

bones and disfigured and missing body parts because they've struggled so much in the tank."



Turkeys shackled by their ankles upside-down to a moving conveyor belt. Granny's Poultry Co-operative, Manitoba.

DID YOU KNOW?

Chickens are inquisitive animals who, when in natural surroundings, enjoy dust-bathing, making nests, roosting in trees, and searching for food.

Like us, chickens form friendships and strong family ties. They love their young and mourn the loss of loved ones.

According to animal behaviorist Dr. Chris Evans, chickens are as smart as mammals, including some primates. He explains that chickens are able to understand that recently hidden objects still exist, which is beyond the capacity of small children. Furthermore, Dr. Joy Mench, professor and director of the Center for Animal Welfare at the University of California at Davis explains, "Chickens show sophisticated social behavior. They can recognize more than a hundred other chickens and remember them. They have more than thirty types of vocalizations."

References

- 1 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Agricultural Statistics 2011. <http://www.agr.gc.ca/>.
- 2 Ernst R.A., University of California Cooperative Extension. (1995, June). Poultry Fact Sheet No. 20.
- 3 Dawkins, M.S. & Hardie, S. (1989). Space needs of laying hens. *British Poultry Science*, 30, 413-416.
- 4 Davis, K. (1996). *Prisoned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs* (pp. 96-98).
- 5 Danbury, T.C. et al. (2000, March 11). Self-selection of the analgesic drug carprofen by lame broiler chickens. *Veterinary Record*, 146, 307-11.
- 6 Kestin, S.C. et al. (1992, Aug. 29). Prevalence of leg weakness in broiler chickens and its relationship with genotype. *Veterinary Record*, 131, 190-194.
- 7 Feedstuffs. (1991, Sept. 9).
- 8 Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Food Animals (2009). *Broken Wings: the breakdown of animal protection in the transportation and slaughter of meat poultry in Canada*.
- 9 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. *Poultry Condemnation Report*. <http://www.agr.gc.ca/>.
- 10 Boyd, F. (1994). Humane slaughter of poultry: the case against the use of electrical stunning devices. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, 7, 221-236.
- 11 Bilgili, S.F. (1992, March). Electrical stunning of broilers-basic concepts and carcass quality implications: a review. *The Journal of Applied Poultry Research*, 135-146.
- 12 Heath, G. B. S. (1984). The slaughter of broiler chickens. *World's Poultry Science Journal*, 40, 151-159.
- 13 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. *Poultry Condemnation Report*. <http://www.agr.gc.ca/>.

Canadians for Ethical Treatment of Farmed Animals
(CETFA)
cetfa.org
care@cetfa.org



Chickens and turkeys

As more and more people are switching from beef and pork to poultry, the number of birds raised and killed for meat is sky-rocketing.

More than 600 million "broiler" (meat-type) chickens and over 20 million turkeys are slaughtered each year in Canada.^[1]

Overcrowded by the thousands into ammonia-laden sheds where disease runs rampant, the birds often cannot even flap their wings.^[2,3] Most will never see sunlight or breathe fresh air, except on their way to the slaughterhouse.



Thousands of turkeys are crowded into filthy, ammonia-laden sheds. Turkey barn in Quebec.

The birds are forced to breathe air from oxygen-deficient sheds, full of pathogenic microbes, carbon dioxide, methane, hydrogen sulfide, excretory ammonia fumes, and lung-destroying dust and dander. The high ammonia levels cause painful skin and respiratory problems for the birds.^[4]



Bred for Pain

Chickens have been genetically manipulated to grow much larger and more quickly than their ancestors. According to an article in *Feedstuffs*, an agribusiness journal, "...broilers now grow so rapidly that the heart and lungs are not developed well enough to support the remainder of the body, resulting in congestive heart failure and tremendous death losses."

Modern broiler chickens also experience crippling leg disorders and lameness because their legs are not capable of supporting their abnormally heavy bodies.

Researchers have found that this lameness is so chronically painful that lame chickens will repeatedly choose food that has painkillers added to it over regular feed.^[5] Another study found that 26% of broiler chickens are severely crippled and that 90% cannot walk normally.^[6]

Turkeys also suffer from unnatural breeding. According to another *Feedstuffs* article, "turkeys have been bred to grow faster and heavier but their skeletons haven't kept pace, which causes 'cowboy legs'. Some turkeys have problems standing and fall and are trampled on..."^[7]



Turkeys and chickens often suffer from untreated open bloody sores and wounds. Turkey in Quebec barn.

Transportation

Chickens and turkeys who don't die on the factory farm are roughly grabbed by workers and slammed into transport crates to be taken to slaughter at just a fraction of their natural lifespan.



Chickens are gathered hastily, up to eight at a time. Their legs and wings often break in the process. Chicken barn in Ontario.

The birds are routinely overloaded into crates which do not afford protection from the elements, enough headroom to stand, or the ability to be reached for medical treatment - all required by humane transport regulations^[8]. Because of this, each year 2 million birds arrive at Canadian slaughterhouses dead.^[9]



Chickens are routinely overloaded on trailers to such an extent that some suffocate to death. Olymel slaughterhouse, Quebec.

Slaughter

At the slaughterhouse, fully conscious chickens and turkeys are shackled upside-down by their ankles to a moving conveyor belt. The birds are then given intensely painful electric shocks^[10], which are intended to immobilize them to make it easier to slit their throats.^[11] The shocks are frequently not powerful enough to render them unconscious.^[12] After being shocked, the birds' throats are slashed, usually by a mechanical blade.

Inevitably, the blade misses some birds who then proceed to the next station on the assembly line: the scalding tank. According to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, in 2013 almost 60,000 birds had their bodies submerged in scalding hot water (about 62° C) while they were fully conscious.^[13]

According to Virgil Butler, a former Tyson slaughterhouse worker, "When this happens, the chickens flop, scream, kick, and their eyeballs pop out of their heads. Then, they often come out the other end with broken