

THE GAME BIRD SHOOTING INDUSTRY:

WHERE FACTORY FARMING MEETS BLOODSPORTS



The reality of shooting ...

Many people believe that pheasants and partridges live free and natural lives, and that people shoot one or two for food.

In reality, around 60 million of these birds are mass-produced every year. Many come from factory farms, where breeding birds are confined in battery-style cages (picture below), and their offspring are reared in huge, crowded sheds before being transferred to outdoor pens. Aged about 18 weeks, they are released to become feathered targets for paying shooters.



Caging wild birds ...

Animal Aid's undercover investigations at intensive game bird farms have revealed that birds who are used as 'breeding stock' are confined in terrible – often totally barren – cages, where stress-induced injuries are widespread. With no escape, the birds may have to endure temperatures as high at 41C in Summer and as low as -4C in Winter.

Their eggs are taken and incubated. Eggs and even live chicks categorised as 'sub-standard' are destroyed in grinding machines. Chicks of 'good enough' quality will be boxed up, and sold to shoot operators.



Visit AnimalAid.org.uk to see the latest information on how you can help.

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Killing for pleasure ...

The argument that shooting game birds is about providing food is highly questionable, especially given that it costs far more to produce a bird for shooting than the carcass will sell for.

Of the 60 million birds bred for the UK shooting industry every year, many will die of predation, disease or on the roads before the start of the shooting season. Of those who survive, around 1 in 3 birds are shot, and only a fraction (about 3 million) go into the food chain. Shooters can pay up to £3,000 each, a day, to kill hundreds of birds.

Damaging the environment ...

Once the young birds are old enough, they are released outdoors. Gamekeepers feed them to stop them wandering far. Releasing millions of non-native game birds has negative consequences for other wildlife, who need to compete for food and habitat. In order to keep the pheasants and partridges alive until the shooting season, gamekeepers kill any wildlife deemed a threat to the birds. This can involve snares, traps or being bludgeoned to death or shot. It is estimated that more than 6,000 tonnes of lead shot are discharged into the environment every year in Britain, in cartridges from guns.



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Ban the production of birds for shooting

A 2018 YouGov poll found that 69% of respondents think that shooting birds for sport should be illegal (only 18% thought it should be legal, 13% did not have an opinion).

Animal Aid is campaigning for a ban on the production of birds for shooting because of the undeniable cruelty of shooting animals, and the negative impacts that this bloodsport has on the environment and other animals.

