Animals Australia
Campaign Update

Animals Australia Speaks Up for Sheep on NZ TV

New Zealand’s premier current affairs program Sunday recently focussed on attempts to re-open the live sheep export trade from New Zealand to the Middle East. Evidence gathered by Animals Australia in the Middle East played a pivotal role in this program. Animals Australia’s Communication Director Lyn White was interviewed and conveyed the brutal treatment of animals that she has witnessed in the Middle East, and that the inherent welfare impacts of shipboard transportation can never be overcome. The Sunday program was inundated with New Zealanders opposed to the re-opening of the live trade. Importantly, the New Zealand Minister for Agriculture has now stated that the trade will not reopen whilst his government is in power.

Hope in Sight for Battery Hens

For the 11 million hens still confined in battery cages in Australia hope is finally in sight. The recent announcement by Woolworths that it would reduce its product lines of caged eggs represents the first shift by a major retailer away from supporting factory-farmed products, and importantly, reflects growing consumer awareness of the lives endured by hens in battery cages...

Whilst the battery cage will be banned from 2012 in the EU, no phase out date has been forecast for Australia. With political reviews failing to provide welfare advances for animals, Animals Australia’s focus changed to lobbying retailers and educating consumers to use their purchasing power to demand an end to cruel practices.

Last year members of Animals Australia’s Action Network wrote to Woolworths expressing their concerns about how hens and pigs were treated. Woolworths advised us that in response to letters received, they had established an animal welfare committee to review their livestock supplier standards – another great win for the Action Network!

Both Animals Australia and Animal Liberation NSW have presented evidence of the suffering endured by factory farmed animals to this committee, and called on Woolworths to improve their standards and phase out their lines of factory farmed products.

This subsequent decision by Woolworths to reduce its lines of caged eggs is welcomed as an important first step that will send a strong signal to caged egg producers that the end is nigh.

In further good news, McDonalds announced that it would be moving its Australian operation to only using free-range eggs. Our meetings with both Woolworths and McDonalds have revealed the growing significance that retailers are giving to meeting and addressing animal welfare concerns.

In the UK welfare reforms have been led by retailers. Two of Britain’s biggest supermarkets no longer stock caged eggs and McDonalds, Subway and Starbucks in the UK use only free-range eggs.

The spotlight will now fall on Australia’s other major retailer Coles to follow Woolworths’ lead. Animals Australia continues to be involved in Woolworths’ review of livestock welfare standards with the hope that further advances will be agreed to by this influential retailer.

Caged Egg Figures

30: The average number of hours suffered by a battery hen to produce just 1 egg.

1.5: The age (in years) at which most battery hens are slaughtered after their egg-laying declines (of a natural lifespan of 12 years).

1 in 6: The estimated number of battery hens who live in cages with untreated broken bones.
Mulesing Deadline Delay: another Pain in the Backside

In July, Australia’s wool industry leaders announced they would abandon a commitment to cease mulesing by the end of 2010. Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) claimed that alternatives to mulesing were not sufficiently developed, that sheep would be left vulnerable to flystrike or alternatively that sheep farmers would leave the industry.

Animals Australia rejects the AWI decision. A recent meeting with AWI board members and its researchers only confirmed our view that alternative measures can provide similar flystrike protection to unmulesed sheep.

Each year 20 - 30 million lambs endure the pain of mulesing; shears are used to cut skin from lambs’ behinds to reduce the risk of future flystrike. Studies show that pain caused by this large open wound lasts for at least 3 weeks. Whilst AWI is claiming that this year half of the mulesed lambs will have topical analgesia sprayed on the wound immediately after mulesing, this lasts just 8 hours!

The AWI backflip panders to farmers who have been resistant to any change to this circa 1930s abhorrent practice. Whilst the best preventative measure for flystrike is breeding for less-wrinkled sheep, many farmers have failed to commence that selection process over past decades, nor even since the deadline announcement in 2004. Other existing alternatives include more frequent crutching and inspection of sheep, and the use of long-lasting insecticides. AWI research is developing at least two other mulesing alternatives, to be available likely before the end of 2010.

Retailers in Europe, USA and China alerted to the cruelty of mulesing by a focussed PETA campaign, have been perplexed by the AWI backflip, and wool from mulesed sheep is likely to be shunned. Despite being lobbied by wool-growers during a recent visit to Australia, buyers from UK Marks and Spencer stated they will not be using mulesed merino wool in its menswear range after 2010.
One would expect travelling circuses with exotic animals to be a thing of the past, but in Australia, circuses such as Lennon Bros and Stardust Circus still regularly take to the road with their cargo of lions and monkeys to bring a few minutes of 'entertainment' to town.

Thankfully – finding a place to pitch their big top is becoming increasingly difficult for these circuses. More and more councils are taking an ethical stance by imposing bans on circuses with exotic animals on council owned land. In recent months, Lismore Council in New South Wales and Ipswich and the Gold Coast Councils in Queensland were added to the list of approximately 45 districts where circuses with exotic animals are not welcome.

Adding to an overwhelming body of evidence, the recent scientific study ‘Are wild animals suited to a travelling circus life?’ by the University of Bristol in the UK confirmed that it is impossible to satisfy the behavioural and welfare needs of exotic animals in travelling circuses.

The lives of exotic animals in circuses could be no further removed from their natural environment. Transported from town to town in trucks, they are confined in small, barren cages or pens for most of their lives and forced to do unnatural or degrading tricks – often taught by the crack of the whip.

Lismore, Ipswich and Gold Coast Councils are part of a worldwide shift to ban circuses with (exotic) animals. In July, Bolivia became the first country in the world to completely ban all animals in circuses. Similar proposals are currently being discussed in the Brazilian and Peruvian parliaments. If you become aware of Lennon Bros or Stardust Circuses coming to your council district please give us a call. Even a letter from one concerned citizen can prompt councils to think for the first time about the ethics of encouraging circuses that use exotic animals.

These circuses promote themselves as ‘entertainment for the whole family’. It is therefore encouraging that a growing number of Australian Councils are sending the right message to the community – that entertainment stops when animal suffering begins.

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Over the past three years, largely due to just a few individuals with cameras and courage and Animals Australia’s subsequent detailed complaints and submissions, the State Governments of Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia have changed their laws, and some of the worst rodeo practices are being outlawed.

Tasmania has new regulations making it a legal requirement for a rodeo to have a veterinarian in attendance, and in South Australia calf roping has now been banned (it was already banned in Victoria). Victoria has introduced specific offences for practices such as using electric prods excessively on cattle (to make them jump as they enter the arena) and for using an electric prod on a horse at any time. Queensland is currently reviewing its rodeo rules and Animals Australia has made a detailed submission slamming this terrible ‘sport’ and specifically calling for a ban on calf roping.

What to do if a rodeo is coming to town: Call and write to any corporate sponsors and your local council immediately and ask them not to support such cruel events. See also AnimalsAustralia.org/issues/rodeos.php
In recent months there have been two very worthy recipients of Animals Australia’s Compassionate Citizen Award. Introduced this year, the award acknowledges individuals who have taken extraordinary and compassionate action to assist animals in need.

The inaugural recipient was Australian sporting legend and Gold Coast Mayor Ron Clarke for using his public position to speak out against the cruelty of rodeos. In a media interview Mayor Clarke publicly described rodeos as “horrifying” and “human entertainment at the expense of animals”. Clarke has vowed to oppose any request to acquire council funds for the promotion of rodeos and his public stand undoubtedly convinced many people not to attend the privately run Bulls on the Beach rodeo on the Gold Coast. Mayor Clarke and the Gold Coast Council then reiterated its ethical position on animal cruelty by banning circuses with exotic animals from performing on council land.

A 20 year old young man who jumped off Brighton Pier in Victoria to rescue a drowning dog has also received Animals Australia’s Compassionate Citizen Award. Raden Soemawinata was on the pier scattering his grandmother’s ashes when Bibi was swept from the pier into the sea by gale-force winds. As his distressed owner watched Bibi struggling in the rough seas, Raden with no thought to his own safety jumped in and brought the little dog to safety.

Raden who was reunited with Bibi for the presentation of the award said that he was ‘stoked’ to receive the reward.

Animals Australia is the only national animal protection organisation that actively exposes animal abuse and promotes a cruelty-free lifestyle. Our small team of experienced campaigners and investigators works tirelessly and effectively to raise public awareness and campaign for change, with an uncompromised vision to end the abuse of animals in Australia and beyond.

One important way that you can help us achieve this vision is by remembering us in your will. Your gift will ensure that our vital work is able to continue whilst providing a lasting personal legacy towards creating a kinder world. For more information on leaving a bequest to help animals, please call the Animals Australia office on 1800 888 584.

Leaving a Legacy of Kindness
Dear friends,

Since 2003, Animals Australia’s investigators have conducted six investigations in the Middle East to document the treatment of animals that are exported live from Australia to be brutally slaughtered in countries with no animal protection laws.

Our investigators’ efforts in this most challenging of regions have ensured that the suffering of these and other animals has not been in vain. No Australian animals have been exported to Egypt since footage of the barbaric treatment of animals in this country aired on 60 Minutes — saving hundreds of thousands of animals from brutal treatment. Bahrain has been forced to outlaw transporting animals in boots after our footage of sheep being trussed and shoved into boots shocked Australians on A Current Affair. And in Jordan — a cruel livestock market and its illegal abattoirs were bulldozed as a result of shocking evidence provided to the Royal Family and the footage airing on 7.30 Report.

Continuing to reveal what exported animals are enduring is critical in keeping this immoral trade at the forefront of politicians’ and the community’s mind. Without our investigators in the Middle East there is no-one to represent these animals and provide the truth.

Please give generously to enable our investigators to return to the Middle East. Please help us to be there for them...

For the animals,

Glenys Oogjes, Executive Director

I want to sponsor an investigator with a donation of:

- $15
- $50
- $100
- $250
- Other: $ ________

Name: ________________________________

Address: ________________________________

________________________ Post Code: ________

Telephone: ____________________________

E-mail: _______________________________

☐ I enclose a cheque / money order
   (please make payable to ‘Animals Australia’)

OR ☐ Please debit my:
   ☐ VISA  ☐ MasterCard  ☐ AMEX  ☐ Diner’s

Card Number: ____________ ____________ ____________ ____________

Name on Card: _______________________________________

Expire: __ __ / __ __ Signature: _______________________

We will send campaign e-updates to your e-mail if supplied

For alternate payment options please call 1800 888 584