MEDIA RELEASE: 20 MARCH 2024

FARM TRANSPARENCY PROJECT

Protest outside Northern Victoria pig farm where 'sickening' bestiality took place



30+ animal activists are protesting outside a Northern Victoria pig farm, after "sickening" bestiality act revealed last week.

- 30+ animal activists have gathered outside Midland Bacon pig farm in Carag Carag, demanding the release of the sow who last month was captured on camera being raped by a worker, while confined to a farrowing crate.
- A global petition to free the sow, who activists have named Olivia, has been signed by over 13,000 people. The activists have arrived at the farm with a livestock trailer and are demanding that she be released into the care of an animal sanctuary.
- The protest has been organised by Farm Transparency Project, whose investigators inadvertently captured the vile footage during routine surveillance of the facility.

Footage and photos will be uploaded to https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1BFkwEUQKL4GtxLxqHLEvpoaqnfFrCCHF?usp=sharing.

Thirty (30) animal activists have converged on Northen Victoria piggery, Midland Bacon, in Carag Carag, where just last month hidden cameras installed by Farm Transparency Project captured horrific footage of a piggery worker raping a sow who was confined to a farrowing crate. The piggery worker was later confirmed to be the son of the manager and operator of the pig farm.

Last week, this shocking footage was released publicly by ABC's *7.30* program, kickstarting a global call for the piggery to release the abused sow, who has been named Olivia, into the care of an animal sanctuary, rather than continue to use her for breeding or send her to die in a gas chamber at nearby pig slaughterhouse, Benalla abattoir. Activists today are demanding that Olivia be released into their care and are saying that they intend to remain at the property for as long as it takes to get Olivia home safely.

Prominent animal rights campaigner, Sophie Wilcher, started the petition to free Olivia, alongside dietician Meghan Quinlan. Ms. Wilcher says that she has tried everything else to secure Olivia's release before attending today.

"I started by calling the police, who were already well aware of the case and had arrested the perpetrator before the footage was released. They told me that they could do nothing to help Olivia and told me to talk to the RSPCA. When I contacted the RSPCA, however, I was informed that they didn't have jurisdiction to intervene as the property had more than 25 animals. I was directed to contact Agriculture Victoria, which I did, but received no help there either. I have emailed, texted and called the operator of the piggery explaining how a sanctuary has agreed to take Olivia and will provide her a loving home, called and sent letters to the two owners of the piggery and I have done everything else I could possibly imagine doing to get this one sow, who was violated in the most horrific way possible, released into our care. Why is it so hard to let her live out her life in peace?"

"We're here today to show just how many people care about Olivia and want her to be released. We're ready to take her away with us right now, all we need is for the piggery to show some mercy and release her. Hasn't she suffered enough?"

Strategy and Campaigns Director at Farm Transparency Project, Harley McDonald-Eckersall, has said that she's been deeply moved by how Olivia's story has touched so many people.

"Pigs are intelligent, sentient animals who have the capacity for pain, fear and suffering. What Olivia must have experienced

while being abused in this way, unable to escape, is horrific to imagine. It is our hope that the piggery decides to do what is right and allow Olivia to live out the rest of her life on an animal sanctuary, free from abuse and exploitation."

"I think for many people, Olivia's story has opened their eyes to the dark reality of what is happening every day in Australian farms and slaughterhouses. While what happened to Olivia is undoubtedly horrific, it is not so different to what happens to millions of pigs just like her who are raised for food in these factory farms. Sadly, Olivia is just one pig amongst the five million who are killed annually in Australia. Her story, while heartbreaking, is not unique."

Facilities related to this media release:
Midland Bacon, Carag Carag 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.