

# The Center For Consumer Freedom<sup>®</sup>

April 10, 2008

Mr. Jon Ernst, Sales Operations Director  
*Newsweek*  
251 West 57th Street  
New York, NY 10019

## **Via Overnight FedEx**

Dear Mr. Ernst,

I am writing to express my profound disappointment and frustration at the advertisement that *Newsweek* placed on page 71 of its April 14 issue. The ad in question, from an animal rights group called the Humane Farming Association (HFA), is riddled with falsehoods and inaccuracies that unfairly and inaccurately portray all veal producers as vicious animal abusers. Judging by your own standards, the ad should never have been accepted. The *Newsweek* “Contract conditions” state that advertisers must guarantee:

... that their advertisements and their entire contents and subject matter are in no way false, deceptive, misleading, fraudulent, libelous, [or] defamatory ...

Among the more obvious “false, deceptive, [and] misleading” statements in the HFA ad:

- HFA claims that a veal calf’s “entire life” is spent in a confining crate. In fact, the entire U.S. veal industry is in the middle of a conversion to “group housing,” which eliminates the use of crates. Regardless, scientific studies have found that the two methods of raising calves are equivalent in terms of animal welfare. If you are interested, I could provide you with independent scientific studies in this regard.
- HFA claims that calves are “*not* fed mother’s milk.” In fact, most veal calves are provided cow’s milk during their first week, at which point they are weaned and fed a

milk-replacer formula tailored to their nutritional needs. This is analogous to the baby formula that many women choose to feed their infant children.

- HFA claims that veal calves are fed “an antibiotic-laced formula.” In fact, veal calf milk-replacer contains no antibiotics at all. It’s typical for veal farmers (as with other farmers) to administer therapeutic antibiotics to sick animals for their own protection, but there’s no indication that the mythical animal described in HFA’s ad was suffering from any acute illness.
- HFA claims that the U.S. Department of Agriculture “absolutely [does] not ... prevent tainted veal from being sold.” In fact, USDA inspectors are present in every single facility where veal calves are slaughtered and meat is processed. I am informed by the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service that veal is the most often-tested meat during processing (nearly 12 percent of the national total), despite the fact that veal represents the smallest segment (around one-tenth of one percent) of the U.S. meat industry.
- HFA claims that “illegal and unapproved drugs have been widely used in veal calves.” This is patently false, and assumes a level of knowledge about widespread veal-production practices that I seriously doubt HFA has.
- HFA characterizes veal farmers as “veal factories.” In fact, veal is one of the last remaining forms of animal protein that is routinely “family-farmed.” There are fewer than 700 veal farmers in the United States, and most have less than 300 animals.

The above six points are merely the low-hanging fruit. The overall tone of the ad is so filled with vitriol that I find it hard to believe *Newsweek* would have accepted a similar ad targeting other U.S. industries (apple growers, corn farmers, or dairymen, for example), regardless of whether its claims were accurate.

My own organization has placed several full-page ads in *Newsweek* in the past. I find it unbelievable that the Humane Farming Association was subjected to the same sort of scrutiny and intense review to which our ads are routinely (and understandably) subjected.

I would be keenly interested in learning whether *Newsweek* ever asked the Humane Farming Association to substantiate the above claims—and if so, what sort of evidence the group provided that could have satisfied the attorneys performing due diligence prior to publication. The only explanation I can imagine is that perhaps someone on your central advertising staff is so blindly sympathetic to the cause of animal “rights” that he or she was willfully blind to an obviously false and deceptive ad.

In the many years I have been studying the animal protection movement, I have never encountered a more baseless, dishonest, and disingenuous advertisement than the one you published this week. *Newsweek* owes a sincere apology (or at least a proper explanation) to veal farmers, to members of the public who choose to eat veal, and to its readers in general.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

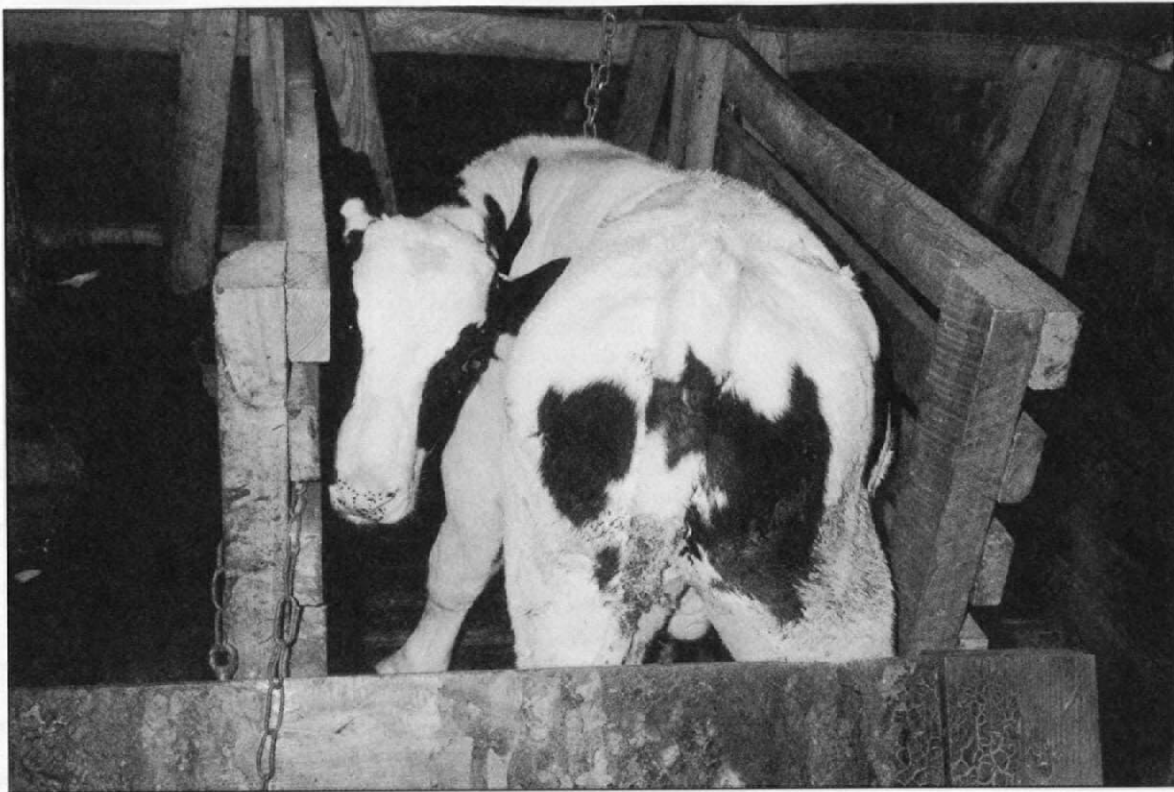
David Martosko

Director of Research

*enclosure*: Humane Farming Association ad

cc: Tom Aschein, CEO  
Gregory Osberg, President  
Patrick Hagerty, U.S. Publisher

# Q: Why can't this veal calf walk?



## A: He has only two feet.

Actually, less than two feet. Twenty-two inches to be exact. His entire life is spent chained in a wooden crate measuring only 22 inches wide and 56 inches long. The crate is so small that the calf can't walk or even turn around.

Most people think animal abuse is illegal. It isn't. In veal factories, it's business as usual. "Milk-fed" veal is produced by making a calf anemic.

The calf is *not* fed mother's milk. He's fed an antibiotic-laced formula that leads to diarrhea. He must lie in his own excrement — choking on the ammonia gases. He's chained with hundreds of other baby calves suffering the same fate.

### Tainted Veal

According to the USDA, sulfamethazine (a known carcinogen), oxytetracycline, penicillin, neomycin, streptomycin, and gentamycin have all previously been found in veal.

Doesn't the USDA prevent tainted veal from being sold? Absolutely not. The USDA itself admits that most veal is never tested for toxic residue.

The industry claims that the drugs used in veal have been approved by the FDA. But don't buy it. The fact is: Illegal and unapproved drugs have been widely used in veal calves.

Veal factories maximize profits for agribusiness drug companies because they are a breeding ground for disease. To keep calves alive under such torturous conditions, they are given drugs which can be passed on to consumers.

It doesn't have to be this way. And with your help, it won't be. *Please join us.*

**YES!** I support HFA's National Veal Boycott. Factory farms must be stopped from abusing animals, misusing drugs, and destroying the environment. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

\$20    \$50    \$100    \$500    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Free newsletter available upon request.

**THE HUMANE FARMING ASSOCIATION (HFA)**