



Suggested Letter to the Editor
(feel free to amend, or write your own letter)

I have just watched footage of British slaughterhouses, which was filmed secretly by campaigning group Animal Aid. It is the most shocking thing I have ever seen.

Terrified sheep and pigs ran crazily in circles, desperately looking for an escape. Many animals were partially stunned and left writhing or convulsing on the floor, while the stun operator ignored their plight. I watched ewes being stunned while their young suckled them. The lambs – no bigger than cats – were then stunned, hoisted and had their throats cut. Animals were kicked, hit, goaded, sworn at and stood on.

Another film showed events at a supposedly ‘high welfare’ organic plant, where animals were also kicked in the face, inadequately stunned and even had their heads cut off before they were dead.

This is a damning indictment of animal welfare in this country, and makes a mockery of the systems that are supposed to protect animals from the worst abuses at the most vulnerable time of their lives.

I would urge others to watch the films, too, and see for themselves the suffering animals endure so people can eat meat. I will demand action of Defra and will be taking personal responsibility, too: I will no longer eat meat.

Suggested Letter to MP
(feel free to amend, or write your own letter)

I am writing to ask you to do all you can to protect animals from the worst suffering at the most vulnerable time of their lives: at slaughter.

Animal Aid’s 18-month investigation into seven randomly chosen slaughterhouses has revealed serious welfare failings at six of them. There is much that must be rectified to stop such cruelties.

Animal Aid has identified three measures that could encourage best practice, ensure compliance, help with training and aid cruelty prosecutions:

- CCTV should be installed in all slaughterhouses.
- Stun operators and slaughterers should be retrained and re-assessed for proficiency at least every three years (currently, there is no retraining or re-assessment at all).
- The ‘fit and proper person’ test should be rigorously applied. Currently, criminal convictions for animal cruelty, and for violent and sexual attacks on people, do not disbar a person from becoming a slaughterer.

I urge you to contact Defra and the Food Standards Agency to support these proposals.