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To Whom It May Concern,

I, Dr. Christi Camblor, DVM, have been asked to view a film made available to me by Mercy for Animals wherein several scenes filmed at a commercial battery cage egg farm are depicted. Below is my professional opinion regarding the content of that footage. I graduated with a doctorate in veterinary medicine from UC Davis in 2007 and also hold a Bachelors of Science in Animal Biology.

Killing:

In the first scene a live chicken that appears to have been left behind in a cage is thrown to the floor and subsequently kicked and stepped on repeatedly by a worker. The chicken is in clear distress, flailing, flapping her wings and thrashing as the worker continues to step on different parts of her body as he smashes her with his boot, ultimately lifting a railing and shoving her crushed, yet still moving and alive, body beneath the bottom row of cages.

The animal handling in this scene, which essentially consists of the chicken being bludgeoned and kicked to death, clearly causes both extreme physical and emotional suffering to the animal. Undoubtedly, this bird endured broken bones, internal organ damage, and immense pain and was thus left to remain in that condition as she died, which occurred at an unknown period of time later and may have taken hours to days.

A subsequent scene shows a chicken that appears to be in very poor health being pulled out of the cage by a worker that then proceeds to grab the bird by the head and swing her around by the neck multiple times. The bird is then thrown onto the floor a few feet away and the worker is scene walking away. The bird is filmed and is still a live with legs twitching a full 2 minutes following this event.

The inhumane disposal of this bird is egregious. The worker made no attempt to ensure the chicken was indeed dead and the bird was allowed to lie in extreme physical distress for an unknown period of time prior to eventually expiring on her own.

Populating Cages w/ Pullets

In this scene workers are seen lifting pullets and forcing them into the battery cages. The birds are generally grabbed 2 at a time and crammed into the cages with brute force. On numerous occasions you see their heads, wings, legs, necks being bashed against the steel wire cages as workers carelessly and quickly try to fit them through the small opening of the door.



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The animal suffering demonstrated in this footage is demonstrative of the inherent cruelty within the battery cage system wherein the sheer volume of chickens that are being populated coupled with the poor design of the door/cage they are being placed in leads to invariable brutality. Undoubtedly bones are broken, muscles bruised, and other painful injuries endured as these birds are repeatedly bashed up against metal wire. The birds are then left to live with these injuries within the confines of their overcrowded battery cages.

Depopulating of Spent Hens

In this scene the spent layer hens are being pulled from the cage and tossed into the carbon dioxide cart where they are gassed to death. The animal handling in this scene is careless and harmful to the birds. Animals are tossed carelessly toward the cart, grabbed by wings, legs, and necks – often getting caught in the door of the cage and their way out and being yanked out by brute force undeniably causing painful injuries and severe stress to these animals.

The system itself, which consists of a large volume of hens that must be depopulated and a poor cage design with a very small opening from which the hens must be pulled, is inherently flawed and inconsistent with animal welfare friendly practices.

Injured/Sick Animals

Within the footage there are numerous scenes that depict chickens in extreme physical distress. There are multiple shots of moribund chickens with ailments ranging from broken limbs to abscessed cloacae to illness so severe the birds are unable to open their eyes or stand. The presence of animals in such poor conditions without any apparent method to detect them or provide them with an instant death is extremely concerning. These animals are left to essentially linger and die of these painful ailments within the confines of the battery cage {there are shots of decaying carcasses being pulled from cages with live hens} which is not only inconsistent with even the most basic animal welfare standards but also presents serious public health concerns.

Overall Impressions of Animal Handling at the Facility

The animal handling shown in this video is demonstrative of gross animal cruelty and violates all standards of animal welfare. Animals are crushed to death, tossed aside with broken bones and massive injury, and handled with careless brutality.


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