

THE 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, up to 60 million of these birds are mass-produced every year. Many come from factory farms, where breeding birds are confined in battery-style cages, and their babies 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 the intensive farms which breed birds for shooting 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 as 41°C in summer and as low as -4°C in winter.

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



Killing for pleasure ...

The argument that shooting pheasants and partridges 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 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 pay up to £3,000 each to kill hundreds of birds.

Damaging the environment ...

Once the young birds are old enough, they are released outdoors, where gamekeepers feed them to stop them wandering far. Releasing millions of non-native 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, including badgers and foxes. It's also estimated that more than 7,000 tonnes of lead shot have been discharged into the environment every year in Britain, from cartridges in guns.



Ban the production of birds for shooting

2025 polling by OnePoll found that more than 70% of people think that wild animals have a right to live free from persecution, like shooting.

Animal Aid is campaigning for a ban on the production, release and shooting of birds. Shooting animals is undeniably cruel, and the release of millions of birds every year negatively affects other animals and the environment.

Please sign our petition to end the shooting of live birds

www.animalaid.org.uk/BirdPetition

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