



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Campaigners stage "Wicked" event to call on Labour to Scrap Factory Farming

On 22nd March, campaigners will gather outside the House of Commons to stage a musical and theatrical event called 'Factory Farming Is Wicked' a reference and tribute to the Wicked smash hit film and musical. The event will be a non-violent protest against the Labour Government's lack of action to enforce its own Animal Welfare Act 2006, calling for the immediate phasing out of factory farming in the UK.

The Scrap Factory Farming team will be singing, rapping and playing key characters from the film such as Elphaba, Glinda and the Wizard. Sir Keir Starmer will be making a guest appearance! The event was inspired by the film's salient messages around the rights and systemic exploitation of animals. David Finney, campaign spokesperson: "Our aim with this event is for our supporters and guests to have a fun afternoon delivering a serious message to the Labour Government which is to commence the immediate phase out of factory farms."

Humane Being, a not-for-profit organisation run entirely by volunteers, will be leading this significant protest, as part of their Scrap Factory Farming campaign. The team launched a world first legal challenge against the previous Conservative Government for failing to address the health, environmental and cruelty issues created by factory farming. This landmark assault received backing from Dr. Tim Finnigan, Chief Scientific Adviser, Quorn Foods, and actors Jerome Flynn (Game of Thrones) and Peter Egan (Downton Abbey), as well as over 7,000 members/followers across its platforms.

Between 2016 – 2023 the number of intensive factory farms rose by 12%, with a 20% increase in pig and poultry units. Labour has already approved 16 new planning applications for mega-farms within its first 6 months in power including food company Cranswick's application for

two sites housing 14,000 pigs and 870,000 chickens. In response to previous petitions and campaigns for the removal of cages, the Labour Government has stated that it is already 'considering very carefully' legislation around the use of cages and crates.

David Finney responds: "The removal of cages and crates is nowhere near enough as this will still leave millions of farmed animals packed tightly in sheds and undergoing painful mutilations. This is about addressing a much broader systemic issue and is now an opportunity for the Labour Government to address the failings of the previous Conservative government ministers who – for 14 years – failed to act to protect these animals. Current factory farming practices are about industrial speed and efficiency over animal welfare and sentience."

Guest speakers on the day will be Claire Palmer from the Animal Justice Project, Michelle Strauss from The Animal Advocacy Project, Dr Rebecca Jones from Plant Based Health Professionals and Jake Bristow from We The Free. Humane Being and their growing number of supporters - will also be submitting complaints via the Labour Government website for failing to include plans to address this big issue in their manifesto.

Extensive research and study carried out by Humane Being and other organisations has produced some alarming statistics, which, when compared to the Animal Welfare Act 2006, illustrate a significant contradiction – especially with regards to 9(2) (a), (c), (e):

9. Duty of person responsible for animal to ensure welfare

(2) For the purposes of this Act, an animal's needs shall be taken to include—

(a) its need for a suitable environment,

(b) its need for a suitable diet,

(c) its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns,

(d) any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, and

(e) its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

- UK Govt: 88% of pigs gassed with high concentration CO² (witnessed accounts: gasping for air, choking, suffocating, can take up to a minute, some alive after)
- RSPCA: 1-day old male chicks also gassed (maceration was banned, may still be active)
- FAWC: Pigs have their tails cut off without anaesthetic (this is because they are so frustrated at not being able to express natural behaviour and bite each other's tails)
- BSAS: Cow and calf separated within hours of birth, natural weaning would be around eight months (witnessed accounts of cow pining and calf stress – i.e. emotional cruelty). British Society of Animal Science; FAWC = Farm Animal Welfare Council
- Farmed animals are being packed tightly into cages and sheds like products in a warehouse
- Fish are forced to live in crowded, underwater cages with lice infestations and disease
- *RSPCA: over a billion land animals and 77 million fish farmed each year in the UK*
- *BBC: over 800 beef and dairy mega farms in UK (FOI request) – over 9000 cattle*
- *CIWF: have since stated there are over 1000 mega farms, 85% factory farming*

Humane Being was founded in 2018 by former Vice-Chair of the RSPCA, Jane Tredgett, who has spent the last 25 years as an active volunteer/trustee for local and national animal welfare

organisations including 10 years on the RSPCA and RSPCA Assured Boards. As a not-for-profit organisation, run by volunteers, Humane Being supports people to live in a way that is kinder to animals and better for the planet and people.

Humane Being contacts

David Finney is the spokesperson for the Scrap Factory Farming campaign and can be contacted via david.finney@humanebeing.org.uk or 07521 991645 (24-hour answerphone).

For general enquiries email Jane Tredgett jane.tredgett@humanebeing.org.uk

References

- [The Environment Agency](#) has set the bar really low with its definition of an intensive farm: 40,000 poultry, 2,000 production pigs, 750 sows; i.e. they are allowing very large numbers of chickens, turkeys, ducks and pigs to be squashed into sheds
- [Bureau of Investigation](#): The UK has more than 1,000 livestock mega-farms, although there is no legal definition of a megafarm
- [CIWF](#) have since stated there are over 1,000 mega farms in the UK with 85% factory farming
- [BBC](#): Over 800 beef & dairy mega farms in UK (FOI request), farming over 900000 cattle
- [RSPCA](#): over a billion land animals farmed each year in the UK, along with over 77 million fish
- [Bureau of Investigation](#) the growth of intensive farm applications in recent years
- [CIWF](#) analysis of the extent of factory farming (map) which shows a 12% increase in intensive farm applications from 2016 to 2023