

EGGS

95% of eggs come from hens imprisoned in “battery cages.” Usually between 4 and 11 birds live cramped in a wire cage the size of a folded newspaper—even though each bird has a wingspan of 32 inches. These cages are tiered, so feces and urine fall onto the animals below. Chickens’ feet sometimes grow around the slanted wire floors of their cages because the birds are packed so tightly together they cannot even move.

Almost all hens used for egg laying, even “free-range” birds, have their beaks cut off to prevent cannibalism and injury from overcrowding and stress-induced fighting. Many birds are also “force molted”—their food and water are removed for up to 2 weeks to shock their bodies into another egg-laying cycle.

Hens, including free-range, are killed when they can no longer produce eggs profitably. Baby chicks are hatched to replace them. If the babies are males, and thus unable to lay eggs, they are killed at only a few days of age. Approximately 280 million male baby chicks are killed every year by the egg industry.

Unless your eggs come from companion chickens who freely run around your yard or a trusted friend or neighbors yard, you are most likely supporting intense animal cruelty every time you buy or eat an egg—about 26 to 34 hours of cruelty per egg. Consuming eggs, even “free-range” eggs, supports de-beaking, forced molting, killing of baby male chicks, cruel transport, and eventual slaughter of the hens.

DAIRY

Most cows used for dairy live the majority of their lives in concrete stalls and attached to milking machines that pump them for milk 2 or 3 times a day.

Cows are repeatedly impregnated to make them produce the maximum amount of milk. Once a year, they are either “serviced” by a bull or artificially inseminated on what the dairy industry commonly refers to as a “rape rack.” Their calves, if male, are usually sold to be raised for veal. Female calves are either raised to replace their moms or are sent to be raised for veal. Without the supply of calves from the dairy industry, the veal industry would not thrive.

After 4 to 6 pregnancies and 4 to 6 years of milk production, dairy cows are sent to slaughter. Naturally, cows live 20 to 25 years. 10% of cows are so sick after 4 to 6 years of commercial milk production that they cannot even walk. These “downers” are literally dragged or pushed into slaughterhouses by forklifts.

MEAT

Every year in the USA, over 12 billion land animals and billions more aquatic animals are slaughtered. An additional one billion land animals die every year from stress-induced disease or injury before slaughter. The average non-vegan eats about 40 land animals and about 55 aquatic animals every year.

Fish often experience decompression when caught. Their eyes can pop out of their heads and their stomachs can be pushed out through their mouths. Fish have developed nervous systems, like humans and other land animals, and suffer when they are hooked or netted and forced to die of suffocation when pulled from the water.

Fishing is raping our world’s oceans—killing not only fish, but other life as well. Shrimp trawling has devastated sea turtle populations worldwide.

Industrial fishing results in enormous “by-catch”—non-target animals caught (and usually killed), but tossed overboard and not counted in a ship’s quota. In addition to non-target fish species, by-catch can include birds, whales, dolphins, sharks, turtles, rays, and seals.

90% of all land animals killed for meat are chickens. Cutting out red meat but increasing chicken and fish consumption will only increase death and suffering.

Chickens killed for meat suffer the same painful de-beaking as egg-laying hens. Though they usually are not in battery cages, they usually live in filthy, crowded sheds with as many as 100,000 birds (similar to the conditions “free-range” hens live in). Chickens have trouble establishing a pecking order with such large numbers of birds, and the crowding and stress lead to constant fighting, causing injury and sometimes death.

Most pigs are raised in factory farms. They live their lives in crates stacked on top of one another or in crowded group stalls. When they are piglets, their tails are cut off to avoid tail-biting from others out of boredom, stress, or premature weaning. Pigs also have their teeth pulled out or ground off to reduce loss from fighting caused by stress. Males are also castrated without anesthesia.

Mother pigs live much of their 5 year lives in “gestation crates.” They give birth and nurse their young on grated steel floors. The mother pigs are literally turned into baby-making machines.

Pigs often develop pneumonia from living in their own waste. The ammonia from their urine burns their sensitive noses and causes many piglets to die.

All land animals used for eggs, dairy, and meat are transported to slaughter when they no longer produce profitably or when they reach slaughter weight. The animals are often forced to travel for several days without food or water and are usually exposed to the elements. Animals in the middle of the transport truck can die from suffocation while animals on the outside can freeze to death, and sometimes even freeze to the steel sides of the truck in the winter.

Most animals are slaughtered on an assembly line—with little attention given to each suffering individual. Chickens and turkeys have their legs forced into shackles before their necks are funneled between two whirling blades. If their necks miss the blades, as often happens, they are scalded to death in the feather removal tank. Pigs, cows, and sheep are usually shackled and hoisted by one leg. As the kill line moves, they are first stuck in the chest or throat with a knife, then they have their limbs cut off, and finally their skin is ripped from their bodies. They are sometimes still alive when this happens.

SOME ALTERNATIVES

Try Ener-G Egg Replacer in cooking and Fantastic Foods Tofu Scramble instead of scrambled eggs, or Google “egg substitutes” and “tofu scramble.” There are many vegan ice cream, milk, and meat substitutes that are widely available and taste great! Try Boca Burgers and “chicken” patties; Yves, Tofurky, and Lightlife dogs, and cold cuts; Tofurky and Field Roast sausage; vegan ice cream made from soy, rice, hemp, or coconut milk (So Delicious, Purely Decadent, Tofutti, Soy Dream, Rice Dream, Trader Joe’s Soy Creamy, Coconut Bliss, Temptation, and other brands); Rice Dream bars and moon pies; Tofutti and So Delicious “ice cream” sandwiches; Silk or Mocha Mix coffee creamer; ZenSoy vegan pudding; soy, rice, almond, hemp, or oat milk; White Wave, So Delicious, WholeSoy, Nancy’s, and Stonyfield soy yogurt; Daiya, Vegan Gourmet, and Tofutti cheeses; Galaxy and Parma! Vegan Parmesan; Tofutti Sour Supreme and Better Than Cream Cheese; and even Veganise! Try nutritional yeast on pasta and popcorn. Visit Trader Joe’s, Whole Foods, Fred Meyer Nutrition Center, or other natural foods stores. Most supermarkets have natural foods sections or at least carry soy milk, fake meats, etc. Visit vegweb.com & chooseveg.com for recipes, or Google your favorite recipe with the word “vegan” in front of it.

FREE VEGAN STARTER PACK!

Visit VeganStarterPack.com to request a free pack full of recipes; animal agriculture, environmental, and nutrition info; tips on getting started; and more!