

fatal inflammation of the udder tissue.¹⁹ Cows used for milk production are kept continuously pregnant or milking. Procalves taken away within hours or days of birth. They are bred to produce far more milk than their calves would need. As the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) reports, "On average, a U.S. dairy cow produced 9,193 kg (20,267 lb) of milk in 2007, more than double the per-cow milk yield in 1967 and 47% more than the per-cow milk yield in 1987. . . . Even though the number of cows in the dairy industry declined from 1987 to 2007, the total production of milk increased by 30%."²⁰ As with battery hens, this overproduction leaves cows susceptible to limping, weak lambs, and broken bones, as they must walk with an unusual gait to carry such large and heavy udders.²¹

Pigs are prone to disabling conditions as well. Most upsetting to the pork industry is porcine stress syndrome, which costs the industry an estimated \$90 million a year.²² The condition is genetic, resulting from half a century of selective breeding for large and lean muscles. The condition makes pigs susceptible to heart attacks if they are stressed, which is inevitable on industrialized pig farms. All of the pigs live in cramped and filthy conditions, but it is the female animals who are the worst off. They are kept continually pregnant or nursing in cages so small that they often cannot even sit up and are forced to lie on their side until the next breeding cycle begins.

Pigs also experience disabling leg conditions because of a lack of physical exercise and the unusual weight they are bred to carry. They are prone to a wide variety of disabilities and diseases, including severe arthritis that affects their ability to walk. A slaughterhouse in Sioux City, Iowa, John Morrell & Company (which closed in 2010) had the capacity to slaughter 75,000 hogs a week, or one pig every four seconds. This is how one employee described it: "The preferred method of handling a cripple at Morrell's is to beat him to death with a lead pipe before he gets into the chute. It's called 'piping.'"²³ Another said, "If a hog can't walk, they scoop the son of a bitch up on a dead run with a Bobcat [small tractor]. Whup! Right up in the air. If he stays in the bucket, he stays in. If he falls out, you run him over or pin him against the wall, finish busting the rest of his legs so he can't run

any further."²⁴ Comparing this reality to the general enthusiasm over Internet sensation Chris P. Bacon, it becomes apparent just how conflicted human beings are about how we should treat and how conflicted animals feel about animals.

One need not look past the daily newspapers to realize the impact of industrial farming on animal health. Outbreaks of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (mad cow disease), foot and mouth disease, swine flu, avian flu, and other diseases of industrially farmed animals have led to countless headlines over the past few years. In the spring of 2015 the worst outbreak of avian flu ever to hit the United States spread across a dozen states and, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, led to the death of more than 48 million birds. These birds did not die of the flu. Avian flu infects even one bird, the whole flock is killed. And these are not flocks of a few dozen animals. *The Guardian* reports that in Iowa, the worst hit state, an egg farm holds anywhere from seventy thousand to 5 million chickens. In such a scenario, "infection means slaughtering an unimaginable number of animals." If the affected birds are egg-laying hens, they are "euthanized" with carbon dioxide gas. Because carbon dioxide isn't effective in the enclosures that house broiler chickens and turkeys, they are suffocated to death with water-based foam, a process that can take three to seven minutes.²⁵

In 2001 a highly publicized outbreak of foot and mouth disease—a virus that is not lethal to humans or animals—swept through the United Kingdom. Pyres of burning cattle carcasses could be seen across the English countryside and all over the international media. The fires were to dispose of the bodies of more than 10 million adult and baby cows, pigs, and sheep who were shot, burned, and then bulldozed into mass graves.²⁶ Reports described terrified animals running over each other in an attempt to escape their executioners. Millions of these animals did not have foot and mouth disease, which is preventable and can be easily treated with veterinary care. They were killed because trade policies required it.²⁷

All of these animals—the 10 million cows, pigs, and sheep and the 48 million chickens and turkeys—were destined for early and traumatic deaths regardless of these culling campaigns. What was