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AACT Now

quarterly news from Against Animal Cruelty Tasmania

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We live in a world where the Great Divide is expanding at a pace hitherto unknown – the divide between rich and poor, haves and have-nots, first world and third world, privileged and underprivileged. We live in a world where the industrialized nations rule supreme and the acquisition of material wealth and power is the sad *raison d'être*. All too often this is at the expense of the poor and underprivileged that are being steadily stripped of any remaining power.

Animals as a group form an easy target. With unmatched arrogance humans have claimed the Earth for themselves, to do with as they see fit without thought of consequence to those that share this planet. Since emerging from the trees, and bracing against them to pull themselves upright, humans have subjected all surrounding living beings to a cruel ownership, an ownership implying that all other living species are there purely for us to profit from. Native animals have their homes bulldozed and burnt prior to them being torturously killed with 1080 as punishment for their role in decreasing forestry profits as they try valiantly to survive. Cows, pigs, sheep and chickens – to name but a few at the tip of the iceberg – are battery farmed in the most despicable conditions because doing so allows the farmer to increase his profits and, after all, they are 'just animals'. Chimpanzees, cats, rabbits and our best friend the dog endure miserable lives filled with excruciating pain, caged for their entire sorry existence, so that we may appear younger when we are in fact old and decrepit with hearts cold as stone, so that the shampoo we use burns holes in their eyes and not ours, and so

that new drugs may be 'safely' developed while all the while disregarding the widely known fact (at least in the closed corridors of Medicine) that the physiological differences between non-human animals and animal humans is sufficiently large to make most animal studies scientifically worthless. If, as Ghandi asserted, a nation can be judged by the way it treats its animals, then the world as a collective nation is in a shameful mess.

But, just as profits are soaring, and gaps are widening, so too are more humans looking deep into the eyes of their beloved dog, cat, horse, goat, chicken or rabbit and seeing the pain of their brothers and sisters within. YES, animals do feel pain. YES, animals do have emotions. YES, animals do suffer when locked in cages, do suffer when noxious chemicals are poured into their eyes, do suffer when kept in stalls 24 hours a day for their entire life so that we may collect their urine and by taking a pill stop ourselves from falling pregnant. YES, animals ARE sentient beings, and YES, they deserve to be treated as such. Vegetarianism and Veganism is growing, and more non-vegetarians are demanding assurances that their food is not a product of unnecessary suffering. Too many people are unhappy with the status quo. Too many people are ashamed. And these people are realizing that despite governments' safeguarding the profits of wealthy companies, differences can, and will, be made. Enter AACT – A Tasmanian initiative to ensure these differences are made.



encouraging and supporting cruelty free living

Against Animal Cruelty Tasmania is a not-for-profit group based in Hobart, Tasmania. Our aim is to eliminate all exploitation, cruelty and suffering of animals within our state and beyond.

We strive to facilitate change through non-violent action, education and political lobbying on a wide variety of issues. Our current campaigns target the live export industry, intensive farming, and duck shooting.

At all times, AACT strives to respect the diverse opinions of its members and supporters through our action.

AACT liases with appropriate groups and organizations to achieve our objectives, which are:

- to encourage and support cruelty free living
- to identify and campaign against the inhumane treatment of animals within Tasmania
- to respond to national and international animal cruelty issues as appropriate



RECENT ACTION REPORTS

LIVE EXPORT

Sue Quarmby

AACT has targeted the Live Export Issue as our feature target throughout 2004. We have been involved in many actions in an attempt to raise awareness of this shocking practice and gain community support to bring about its cessation.

After conducting several small actions last year, our year began on January 20th and 21st, with a large action on the docks of Devonport. AACT joined AMIEU, Noahs Ark and Animal Rescue groups in protesting against the loading of 57000 sheep aboard the AI Shawaikh, bound for the Middle East. We were successful in delaying the trucks transporting the sheep to the ship, whilst we checked each truck for injured sheep and regulation breaches. The

trucks and sheep were photographed, and breaches were reported to the authorities. The action attracted a great deal of media interest and, alongside flyer distribution by AACT amongst Spirit of Tasmania passengers arriving in Devonport, undoubtedly raised a great deal of community attention to the issue.



We followed up the Devonport action with a large public rally on Parliament Lawns on 31st January. A crowd of over 100 people were addressed by the Yvette Watt, (AACT), Grant Courtney (AMIEU), the Democrats and The Greens. There was overwhelming support for the cessation of live export displayed by attendees, and many signatures were added to AACT'S petition calling for a ban of Live Export from Tasmania.

Our most recent action was held on June 3rd outside the Roberts retail store in Hobart. A large banner reading '*R U supporting Live Export?*' was displayed to draw public attention to Roberts' involvement in the trade. This action drew a great deal of television media coverage which was encouraging.



DUCK SHOOTING

Catherine Silcock

A small but committed group of ten protesters from Against Animal Cruelty Tasmania made their presence felt at Moulting Lagoon on the opening day of the duck shooting season held on Saturday 6 March. Protesters were in position on the Top Bank of the lagoon at 5.30am and successfully scared ducks away from the shooters with the use of wind socks on poles (see picture). On Top Bank sixteen hides were occupied but shooters shot only three ducks for the entire opening morning. Next year, with more protesters, the goal is to ensure that no ducks get shot across the entire lagoon for the opening weekend. With adequate numbers this is entirely achievable.



One problem that was particularly notable this year was repeated attempts by several shooters to shoot ducks that were well out of range of their shotguns – in some instances up to one hundred metres away. Some ducks may have been injured and were able to fly away only to suffer blood loss or infections. It is difficult to distinguish between when a duck has been startled and suddenly alters its flight path and when it has suffered a minor but potentially life threatening injury.

We will maintain our stand in calling for a ban on recreational duck shooting and have taken our concerns to Minister Judy Jackson who was positive about receiving further input from the group. We specifically highlighted our concerns about the apparent lack of structure in the planned phase out of lead shot, the critical shortage of enforcement officers throughout the

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state and irresponsible shooting behaviour.



UPCOMING EVENTS

DUCK SHOOTING

AACT is planning an action to mark the end of the Duck Shooting Season in Tasmania during July. Hundreds of cardboard ducks mounted on bamboo sticks will be erected on Parliament Lawns in Hobart to commemorate the deaths of ducks and other water birds and to call for a ban of the sport.

Please contact AACT if you are interested in assisting with or attending the action.

LIVE EXPORT

AACT plans to continue displaying its banner 'R U Supporting the Live Export Trade' outside Roberts stores in Hobart and Launceston during the next few months. AACT members will also be conducting petition-signing sessions at major shopping centres around Hobart. Look out for us and come and say hello!

QUARTERLY HOT TOPIC

THE LIVE EXPORT INDUSTRY

Suzanne Cass

For many years, a number of animal welfare organizations, unions, political parties and individuals have been fighting the cruel practices associated with the live export trade and seeking to have the industry banned. AACT is a relatively new group which has been fighting the trade with a number of activities, including rallies on Parliament House lawns last October and January and a demonstration in Devonport in January during the loading of the "Al Shuwaikh" for Kuwait.

Research indicated that the "Al Shuwaikh" was one of a number of ships that are sadly substandard for carrying live animals. It, amongst others, has a history of defects that have resulted in terrible suffering and high mortality rates for its pitiful cargoes. The "Al Shuwaikh", for example, was detained in Fremantle in 2001 for defects to do with its fire dampening ventilation systems.¹

Numerous cattle carriers were condemned by Animals Angels, a leading European animal welfare group², which stated that at least two should be made "illegal".

The cruelty facts have been exposed on three occasions by "Sixty Minutes", and the mortality statistics, video footage of suffering, dying and dead animals, photographic evidence and statistics bear testimony to the misery, cruelty and greed associated with the live export trade. The appalling cruelty and animal suffering are widely known, but have to date been insufficient grounds for governments to ban the trade. This is in spite of a Senate Selection Committee recommendation back in the 1980's stating that on animal welfare grounds alone, the trade should be stopped. Numerous later enquiries expressing major concerns regarding the welfare of exported animals, and containing fundamental recommendations, have been ignored by successive governments, including

¹ Fairplay International Register of Shipping, accessed January 2004 onwards

² "liveexportsshame.com" Animals Angels reports on numerous cattle carriers

³ "Impact of the Live Animal Export Sector on the Australian Meat Processing Industry" S.G. Heilbron Pty. Limited April 2000 commissioned by the Australian Meat Processor Corporation Limited

the latest one chaired by Dr John Keniry. So the argument, much as it should be so, cannot be won on the grounds of cruelty alone.

But two recent reports have come to light which detail the role of governments in distorting the "profitability" figures associated with the live export trade. The report by S.G Heilbron "Impact of the Live Animal Export Sector on the Australian Meat Processing Industry"³ indicates that live exports could be costing Australia around \$1.5m in lost GDP (Gross Domestic Product), around \$2.7m in lost household income, and around 10,500 in lost jobs (the AMIEU puts that figure closer to 20,000 jobs). There is the associated factor of fragmented communities resulting from these job losses.

A further report commissioned by the Western Australian government has brought more bad news for governments supporting the cruel live export trade. Professor Lindner, a leading agricultural science academic has highlighted the fact that the degree of governmental intervention in favour of the live export trade is instrumental in forcing up the prices of local meat, by subsidising the AQIS inspection fees in the live export trade to the level of about \$400,000 a year, while charging local abattoirs *each* a similar amount – in Western Australia *alone*.⁴

It appears also that the government's often reiterated propaganda about Saudi Arabia and other countries requiring live animals for processing is not in fact necessarily the case. During the embargo on the live export trade to Saudi Arabia in the 1990's, frozen/chilled meat exports in fact tripled.⁵ Further evidence has been presented that live animals were exported to the United Arab Emirates, processed there, and exported on to Saudi Arabia. And the Heilbron Report further states that the claims that we are dealing with poor countries that lack refrigeration are flawed. This was apparent in the latest "Sixty Minutes" broadcast.

While it is not the intention of AACT to promote the slaughter of animals, we are aware that the live export trade continues because of a degree of public apathy, enormous greed by those running the industry, and governments'

⁴ "The West Australian" Paul Murray's column, April 17, 2004

⁵ The Heilbron Report, April 2000

intervention (or lack of) for their own reasons. We seek therefore that the live export industry be banned now and forever because of its legendary cruelty. If animal slaughter MUST happen, it must be as humane as possible, and be carried out as close as possible to where the animals are produced. It must be under strict regulation and NOT BY MEANS OF LIVE EXPORTS. It MUST be carried out with minimal suffering to the animals, and under no circumstances should animals be exported under the horrific conditions they are currently forced to endure.

For further information, please visit the following websites:

Animals Australia
Liveexportshame.com
PACAT
Animal Liberation



NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA

TOWNSVILLE

6 Australian Defence Force soldiers get \$2000 fines for abhorrent cruelty to animals – three 3-week old kittens were doused with fuel and set alight while a fourth was placed behind a rear wheel and driven over. The Queensland Police Service are appealing the paltry sentences.

VICTORIA

Tail docking is banned in Finland, Switzerland, Sweden, Greece and Norway. In February Victoria became the first Australian State or Territory to do the same.

... AND AROUND THE GLOBE

AUSTRIA

In May 2004, lawmakers unanimously approved one of Europe's toughest animal rights laws, a measure that forces farmers to uncage chickens, bars pet owners from clipping their dogs' ears or tails, outlaws the use of lions and other wild animals in circuses and makes it illegal to restrain dogs with chains, choke collars or 'invisible electric fences'.

CANADA

The Canadian baby Harp seal hunt is the largest single mass slaughter of a mammalian wildlife species anywhere in the world. Over one million harp seals are condemned to be cruelly clubbed to death over a three year period. AND it's to be heavily subsidized by the Canadian taxpayer.



VEGETARIAN RECIPES

Stuffed green peppers with cherries and pine-nuts

www.ashycook.topcities.com

(a highly recommended site – Ed)

Sounds exotic, doesn't it? It is. I first tasted peppers stuffed with rice and pine-nuts in Turkey and when I came across some lovely fresh Siberian pine-nuts, I remembered the peppers and wanted to try making them. The ones in Turkey also contained a special type of small black raisin which I didn't know where to buy. Luckily, there were six black cherries in our fridge and I thought, 'Cherries? Raisins? - same-same, no problem!' There was also a can of sweetcorn in the cupboard.

Here is my version of Turkish stuffed green peppers. Don't worry if you haven't got all the ingredients - just do as I did and add some different ones. If you don't have any cherries however, don't call your creation 'Stuffed green peppers with cherries and pine-nuts'.

The quantities shown will make stuffing that will fill about 8 small peppers. Make more if you want to. The crucial thing however, in this recipe, is to have just the right amount of peppers to sit open-end-up, side by side in a pan, so they don't fall over. Think about how many people you want to feed then choose your pan and do your calculations.

Ingredients

1 mug of rice, soaked overnight, or at least for a few hours.

100-150g sweetcorn

A small handful of pine-nuts

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6 cherries (more if you've got them)
 1 dessert spoon of vegetable oil
 Half an onion
 3-4 tsps. tomato paste
 3 cloves of garlic
 A few whole black pepper-corns
 Salt

Rinse the rice, drain and put it in a bowl with the corn, vegetable oil, finely chopped onions, cherries and pine-nuts and a little salt. Mix it all together and leave to one side while you do the peppers. Cut round the stalks and pull them out, then remove as much of the white bits and seeds as you can without being too fussy, and definitely without splitting the peppers. Use a teaspoon to fill the peppers but don't pack the mixture in too tightly - it will swell as it cooks. Leave some space for this. Stand the peppers in a pot and pour some water, mixed with the tomato paste and a pinch of salt, round them. The water should only come about two thirds of the way up the peppers - you don't want to flood them. Pour plain water into each pepper until it covers the filling. I used the little plastic jug that came with our iron when we bought it (before I hit on that idea, I thought of using a teapot).

Crush the garlic cloves and poke them down between the peppers into the cooking water along with the pepper-corns. Put the pan on the cooker and bring to the boil. Boil it for five minutes to heat the peppers thoroughly, then turn the heat right down and cover the pan. Simmer for about 40 minutes.



QUARTERLY QUOTE

Animals are my friends. And I do not eat my friends.

George Bernard Shaw

SAINT FRANCIS AND THE SOW

Unknown Author

*The bud
 stands for all things
 even for those things that don't flower,
 for everything flowers, from within, of self-
 blessing;
 though sometimes it is necessary
 to reteach a thing its loveliness,
 to put a hand on its brow
 of the flower*

*and retell it in words and in touch
 it is lovely
 until it flowers again from within, of self-
 blessing;
 as Saint Francis
 put his hand on the creased forehead
 of the sow, and told her in words and in touch
 blessings of earth on the sow, and the sow
 began remembering all down her thick length,
 from the earthen snout all the way
 through the fodder and slops to the spiritual curl
 of the tail,
 from the hard spininess spiked out from the
 spine
 down through the great broken heart
 to the blue milken dreaminess spurting and
 shuddering
 from the fourteen teats in the fourteen mouths
 sucking and blowing beneath
 them;
 the long, perfect loveliness of the sow.*



DID YOU KNOW?

Just 25 years ago, a chook took 64 days to reach a live weight of two kilograms - today it can do it in 35 days, on only 3.5 kilograms of feed.

ANIMAL FRIENDLY WEBSITES

PACAT (People Against Cruelty in Animal Transport) www.pacat.org.au
Animal Liberation www.animal-lib.org.au
Animals Australia www.animalsaustralia.org.au



COMMITTEE MEMBER INFORMATION

Coordinator: Yvette Watt
Deputy Coordinator: Sue Quarmby
Treasurer/ Membership Secretary: Kiren Couser
Secretary: Karen Bohmer
General Committee: Catherine Silcock, Suzanne Cass, Ben Bartl, Maria Merry, Clair Orlikowski
Newsletter Editor: Craig Quarmby

CAMPAIGN COORDINATORS**Live export:** Suzanne Cass**Sow stalls:** Clair Orlikowski**Battery hen farms:** Sue Quarmby**Duck shooting:** Catherine Silcock

Campaign coordinators are looking for community volunteers who would like to become involved in actions. If you are interested in joining any of the above campaigns please contact AACT via email or telephone.

**AACT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Name.....

E-mail.....

Address.....

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..... Postcode.....

Work ☎

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