

Chicken meat production... : a price that's too painful to pay... / Friends of Animals Under Abuse (FAUNA).

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Friends of Animals Under Abuse.

Publication/Creation

Cardiff : Friends of Animals Under Abuse, [ca.2002]

Persistent URL

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CHICKEN MEAT PRODUCTION



PITIFUL CONDITIONS INSIDE A TYPICAL BROILER SHED - Photo F.A.U.N.A. (South Wales)

Every year over 700 million chickens are produced in the UK for their meat. Most chickens destined for the table are intensively reared in squalid conditions, fed growth-promoting antibiotics and slaughtered at 7 weeks of age when they are still baby birds. The natural life span of a chicken is 5-10 years.

They are crammed into evil-smelling windowless sheds and kept together in huge numbers. One shed may contain from 15,000 to 100,000 birds.

These chickens known as 'broilers', are reared only for their meat. Due to selective breeding and growth promoters these birds have been bred to put on the maximum amount of weight in the shortest time - their suffering is a direct result of the poultry industry's desire for quick profits.

A PRICE THAT'S TOO PAINFUL TO PAY...

...A TALE OF SUFFERING AND MISERY



CRAMMED AND CRATED OFF TO SLAUGHTER - Photo FAUNA

Day old chicks are installed in broiler sheds on a layer of woodshavings. At first, when the chicks are small they have plenty of room to move around, but as the chickens grow they have less and less room. The unnatural growth rate results in heart attacks, fatty livers or kidneys, brittle or crippled bones. As enormous strain is put on young growing bones, grotesque leg and feet deformities frequently result. After five weeks, their rapid growth rate leaves them with no alternative but to struggle towards the feed and water points in competition with the tens of thousands of other birds. Many don't survive, every year over 36 million chickens die in broiler units before reaching slaughter-age, from heat, stress, dehydration, starvation and disease. Dead birds decompose in the litter on the shed floor. Living birds peck at their corpses.

Broiler sheds are never cleaned out during the 7 week lifetime of any one 'crop' of birds, so the litter becomes damp, solid and contaminated with droppings. By the end of their brief 7-week lives, these genetically manipulated baby giants sag down onto the ammonia-ridden floor. The chickens can 'burn' themselves when they rest on the litter causing painful hock burns, breast blisters and ulcerated feet.

CATCHING AND TRANSPORT

As if they haven't suffered enough, the infant birds still have to endure the nightmare of catching, transport and slaughter. This involves a gang of 'catchers', who seize the terrified birds by their feet, carrying as many as five birds at a time to a waiting lorry. With their frail legs and weak hearts they are fiercely stuffed and crammed into crates. Lids are violently slammed, with wings, legs or heads trapped. Rough handling results in broken bones. The operation is carried out at high speed with little or no regard for the welfare of the birds. Crates often get damaged and some birds fall from moving lorries and are killed on the roads. Transportation lorries are densely overcrowded. Over 2 1/2 million chickens die on the way to the slaughterhouse - victims of shock, stress, heat, cold, suffocation and injury. Chicken pieces on sale, (legs and wings) will often have been removed from injured or diseased birds at the processing stage.

SLAUGHTER - A CRUEL END

Slaughter is highly stressful and can cause much pain to the birds, especially those suffering from hip and leg injuries. At the slaughterhouse, birds are wrenched from their crates, their feet are thrust through metal shackles and they are taken on a moving shackle line, hung upside down, towards their death. The birds hang upside down for up to three minutes before being electrically stunned by machinery which often fails to render the birds unconscious. The stunning of poultry is ineffective and unreliable. According to the law, poultry should be stunned to render them insensitive to pain before death occurs. This is done by bringing their heads into contact with an electrically charged water bath - some birds lift their heads and miss the stunner completely. An automatic knife then slits the birds' throats, but very large or very small chickens will get cut in the breast or head. Millions of birds enter the automatic throat cutter while fully conscious. If they miss the automatic knife they can enter the scalding tank (boiling water to loosen feathers) still alive and whilst fully conscious.

**OVER 2 MILLION CHICKENS ARE BRUTALLY
KILLED EVERY DAY IN BRITAIN.**

YOU CAN CHANGE THIS

- * DON'T BUY CHICKEN MEAT
- * JOIN US NOW!

☐

I would like to join FAUNA and I enclose a cheque/Po made payable to FAUNA for £6 (£4 unwaged)

☐

Please send me a Poultry Information Pack

☐

I enclose a £..... donation to help stop animal cruelty

Name..... Age.....

(If under 18)

Address.....

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