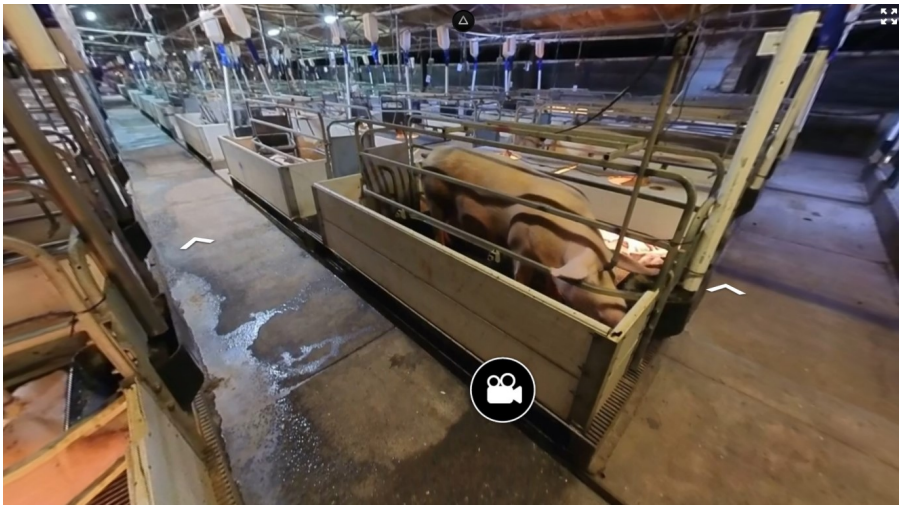
MEDIA RELEASE: 8 JANUARY 2024

FARM TRANSPARENCY PROJECT

Animal advocates release groundbreaking virtual reality tour of major Victorian piggery, as parliamentary inquiry continues



- Farm Transparency Project has released an interactive virtual-reality tour of a major Victorian piggery, using 360° footage they captured while trespassing in the facility in late 2023.
- The group states that the tour is their latest way to increase public awareness of modern pig farming practices, and to encourage members of the public to make a submission to the ongoing Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Pig Welfare.
- The footage shows mother pigs (sows) and piglets in breeding and 'weaner' sheds, and contains embedded videos featuring a guided tour of the facility by Executive Director of Farm Transparency Project, Chris Delforce, who points out issues common to commercial pig farms such as dead and dying piglets, tail docking without pain relief, extreme confinement and more

Animal advocacy group Farm Transparency Project has released a “world-first” interactive virtual tour from inside a major Victorian pig factory farm. The tour is available on their website and allows a viewer to 'walk through' the piggery, experiencing 360° footage from inside the sow housing, breeding (farrowing) and weaner sheds of the facility. The tour comes less than a week before the closure of public submissions to the Victorian parliamentary inquiry into pig welfare, which was initiated following Farm Transparency Project’s recent investigations into gas chambers in pig slaughterhouses (2023), and the ongoing use of sow stalls in Victorian piggeries (2022).

Video clips are embedded into the tour, including videos featuring Executive Director of Farm Transparency Project, Chris Delforce, giving a guided tour of the facility, and videos showing standard practices in Victorian piggeries, including the cutting of tails without anaesthetic and the killing of underweight or weak piglets by bashing their heads on a concrete floor or hard surface. The tour is compatible with virtual reality headsets, and the group has begun holding public outreach sessions in Melbourne, where passers-by can put on a headset and experience the piggery as though they were standing inside it.

Delforce says that himself and his team decided to make the tour in response to a similar virtual tour released last year by Australian Pork Limited, which he says displays a “highly sanitised and misleading perspective of Australian pig farming and slaughter.”

“For the last 12 years I have been investigating Australian pig farms and slaughterhouses. In that time, I’ve entered and filmed inside almost 100 piggeries and dozens of slaughterhouses. In every one of these places, I have seen pain, suffering and death on an unthinkable scale. We believe that consumers have the right to know exactly where the products they pay for come from.”

“This tour gives consumers the opportunity to see inside these facilities in a way that they never have before. We’ve used the latest in 360° camera technology to capture a major Victorian piggery in the exact state that it was in, on an average night in 2023. Rather than carefully choosing angles and lighting, like the pig slaughter industry has done, viewers can virtually walk through the facility and look around for themselves. This is industry transparency like you've never seen before. We hope that by providing this tour, we will show exactly what the Australian pork industry has been hiding with its carefully sanitised version of a brutal and cruel reality.”

Public submissions for the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Pig Welfare close on January 12th. Public hearings are expected to be held next month.

Facilities related to this media release:
Gowanbrae Piggery, Pine Lodge VIC

Campaigns related to this media release:
The Price of Pork
Sow stalls

Farm Transparency Project (FTP) is a non-profit animal protection charity, dedicated to ending the abuse and exploitation of animals in farms, slaughterhouses and other commercial settings. Through comprehensive investigations, documentary films, and the creation of innovative tools and resources, FTP seeks to force industry transparency and educate consumers by shining a light on the brutal reality endured by animals in the name of profit.