: Tom Lang Ltd

And it's not just 'mainstream' slaughterhouses where serious animal welfare failings were documented. In October 2009, we secretly filmed at Tom Lang Ltd, an organic Soil Association-approved abattoir that kills pigs and sheep. Conditions there were so bad that the Meat Hygiene Service immediately suspended three workers and began building a case for a prosecution. At this slaughterhouse, we filmed pigs being kicked in the face, sheep being picked up and thrown, and the heads of sheep being cut off before the statutory time had elapsed - and while they were, in all probability, still alive.

 [See the 6-minute film](#)

 [See the full investigation](#)

Organic Slaughterhouse: ABP Sturminster

In January and February 2010, we filmed at another Soil Association-accredited slaughterhouse, this time in Dorset. Our footage from ABP Sturminster Newton revealed more abuses and legal breaches. Once again, the MHS was forced to take action and has begun building a case for the prosecution of at least one worker.

 [Watch the 2-minute film](#)

 [See the full investigation](#)

J H Lambert, Norfolk

Our filming at this Norfolk slaughterhouse in March and April 2010 revealed still more breaches of the welfare laws, including sheep being dragged by their heads, forcibly thrown into the stun room and picked up by their fleeces and ears. Pigs and sheep suffered improper stunning. Three workers now face prosecution.

FIND US ON:




 [Watch the 3-minute film](#)

 [See the full investigation](#)

A & G Barber

Animal Aid filmed inside A&G Barber slaughterhouse in Purleigh, Essex in April 2010. The film shows scenes of extreme and deliberately-inflicted suffering, including use of electric tongs on pigs' snouts, tails and in their open mouths. One worker and the slaughterhouse operator face prosecution, and – since losing its contract with a German meat producer as a direct consequence of our investigation – A&G Barber has been forced to close.

 [See the 6-minute film](#)

 [See the full investigation](#)

Animal Aid's Key Aims and Recommendations

- CCTV should be installed in all slaughterhouses to help vets and independent parties monitor activities, to support training and retraining, and to provide evidence for prosecutions. The footage must be made available to independent parties outside of the slaughterhouse and preferably a panel of people including a representative from Animal Aid.
- All slaughterers should have appropriate, independent training and undergo retraining and rigorous assessment every three years.
- There should be fixed criteria for what constitutes a 'fit and proper person' and those with outstanding convictions for violence, sexual assault or animal cruelty should be prevented from becoming slaughterers.
- The Food Standards Agency should take full responsibility for enforcement of animal welfare regulations, as well as food hygiene legislation.
- Remedial Action Notices should be introduced for welfare breaches.
- The same sanctions should be introduced for welfare breaches as exist for hygiene breaches.
- The revocation of a slaughter licence should be permanent.

Progress

- Our call for CCTV to be installed in all UK slaughterhouses has now been endorsed by the Chief Executive of the industry's regulator, the Food Standards Agency. We are also supported by the RSPCA, Compassion in World Farming and the Soil Association.
- Nine men have been suspended or have had their slaughter licences revoked.
- Legal action has either been taken or is underway against those nine workers and four slaughterhouse operators at five abattoirs.

- Sainsbury's has suspended its contract with ABP Sturminster Newton.
- A&G Barber's lost its German contract and was forced to close.
- Bristol University is using our footage to train vets and Soil Association inspectors.
- The industry, government agencies and veterinary bodies are now taking part in ongoing discussions about how to implement changes and bring about improvements in animal welfare in slaughterhouses.
- Coverage in the national media has brought these issues to millions of people: [read the *Daily Mail* article](#)

Action

- [Help end the suffering by choosing a meat-free diet](#)
- Urge family and friends to watch our films (see above)
- [Order a free Stop Slaughterhouse Suffering action pack](#)
- [Download and collect signatures on our petition calling for CCTV to be mandatory in all slaughterhouses](#)
- [Make a donation to help us continue our investigations](#)
- [Join Animal Aid to help support all of our campaigns against animal cruelty](#)

KEY RESOURCES

 [Order a Free Stop Slaughterhouse Suffering Action Pack](#)

 [Briefing sheet on slaughtermen training and assessment](#)

 [Briefing sheet on CCTV in slaughterhouses](#)

RECENT CAMPAIGN NEWS

[Stop this cruelty and law-breaking \(08-10-2010\)](#)

[Slaughterhouse Closed After Animal Aid Exposé \(18-08-2010\)](#)

[Advertising watchdog 'strikes a ringing blow on behalf of slaughterhouse cruelty' \(23-07-2010\)](#)

[Essex slaughterhouse exposé finds 'unbearable cruelty and suffering' \(27-06-2010\)](#)

['Cruel' Norfolk Slaughterhouse Exposed \(06-05-2010\)](#)

[Prosecutions Demanded for Slaughterhouse Cruelty: Animal Aid Releases New Covert Film \(13-04-2010\)](#)

[The Food Standards Agency Backs CCTV Campaign \(04-03-2010\)](#)

[Three workers suspended and CCTV installed in organic abattoir following cruelty allegations \(11-12-2009\)](#)

[Humane Slaughter in British Abattoirs a 'Sham' \(28-08-2009\)](#)

[More controversy over religious slaughter \(22-06-2009\)](#)

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