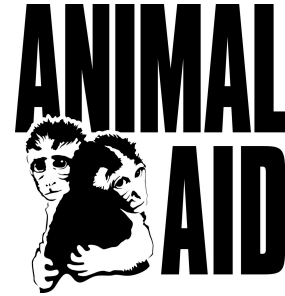


ANIMAL AID'S AGENDA FOR CHANGE

ABOUT ANIMAL AID

Animal Aid exposes and campaigns peacefully against all animal cruelty, and promotes a cruelty-free lifestyle.

Towards those ends, we:



- Launch regular undercover investigations into factory farms, gamebird rearing operations, the horse racing industry and livestock markets
- Produce in-depth reports, factsheets and leaflets to support our campaigns
- Lobby politicians
- Send out thousands of free information packs
- Provide teaching resources free of charge to schools across the country
- Train volunteer school speakers who talk in around 300 schools each year
- Campaign online through viral films, podcasts and networking websites
- Stage Britain's leading annual cruelty-free Christmas fair
- Offer a large range of ethical mail order goods including toiletries, clothes, chocolates and books through our online shop

OUR POLICY

FOOD

Animal Aid opposes the production and trading of animals so that they can be used for milk or eggs, or killed for meat. Instead, we promote a diet free from animal products. Such a diet, apart from being animal-friendly, is healthier, less damaging to the environment and more energy, land, labour and water efficient.

CLOTHING

It is no longer necessary to exploit animals for their skins, fur or wool. There are a great many affordable, durable, fashionable, warm, waterproof and otherwise attractive materials that can and are being used for clothing and shoes. We encourage the development of the trend towards cruelty-free clothing.

VIVISECTION

We want to see an end to all laboratory research on animals because such research is both cruel and scientifically unreliable. Resources should be directed towards the increasing number of superior, non-animal research methods. These include cell and tissue cultures, computer simulations, scanners, microdose tests and the use of microarrays and microfluidics. Millions of animals every year in Britain are confined in stressful conditions and subjected to often painful and

ultimately lethal 'safety tests' and disease research. Our expanding knowledge of the cognitive and emotional sentience of nonhuman animals, and their ability to suffer, makes their use in these ways increasingly unacceptable, whatever the postulated benefits. Our moral objection, however, is buttressed by the accumulating scientific evidence that so-called 'animal models' do not generate data that can be reliably applied to human beings – whether for safety testing or for understanding disease and moving towards remedies. Vivisection, therefore, causes human ethical problems – substantial evidence shows that millions of people have been harmed in the past, and continue to be harmed, due to our reliance upon it.

LEISURE AND SPORT

We advocate the enjoyment of the many leisure and sporting activities that do not involve animals being chased, goaded, hooked, shot, snared, poisoned, made to perform tricks or confined for public exhibition. This places us in opposition to gamebird shooting, hunting, fishing, zoos, horse and dog racing and circuses with animals.

PETS

We oppose the pet trade because it reduces animals to disposable commodities. As with any other commodity, when the purchaser finds the product tiresome, worn-out, old or inconvenient, that commodity is often abandoned or destroyed. Hence, sanctuaries across Britain are overflowing with unwanted animals. The benefits people obtain from their pets are often cited as a reason to continue with the mass breeding, wild capture and trading of animals. But what is it pet animals gain from people? The uncomfortable truth is that the majority are deprived of the ability to move freely and form social and family groups and do the other things that would make their lives meaningful. Birds are kept from flying; reptiles and fish are confined in glass tanks; and hamsters, guinea pigs, rats and gerbils are boxed or caged. At the bottom of countless gardens, rabbits are abandoned alone in hutches. Horses are often kept stabled for numbingly long periods or left to languish in fields. Most dogs do not receive adequate daily exercise and many are kept confined all day alone, while their owners go out to work. Some cats have a degree of autonomy over their lives but even they may be turned out when no longer wanted.

'CULLS' OF WILDLIFE

A great many animal species have been labelled as pests, vermin, predators or 'aliens' and are being shot, gassed, trapped, poisoned or beaten to death. The list includes badgers, rats, grey squirrels, ruddy ducks, mink, foxes, muntjac and other deer, hedgehogs, stoats, weasels, seals, rabbits, magpies, Canada geese and cormorants. Powerful interest groups (farmers, shooters, pest control companies, 'conservationists' and foresters) insist that if animals are not useful or

profitable, then they must be 'controlled' and, in some cases, eliminated as a species. At the heart of this project are selfishness, avarice and intolerance.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

From the above, it can be seen that Animal Aid, in common with an increasing number of people worldwide, is working towards a fundamental shift in our relationship with animals. The move is away from the presumption that animals exist to be exploited for our convenience and pleasure – and towards a position of respect and protection. In an increasingly 'developed', not to say polluted, world, animals need to be granted the space and freedom to lead lives unencumbered by human interference.

AGENDA FOR CHANGE

We recognise that the changes we work towards will not be achieved overnight. But there is a great deal that can be accomplished in the short to medium term through bold and imaginative government action. We set out, below, an agenda for constructive change.

ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 2006

Key to any general improvement in the welfare of animals is for the main provisions of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to be enforced properly. These make it an offence to cause an animal to suffer unnecessarily; and anyone responsible for an animal is required to meet a Duty of Care.

The relevant sections of the Act are as follows:

4 (1) A person commits an offence if

- (a) an act of his, or a failure of his to act, causes an animal to suffer,*
- (b) he knew or ought reasonably to have known, that the act, or the failure to act, would have that effect or be likely to do so,*
- (c) the animal is a protected animal and*
- (d) the suffering is unnecessary.*

9 (1) states:

A person commits an offence if he does not take such steps as are reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure that the needs of an animal for which he is responsible are met to the extent required by good practice.

Those needs include:

9 (2) (e) 'its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury...'

FARMING

- **All livestock farmers, drovers, and slaughterers to undergo compulsory training in animal welfare**

Without an understanding of animal welfare, workers in these jobs are likely to inflict avoidable suffering on the animals they farm. A June 2007 Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) report on stockmanship presented a picture of dramatically declining skills, with less than 1% of farm workers taking up training and certification opportunities. It is an apathy matched by the government and the livestock industry itself, whose support for training – said the report - has ‘weakened considerably in recent years’.

- **A ban on cages for egg-laying hens**

While the ban on the ‘standard’ battery cage is a welcome step forward, the ‘enriched’ cage is not adequate to satisfy the basic needs of hens.

- **A ban on farrowing crates for sows**

A week before the end of their sixteen and a half week pregnancy, sows are moved into a farrowing crate - a barren metal and concrete structure. It is just a few inches longer and wider than the sow herself. Her newborn piglets must suckle from a small area known as a ‘creep’, adjacent to but separate from, their mother. The justification for the use of the farrowing crate is that the sow might otherwise crush her young. Research, however, shows that, ‘given the right management’, piglets delivered in loose housing units are no more likely to die than those born in farrowing crates.

- **A ban on zero grazing, whereby animals, such as dairy cows and goats are confined in sheds for all, or nearly all, of the year**

The industry-promoted image of Daisy amongst the buttercups has long been false but now dairy farming has arrived at a critical new juncture with the arrival of the almost permanently-confined ‘battery cow’. Her fate is to eke out a short existence inside large sheds, shared with hundreds of other cows. Each has a narrow metal-barred stall. They are moved two or three times a day to the automated milking unit. Some operations also have covered ‘loafing’ yards. It is the cow equivalent of battery hen production – a system now widely recognised as being inhumane.

Goats’ milk and cheese are being marketed as sophisticated, humane alternatives to dairy products from cows. But Animal Aid’s 2007 undercover visits to farms supplying leading supermarkets revealed scenes of inexcusable squalour and cruelty. At one farm, a mother lay dead in the dirt with a bullet in her head, her newborn kid huddled beside her body. A second shot goat lay alongside the pair. Many of the goats we filmed had grotesquely distended udders, which left them unable to walk or stand properly.

SLAUGHTER

- **An end to the piece-rate system of payment for slaughterhouse workers**

Payment by piece-rate rewards speed and corner-cutting, to the inevitable detriment of animal welfare.

TRANSPORTATION

- **A ban on the export of live animals and a maximum journey time of eight hours for all animals**

Animals suffer considerable distress and discomfort in transit and many die. Currently, animals are being shipped live from the UK to continental Europe with legal journey times for calves and lambs lasting up to 21 hours with a break of just one hour. Pigs can be transported non-stop for 24 hours and sheep and cattle for 31 hours, with a one-hour pause.

ANIMAL EXPERIMENTS

- **An independent evaluation into the scientific efficacy of safety testing and disease research using animals**

The efficacy of the animal model has never been objectively, scientifically and transparently evaluated. Animal welfare issues aside, this deficiency poses major problems for human health and safety. 250 MPs signed an Early Day Motion calling for just such an enquiry and 83 per cent of GPs have said they would support this.

- **A ban on the use of all primates in experiments**

It is now the official position of the European Parliament to seek a ban on the use of wild-caught monkeys and great apes, as well as to phase out the laboratory use of all primates. This follows the powerful support shown by MEPs for Written Declaration 40/2007 (signed by 433). 150 British MPs also support a ban – on both moral and scientific grounds (EDM 1704). And a demand for a primate research ban is also embodied in the Berlin Declaration, which was launched in 2005 and endorsed by 95 animal protection agencies around the world, plus leading academics and public figures.

- **A ban on using animals in weapons testing**

Before coming to power this government stated: 'It is Labour policy to forbid the use of animals in the testing and development of weapons.' Since then the use of animals in weapons research has tripled.

WILDLIFE

- **The government should not authorise a badger 'cull'**

Bovine TB is a problem created by intensive farming conditions. The public overwhelmingly opposes a cull and the Independent Scientific Group that spent a decade assessing the potential value of a cull reported that there was no case for one – and that it could make matters worse. TB, its chairman reported, probably first spreads from cattle to badgers.

- **An end to all government sponsored wildlife ‘culls’**

Governments have promoted or endorsed the killing of many species, including the ruddy duck, grey squirrel, deer and Lundy rat. Wild animals are already suffering extreme and unending pressure as a result of road and building development, climate change, pollution, etc. Where animals are deemed to cause problems, humane, non-lethal methods of population management must be employed.

CIRCUSES

- **A ban on the use of animals in circuses**

There is a wealth of documentary evidence, produced by Animal Defenders International, Captive Animals’ Protection Society and others, demonstrating that circuses impose too great a welfare burden on animals – whether wild or domesticated. Animals suffer high levels of stress during training, travel and confinement and while performing.

BLOODSPORTS

- **A ban on the production of gamebirds for ‘sport’ shooting**

Thirty-five million pheasants and more than six million partridges are mass-produced every year so that they can be shot for sport. Wildlife around the rearing sites and on shooting grounds is exterminated.

- **As a matter of urgency, a ban on the battery cage system of rearing pheasants and partridges**

Battery cages (also known as raised laying units) for breeding pheasants and partridges – whether or not they are ‘enriched’ – are indefensible in terms of the welfare burden that they place upon the birds.

- **Ensure that those involved in the business of rearing and shooting birds for sport pay their due taxes and non-domestic rates**

There is a wealth of evidence demonstrating that the industry deprives the public purse of millions of pounds in unpaid rates and VAT.

- **A proper commitment must be made and appropriate resources allocated to enforce the ban on fox hunting**

Foxes continue to be chased and mauled to death, and many peaceful monitors have been physically assaulted.

HORSE RACING

- **The publication of comprehensive data on equine mortality, sickness and injury**

No comprehensive, reliable data is published by the racing industry. Given the degree of self-regulation the industry enjoys, it should be obliged to produce a full annual audit.

- **A ban on the whip**

The use of the whip in horse racing is cruel. The law does not allow any other animal in Britain to be routinely beaten. The whip is banned in Norway.

- **A proper fund to be established for retired Thoroughbreds**

Around 5,000 horses come to the end of their racing career each year. Current industry provision for them is woefully inadequate. Only a small number are granted a decent retirement. The fate of the majority is to pass from owner to owner, with many ending up at a slaughterhouse or knacker's yard. Everybody involved in equine breeding, owning or trading should be made to uphold their duty of care to these animals.

- **An independent audit of all racecourses**

An independent audit should be commissioned in order to determine what immediate steps can be taken to reduce equine mortality and injury.

- **A ban on the Grand National**

The Grand National is a deliberately punishing and hazardous race. Equine deaths at the event remain routine. See Ten Reasons to Boycott the Grand National: <http://www.animalaid.org.uk/h/n/CAMPAIGNS/horse/ALL/1746/>.

IMPORTATION OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS

- **A ban on the importation of animal products, whose methods of production have been prohibited in Britain because they impose too great a welfare burden on animals**

This includes foie gras and all fur products and pelts derived from farmed animals.

PET TRADE

- **Breeders and sellers to take responsibility for the animals they sell**

Anyone selling, breeding or dealing in 'pet' animals should be levied a fixed proportion of their income in support of sanctuaries. While breeders make money, sanctuaries are forced to rely on donations. Breeders should accept responsibility and make financial provision for the animals they create.

- **Any business selling animals that requires a licence to do so should have to conduct mandatory home checks, which will be carried out by independent inspectors**

Breeders, pet shops and farms do not routinely conduct home checks and, as a result, many animals are sold to inappropriate homes and end up either suffering or being dumped at sanctuaries

- **A ban on the sale of non-domesticated animals**

Pet shops are increasingly selling non-domesticated animals including monkeys, African hedgehogs, iguanas and snakes. Although these animals are captive bred, they remain wild and there is no home that could replicate their natural habitat or sustain their needs.

CONCLUSION

We have set out in this document a series of measures that, if taken forward by government, would significantly advance the cause of animal welfare. Any such action, we feel confident, would be met with widespread public support.

Animal Aid

The Old Chapel, Bradford Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1AW

Tel: 01732 364546

Fax: 01732 366533

www.animalaid.org.uk

Animal Abuse Injustice & Defence Society
Registered in the UK. Company no. 1787309