

# HUMANITY FOR HENS

## NEWSLETTER FOR JULY 1993

P.O. Box 843, Kuils River 7580

SOUTH AFRICA

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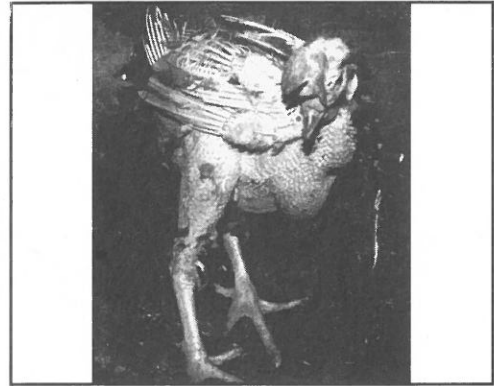
**Dear Supporter,**

### 3000 SIGNATURES TO GO! MORE IF POSSIBLE

If any of you ever feel a sense of despair about the human race, then take heart! There are a lot of caring people out there judging by the enormous efforts that so many of you have made in collecting signatures for the Petition.

We launched the Petition for the Abolition of Battery Farming in South Africa at the end of February. So far we have 7000 signatures in. This is no mean feat, my more experienced British counterparts tell me, for a petition that has been circulating for only four months! Usually, I am told, 10 000 signatures is considered significant enough to hand in.

The Minister of Agriculture's office has advised me that the earliest we will be able to present the Minister personally with the Petition is when Parliament starts sitting again in February next year. For this reason I have



**The toll of living for a year in a battery, in a space allowance shown on the Petition form at the back of this newsletter**

made the cut-off date for the Petition the end of December this year. Hopefully a large deputation of us will present the Petition to the Minister of Agriculture and the spokesperson on agriculture for the ANC, with full Press coverage. (More about that in the next newsletter).

As you will see, this newsletter has another Petition form in it. If you are one of H for H's supporters who has exhausted your circle of friends and acquaintances in getting signatures, please just pop it into someone's post box or pin it on the notice board at a public library.

### ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S OFFICE DECLINES TO PROSECUTE.

Many of you will remember that 18 months ago, in January 1992, Humanity for Hens made a complaint to the police to the effect that battery farming violated the Animals' Protection Act. Last month, on the 26th June 1993, Humanity for Hens received a letter from the Attorney General's Office as follows: "Having considered the police docket, and all the surrounding circumstances, the Attorney-General has decided not to institute a prosecution."

H for H listed three alleged violations of the Act to the police. According to the Animals' Protection Act, no animal may be confined in "inadequate space", be "maimed" or caused "unnecessary suffering".

#### **In the battery:**

- A space allowance of 450cm<sup>2</sup> (i.e. 20cm x 22,5cm) is allotted to each hen for the entire year of her laying life: WE CALL THAT "INADEQUATE SPACE".
- Unable to adapt to the close confinement, the hens sometimes peck each other to death. For this reason they are debeaked (the industry likes to call it beak-trimming). WE CALL IT "MAIMING".
- In the wire cages, the hens are unable to fulfil any of their basic instincts:
  - They cannot scratch – their feet rest on wire bars.
  - They cannot nest – their eggs have to be laid on the wire bars.
  - They cannot preen effectively – because they have been debeaked.

- They cannot dustbath nor even stretch a wing. The wing-span of one hen in the battery is 60% larger than the entire cage for three hens.
- They die without knowing what it is to feel the sunshine.

#### **WE CALL THAT "UNNECESSARY SUFFERING".**

Since the Attorney General has declined to prosecute, Humanity for Hens will do all it can to get this matter into Parliament. We believe that factory farming makes a mockery of the Animals' Protection Act and that this Act should be repealed and/or amended to state specifically that it affords its protection only to pets.

### A C T I O N

WRITE TO THE M.P. IN YOUR AREA AND ASK HIM IF HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO BRING THIS MATTER TO THE ATTENTION OF PARLIAMENT. PLEASE PASS ON TO ME ANY REPLIES RECEIVED

**Humanity for Hens** does not accept that justice has been served by the Attorney General's decision. This view is supported by an independent legal opinion. We are seriously considering a private prosecution and are now trying to find sponsorship for some of the legal costs.

# VETERINARY DEBATE UPDATE

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO DR CHARLES HAYWARD B.V.Sc. AND DR DAVID JOHNSON B.V.Sc. OF WALMER IN PORT ELIZABETH FOR BREAKING RANK WITH THE REST OF THE VETERINARY PROFESSION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND SUPPORTING OUR PETITION.

Not only did Dr Hayward and Dr Johnson collect 91 signatures for the Petition but they also stated in their letter: "We support your campaign as we find any practice where animals are exposed to cruelty reprehensible."

The recent comments of the chief veterinary officer of the British Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mr Keith Meldrum are pertinent to our own situation. Addressing the British Veterinary Association Congress, he said: "The welfare movement is strong and knowledgeable and cannot be dismissed even if some of our professional colleagues think they know better!... How many (veterinarians) keep quiet, giving tacit approval to systems of husbandry they privately dislike or condemn? How many are content with current battery cage systems where up to 29% of hens suffer fractures when being removed from the cages at the end of lay? What of the overcrowded broiler house where leg conditions affect so many of the birds?"

I WONDER HOW MANY SOUTH AFRICAN VETS PRIVATELY DISLIKE THE BATTERY SYSTEM BUT SIMPLY DO NOT HAVE THE COURAGE TO SAY SO.

**DR MELVYN GREENBERG**, chairman of the South African Veterinary Association has this to say in a letter to Humanity for Hens:

"Your organisation is fighting the cruelties of intensification which includes several components where mutilations occur, e.g. beak trimming. The SAVA is opposed to any form of cruelty and do not approve any methods that have these intentions ...

"If beak trimming is done correctly the duration of discomfort is very short. This 'mutilation' does prevent cannibalism, self-mutilation, diet deficiency problems, boredom behavioural problems etc.

"The high survival rate is an indicator of the absence of 'cruelty'."

**PROFESSOR JIMMIE LOADER** OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AT UNISA SIGNS OUR PETITION. THANK YOU PROF. LOADER.

Professor Loader points out that most theologians concerned with ecology and creation theology in the Christian tradition consider animals to be under the dominion of humans in a very specific sense, notably that humans are responsible to God for the wellbeing of non-human creation. This, in the context of Genesis 1-2 and Psalm 8 means that the human dominion in creation is to be exercised by caring for, not exploiting the object of God's love.

Traditional Christian thinking includes that animals are part of God's salvation. This idea of "universalism" is not new, he says, since it is found in the Bible itself as part of Paul's concept of the salvation of the whole of creation.

## EXTRACTS FROM HUMANITY FOR HENS' REPLY TO DR GREENBERG, DATED 4TH MARCH 1993

Dear Dr Greenberg,

... Welfarists and many scientists the world over would strongly disagree with your averment that "the high survival rate (of laying hens in battery cages) is an indicator of the absence of "cruelty".

In addition, no animal physiologist has ever publicly challenged Dr Mike Gentle's published research which, inter alia, finds as follows: "Following major trauma such as partial beak amputation (beak trimming), there is anatomical, behavioural and physiological evidence of persistent chronic pain."

... Welfarists believe that many vets the world over do not live up to that part of their credo which commits them to being caretakers of the animal kingdom's health and welfare and that they find it more comfortable not to criticise the establishment. Indeed, it would seem that double standards have become part and parcel of the profession - one standard for pets and another for 'live-stock'.

One of the founders of the welfare movement in Europe, Peter Roberts, said recently: "I firmly believe that if the welfare societies and the vets had taken a stand against the first battery cage and against the first veal crate and against the first sow stall, we would not have found ourselves in the mess that we are in now. I think that they bear the responsibility for letting the animals down in this situation."

You mention in your letter that the mutilation of beak trimming or debeaking prevents "cannibalism, self-mutilation, diet deficiency problems, boredom behavioural problems etc.". How ironic it is that every one of these problems is a direct result of being incarcerated in a battery cage. Thus, the logic, it would seem, is as follows: By their display of aberrant behaviour (such as listed above) hens show that they cannot adapt to the confines of the battery cage. Therefore we shall remove that part of their anatomy by which they show their frustration, boredom, diet deficiencies etc. Would the logic not be better thus: They cannot adapt therefore let us look for an alternative husbandry system in which their instinctive behavioural patterns can be accommodated? ...

I would be grateful for your comments on the above.

Yours sincerely,

(No reply has been received to date).

## A C T I O N

Please leave a copy of this newsletter with a large "NB" next to the veterinary aspects of it, at your local veterinary practice.



# FAIR LADY

In a Consumer Report entitled "Don't count your chickens" in the June 30, 1993 issue of Fair Lady, hope was expressed that there would soon be a chicken in every South African's pot. The following is my response to this article.

My letter to Fair Lady:  
Dear Editor,

I refer to your Consumer report in the June 30, 1993 issue of Fair Lady: "Don't count your chickens". I would like to suggest that a surprising number of your readers will not want a chicken "in their pot" at all once they realise what 40 years of genetic engineering to produce a fast-growing, meaty bird, has done to the chicken itself.

The chickens (broilers) we buy in the supermarkets lived their short six weeks of life stacked together in sheds at a stocking density of 17 to 18 per square metre. Of the 400 million broilers reared annually in South Africa, 4 to 8 per cent is removed from the flock early and turned into pet food because their legs simply cannot support their unnaturally overgrown bodies. Researchers at Bristol University say the reason why up to 90% of flocks suffer from leg problems, some being so crippled that they are only able to shuffle along the floor using their wings in a paddling movement, is because of man's "overzealous" breeding of meaty birds. British poultry expert Professor John Webster said in The Guardian: "Broilers are the only livestock that are in chronic pain for the last 20% of their lives."

According to the Farmer's Weekly (Jan 8, 1993) the broken bones, bruises and breast blisters sustained by these chickens have become a serious problem. According to the article, overseas studies show that the catching crew (which loads them up for transport to the abattoir) is responsible for 40 percent of the damage.

Recent research at Bristol University gives further chilling results: of the broiler carcasses which arrived dead at the processing plants, 51% had died from heart failure and 17% had suffered from ascites (an accumulation of fluid in the abdominal cavity, with enlargement of the heart, liver and kidneys.)

Disturbingly the investigation found haemorrhage associated with dislocated or broken hips accounted for 27% of the deaths and in a large number of cases the femur had penetrated right into the abdomen. Researchers believe that the catching and carrying of birds by one leg is conducive to dislocation of the hip.

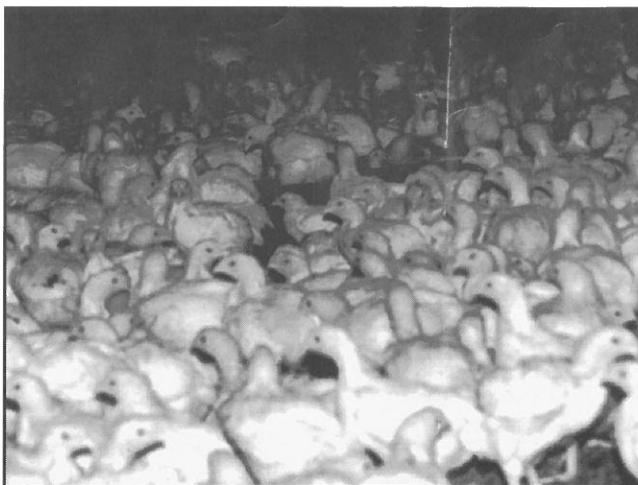


PHOTO: VICKY ALHADEFF

Another area of grave concern is the suffering endured by the broiler chicken breeding stock which have to be kept on severely restricted rations in order to limit their growth rate. The need for restricted feeding stems from the fact that the poultry industry has bred a bird which grows extremely fast and is primarily intended to live for only 6 - 7 weeks. After that it is too heavy to be viable unless on severely restricted rations. 16 000 signatures of the British public protesting this very facet of broiler production were presented recently to the Director

General of the British Poultry Meat Federation Ltd.

As for the broiler being "healthy and nutritious", one cannot help but doubt that. They are fed an antibiotic (such as zinc bacitracin) which acts as a growth stimulant, and a coccidiostat (such as Amprol). The need for a coccidiostat arises because the litter on which they are reared becomes highly contaminated with droppings since it is not changed till the next batch of broilers is brought in. These conditions lead to the chicks developing coccidiosis, a disease which causes damage to the intestinal lining, reducing appetite and the normal absorption of food. The wisdom of feeding antibiotics to farm animals has been repeatedly called into question in medical journals in Britain and America. Scientists have warned that antibiotic resistant disease organisms have emerged because of the overuse of antibiotics on farm animals, putting human health at risk (Veterinary Record 124,538E).

The respected and influential Muslim newspaper "The Majlis" (Voice of Islam) has queried (Volume 10, No. 9) how this "contaminated and spiritually polluted food" ever received halaal certificates and has called upon its readers to abstain from eating broiler chickens.

I believe the suffering of this animal can not be justified in the name of food production. Far from hoping there will be "a chicken in every South African's pot" soon, I would much rather see a reduction in our consumption of animal protein and more emphasis put on the nutritious vegetable alternatives available. Besides which, consider this: It takes 2 kg of feed to obtain 1 kg of live weight chicken meat. After evisceration, one third of the initial weight is lost. Thus 1 kg of dressed poultry requires about 3 kg of feed. This is wasteful and inefficient in a country with a lot of hungry people such as South Africa.

Yours sincerely,

## AT LAST!!! FREE RANGE TABLE BIRDS IN THE OFFING!

Professional poultry consultant, Mr Steve Brookes, who has pledged himself to improving the welfare of chickens in South Africa, says free range table birds will be available in certain Spar and Pick 'n Pay stores in about October and again in December. These chickens will be ordinary laying chickens which will have reached their end of lay. They are not genetically engineered to be giant as the broilers are, but have grown at a normal rate.

Mr Brookes needs to gauge the extent of the demand for free-range table birds so that he can project ahead. If you are a potential customer for free range table birds, please telephone Mr Brookes to let him know. He can be contacted at Tel: 0225 32091 (office

hours). (Buxtons Friendly Spar Foodliner in Durban already stocks free-range table birds at no higher price.)

Mr Brookes has suggested to the South African Poultry Association that a free-range producers committee be formed which would monitor all free range products and which would be empowered to discredit any producer whose free range products were less than free range. We thank Mr Brookes for this much-needed initiative.



## CULL FARM HORROR

Some 99,9% of battery hens in South Africa land up at the cull farms when they reach their end-of-lay. They are brought in by the truck-full to be bought live.

I had reason to go to a cull farm again recently to collect some end-of-lay hens to display in a battery cage at our Petition-signing event outside Pick 'n Pay's Claremont store. I wanted people to see the toll the battery takes on these hens. Featherless, bleeding and often broken-boned, these poor creatures are carried for kilometres by their wings or legs or are tied on to whatever means of transport is available.

The irony of it all is that it is South Africa's very poor people who buy these hens. Dealers go to the cull farms and buy the hens at about R10 each. The dealer then sells them to township dwellers at about R15 or R16 each – double the price paid for a chicken in the supermarkets.

At the South African Poultry Association Congress held in May 1993, the SPCA pointed out that the disposal of cull layers was a "serious problem area from the humane viewpoint". It added: "Slaughtering these birds at an abattoir would be an alternative that would, we believe, prevent much suffering."



PHOTO: SHAWN BENJAMIN

One is overwhelmed with a sense of grief at the horrific suffering.

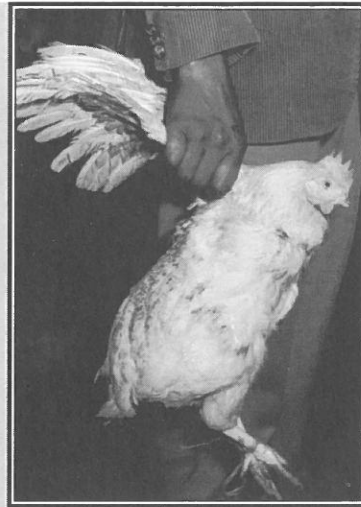


PHOTO: SHAWN BENJAMIN

## BEST BUY FREE RANGE EGGS

The hens providing Pick 'n Pay's own brand of free-range eggs and the brand "Country Hen" found in some Spar shops will not land up at the cull farms. They will be slaughtered in an abattoir to be sold as free range table birds, in Pick 'n Pay and Spar. (See Item on table birds). This is a major plus. By buying these eggs you are helping to stop the hideous suffering of the cull farms.

A further plus is that, on an experimental basis, the hens providing Pick 'n Pay's own brand of eggs in the Transvaal are not being debeaked. Should the experiment prove successful with minimal outbreaks of cannibalism, there will be no further beak trimming of any of the Pick 'n Pay or Country Hen hens. (We all hope that the experiment will prove successful and that Pick 'n Pay and Country Hen will lead the way in giving us eggs from hens that are whole. Cannibalism is a symptom of too high a stocking density.)

## MUSLIMS RALLY TO SUPPORT THE HUMANE TREATMENT OF POULTRY

- "I wish to assure you of the support of my congregation. Our religion prohibits all inhumane methods and acts of cruelty against animals." – *Imam I Moosagie (Humphries Street Musjid Association, Port Elizabeth).*
- "We strongly condemn the cruel methods employed by the farming industry in the mass production of chickens for human consumption... Man has indeed descended to a callous level..." – *E Ahmed, Secretary, Council of Muslim Theologians.*
- "Our religion commands us to be of service to both mankind and animalkind." – *A.S. Desai, Council of Theologians, Port Elizabeth.*

- "We are of the opinion that no one will suffer from the health point of view if these chickens are not consumed." – *A R Asmal, Young Men's Muslim Association, Port Elizabeth.*

The highly respected and influential Muslim newspaper The Majlis (Voice of Islam) has called upon its readers to abstain from eating broiler chickens and battery eggs calling them a "contaminated and spiritually polluted food".

In the light of the above Humanity for Hens has written to Jamiatul Ulama (Natal) and Jamiatul Ulama (Transvaal) asking them to consider revoking the Halaal certificates for broilers and battery eggs.

## HOPEFULLY SATV'S AGENDA WILL LOOK INTO THE PROBLEMS OF FACTORY FARMING SOMETIME.

The following is a letter written by me to the Executive Producer of Agenda following a news item on TV1 that there were 3,5 million eggs surplus in South Africa:

Dear Sir,

The item on the 8 o'clock news on Friday night (23rd April 1993) that the Egg Board has a surplus of 3,5 million eggs which it could not afford to process into powder, would do well to come under your spotlight.

As surpluses go in the egg industry, 3,5 million eggs is not a very big surplus. According to Mr Dawie Gous, general manager of the Egg Board, there were 60 million surplus eggs as at September 1992 (Farmer's Weekly, September 11, 1992). A year before that the surplus stood at 3% of production which translated into 10 million dozen eggs (120 million eggs) which were converted into egg products and exported at a loss.

One does not have to look to the unrest to understand the surplus. It is a world-wide phenomenon that surpluses are one of the by-products of factory farming. So is animal cruelty. When confronted with claims of animal cruelty, factory farmers resort every time to the same old line that they have to feed the nation and that factory farming is one of the unfortunate facts of life when it comes to providing the poor with cheap protein. Yet, once again the poor have not been the beneficiaries of the current surplus. According to the news item, it was not "practical" to distribute the eggs to organisations such as Operation Hunger.

Meanwhile, consumers continue to pay the same price for their battery eggs, despite the over-supply. The battery farmers, protected by the Egg Board, have all been paid for their wares; and R3 million of taxpayers' money is going to be spent on converting these unwanted "old" eggs into egg products. It is just another example of one of the lunacies of modern living which we don't protest against....

It would furthermore be useful to hear from Operation Hunger how many needy persons could have been fed by them with R3 million compared to how many persons will be fed by egg powder from 3,5 million eggs. ...

Your sincerely,

## ANIMAL RIGHTS FEATURE STRONGLY IN CHILDRENS' BOOKS NOWADAYS:

One such recently published book is "Captain Eco and the Fate of the Earth" by Jonathon Porritt. In it, children read that:

- 10 acres of land used to grow vegetables or soya beans will provide protein for 50 people. If those 10 acres are used to grow crops to feed cattle (which are then eaten as beef), they will provide enough protein for just two people. It takes 36kg of protein from crops to produce 450g of protein from meat.
- "Modern farming involves torturing animals ... animals are suffering because people want cheap meat."
- "The politicians need to be leaned on - by farmers, consumers and greenies all together - to help more farmers to go 'green'."

## POINTS TO PONDER

- The June 30 1993 issue of Fair Lady quotes a member of the Housewives' League as calling a chicken "a mealie-cob with wings". (This is a reference to the fact that almost 90 percent of poultry feed is made up of maize). H for H would like to ask all those who believe that the poor will starve without factory farming, to consider this. It takes between 2,2 kg and 2,6 kg of compounded layers' ration to give 1 kg of eggs. Some 20 plates of porridge could have been made from this amount of grain. One kilogram of eggs would provide less than half that number of meals.
- Power giants Rembrandt and Barlows are two of the companies in South Africa which ultimately control the R2,5 billion-a-year poultry industry (Fair Lady, June 30, 1993).

## A C T I O N

If anyone holds shares in either of these companies, please write to the MD or speak at their AGM's and insist that your money be directed towards humane farming operations.

## A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS GOES:

- to PICK 'N PAY for allowing us to stage our Petition-signing event outside their store in Claremont;
- to THE ARGUS and CAPE TIMES for being there to record the event;
- to FEMINA magazine whose article on Humanity for Hens in April resulted in hundreds of signatures for the Petition we'd never have found without it;
- to Earthlife Animal Action which collected signatures at the their Living Without Cruelty Expo '93 and to the Durban SPCA whose article in their journal "THE ANIMAL ANGLE" also elicited a large response.



As you read this, hundreds of thousands of chickens are busy hatching. The Old Mutual advert is right: Life **should** be the greatest gift of all. But for these chickens, it will be a living hell - UNLESS WE CONSUMERS CHANGE THINGS

Scientists no longer believe that all dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago. It seems there was one line that somehow escaped the mass extinction and evolved into the birds of today. Apparently all birds living today are descended from the dinosaurs. They evolved from small dinosaurs such as Compsognathus which was about the size of a crow. The first actual bird was Archaeopteryx which lived 150 million years ago. One could feel a sense of reverence for the bird kingdom's incredible ability to survive.

## SUBMISSIONS BY THE SPCA NATIONAL COUNCIL TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN POULTRY ASSOCIATION CONGRESS HELD IN MAY 1993 INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

- We believe that there is sufficient evidence to prove that conditions for poultry need to be improved. We also believe that birds should be able to express most of their basic behavioural requirements or patterns including accessibility to nests, perches and litter.
- We have seen here in South Africa a vast difference in the standard of beak trimming, some being so severe as to almost "cripple" the bird.
- It is unacceptable for unhatched eggs to be discarded on the local rubbish dump. (Sometimes they hatch on the dump).

- The laws regulating the humane slaughter of birds are not always abided by, resulting in mishandling, ineffective or defective stunning apparatus and bleeding.

Referring to the code of minimum standards to which the poultry industry is meant to adhere, the SPCA said it disagreed with the cage size for layers. "However", it stated, "the minimum size of 450cm<sup>2</sup> is a starting point. There are producers at this point in time who have a much smaller space allowance than this and they will have to increase the space to conform to the minimum standards set down by the code."

### BATTERY FARMING TO END IN THE WHOLE OF EUROPE BY 2002?

According to a draft proposal by the European Commission, all new intensive housing systems for hens should, by the year 2002, include nests, perches and litter. New battery cages may continue to be installed if these provide at least 800cm<sup>2</sup> per bird

of floor space, are 60cm high over 65% of the cage and not less than 50cm high at any point, and contain perches. These provisions have to apply to all birds by 1st January 2002. "What this amounts to is the ending of battery cages by 2002," comments the British Egg Industry Council. "The capital and working costs which cages of this size imply are far too high."

## LET US NEVER FORGET THE OTHER VICTIMS OF FACTORY FARMING:



The great big turkey drumsticks and wings seen in our supermarkets now are imported from intensive systems. Intensive turkey farming means that:

- Male breeding turkeys (stags) suffer on a massive scale from diseased hips. Up to 66% of stags have to be culled as a result.
- Because they are now so "meaty" no stags are able to mate normally. Artificial insemination

is practised 100% throughout the intensive turkey industry.

- By slaughter age they weigh about 24 kg (the weight of an 8 – 9 year-old child). Hung in shackles at slaughter, their great and unnatural weight causes additional hip/leg pain. Work at Bristol university has exposed many shortcomings in the slaughtering process. These include the fact that 35 to 40 thousand turkeys enter the scalding tank alive, and possibly conscious, annually in the UK.

### A C T I O N

Turkeys are a "new line" in South Africa. We did without turkey meat before. We don't need it now.

In a recent issue of the British magazine "Pig Farming", an article, entitled "Accommodating the great move outdoors", stated that rearing piglets outdoors was "fast catching on." The number of free-range sows was expected to reach 35% within the next couple of years.

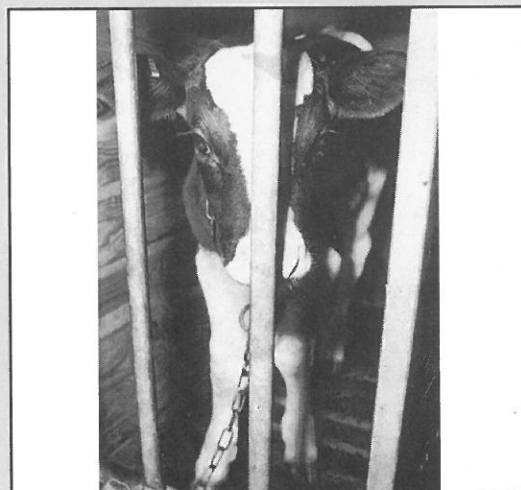
Tell your Supermarket Manager you would like Freerange Pork products and write to the Pig Breeders Society of S.A., P O Box 506, Bloemfontein 9300 and ask if there is any move in this organisation away from sow stalls, tethers and farrowing

crates in favour of free range pig farming. (My letter to this society dated 7th March 1993 remains unanswered.)



PHOTO: VICKY ALHADEFF

Tethered to the ground, awaiting artificial insemination at a farm outside Johannesburg.



Condemned to spend its short life in solitary confinement, unable to turn around, standing on slippery wooden slats and fed an unnatural liquid diet – to keep its flesh anaemic and soft for the consumer.

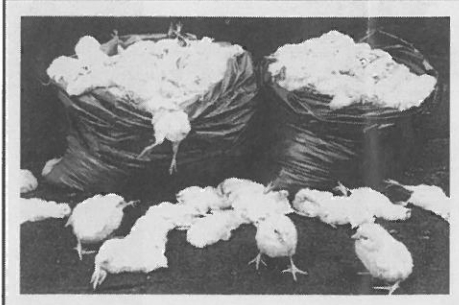
**DON'T BUY VEAL.**



# LETTERS TO HUMANITY FOR HENS:

● "I wish to communicate with you re Heidelberg Farm in the Eastern Transvaal ... I was very distressed to witness the practice of battery hen farming 'in all its glory' ... The practice of debeaking was definitely evident but the hens were not dethroated. But what caused me most anguish was the packing of three hens into a cage no bigger than 30cm (width) by 45cm (length) by 45 cm (height). On questioning the manager/owner on the humanity of this he announced that hens had no brain anyway. Of the three hens only two could feed from a trough at one time while the third remained crushed against the back of the cage."

(Nelspruit Member).



(physical) were thrown in their dozens – if not hundreds – into a drum (while still alive) to be destroyed. They are still chirping as they suffocate under the weight of others dumped on top of them in the drums. This is a pitiful sight to behold." – Pietermaritzburg citizen.

● "Without exception everyone who signed (the Petition) was absolutely appalled by the suffering of these animals. As one friend said: "This makes me ashamed of the human race, ashamed to be one of them." – (Verwoerdburg Member)

● "I would like to mention what I saw outside Pietermaritzburg – at Rainbow Chickens. The baby chicks that had a defect

This space allowance contravenes the S.A. Poultry Association's Code of Ethics. – Editor

● "Die gedagte aan battery hennie gee my snags as ek wakker word wilde hartkloppings." – Member

## PROGRESS TO DATE

**May 1991** – There is not a free-range egg or chicken to be found in any supermarket nationwide. Many people are not even aware of the concept of free-range. HUMANITY FOR HENS is formally founded.

**Nov. 1991** – Both Woolworths and Pick 'n Pay have free-range eggs in stock for the first time in modern supermarket history in South Africa. Today free-range eggs are available nationwide under a variety of brand names.

**January 1992** – Humanity for Hens formally makes a complaint to the Paarl CID to the effect that battery farming violates the Animals' Protection Act. The newspapers and radio pick up the story and the plight of battery hens becomes a matter of public debate.

**February 1992** – SATV's Environmental programme on Sunday evenings, 50/50, takes an in-depth look at the intensive poultry industry.

**February 1992** – Humanity for Hens takes the opportunity to display a battery cage on nationwide television during a debate on Good Morning South Africa, following the 50/50 programme.

**Mid 1992** – Buxtons Friendly Spar Foodliner takes the initiative and starts stocking free-range table birds at no higher price.

**January 1993** – South African veterinary surgeons begin to enter the debate.

**February 1993** – A Petition for the Abolition of Battery Farming in South Africa is launched.

**June 1993** – Two veterinary surgeons align themselves with this cause.

**June 1993** – Notification that free range table birds will start becoming available in Pick 'n Pay nationwide and some Spar stores in about October and again in December.

### Dear Supporters,

On behalf of the chickens I thank you for all your wonderful efforts. We should take heart in the fact that many thousands of chickens have been able to walk around, scratch on the ground and feel the warmth of the sun on their backs, because of our demand.

Before wishing you all well, I would like to leave you with this last thought: It was Albert Schweitzer who said "The quiet conscience is an invention of the devil". Let none of us have a "quiet conscience". Let us all be extremely vocal so that everyone may hear of the horrible suffering of the animals.

Remember, it was **CONSUMERS** who got the infamous pig stalls on the phase out list in Britain in 1991. It was **CONSUMERS** who saved the Canadian Pribilof seal from extinction – by refusing to buy their pelts. And we, as **CONSUMERS**, will bring about a fairer deal for the animals of South Africa too.

With many good wishes,

*Louise van der Merwe*

P.S. In these hard financial times, your contributions are more than ever appreciated. Please don't feel that you have to send a lot. Even very small amounts of money are valued. It is thanks to your contributions that this Newsletter was made possible. I thank you.

PICTURE COURTESY OF EAI CON

## ADDRESS

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or printed text on the paper. A faint vertical crease is visible down the center, suggesting it might be a notebook page or a sheet folded in half. Some very light, irregular smudges are present on the surface, particularly towards the bottom right corner.

MARCH '94

Please return to: Humanity for Hens, P.O. Box 843, Kuils River 7580, **by end December 1993**