MEDIA RELEASE: 18 APRIL 2024

Hidden cameras reveal emaciated cows killed while fully conscious at northern Victorian slaughterhouse



View photos and footage
View location evidence

Hidden camera footage captured by investigators from Farm Transparency Project (FTP) in February 2024 shows ineffective stunning of injured and emaciated cows at Ralphs Meat Co in Seymour, Northern Victoria.

The daily slaughter of up to 500 cows, steers and bulls is documented, with many of those killed being dairy cows whose milk production has slowed. Footage shows workers jabbing cows in the face and head with painful electric prodders, and repeatedly hitting them with metal gates. Many show signs of consciousness after 'stunning' and even after their throats have been slit, suffering for minutes.

FTP's investigators illegally entered the property throughout February 2024 and installed cameras over the race, stunning area and kill room, where cattle have their throats slit. After reviewing the footage, FTP made a formal complaint to Victoria's slaughterhouse regulator, Primesafe. Primesafe and the federal Department of Agriculture, responsible for export-accredited slaughterhouses, have launched an investigation into the facility.

FTP spokesperson, Harley McDonald-Eckersall, says that the footage they have captured is an example of the pain and suffering animals routinely experience in Australian slaughterhouses.

“First off, we’re seeing cows sent to slaughter in incredibly poor physical health. Many of them are ex dairy cows, sent to slaughter because they can’t produce the same amount of milk anymore. You can see that they are emaciated, with swollen, painful udders that almost touch the ground. Then, we see that the actual process of slaughter is not the quick, painless death that consumers are led to believe is the reality in Australian slaughterhouses. Instead, these gentle animals suffer for minutes, many remaining conscious even after their throats have been cut."

She also says that most consumers aren’t aware that dairy cows are sent to slaughter at such a young age.

“When most people think of dairy, they don’t think of it as a slaughter industry. While cows don’t have to die to produce milk, they are still killed as soon as they become less profitable to a dairy farm. On high production dairy farms, where cows are milked up to three times a day, this happens at between 3-4 years of age. Naturally, a cow could live for up to twenty years.”

Facilities related to this media release:
Ralphs Meat Co, Seymour VIC

Campaigns related to this media release:
End Dairy Slaughter
Shut down slaughterhouses

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.