

The Cruelty of the “Foie Gras” Industry

To produce “foie gras,” ducks or geese are restrained and pumped full of feed that weighs twenty percent of their healthy body weight per day—for an average human, this would be 30 pounds of food. This results in immense internal pressure and severe pain. The birds pant incessantly and have trouble moving and walking. Many also experience organ rupture and death. It is at the point when the birds would otherwise die from organ rupture that the “foie gras” industry finds the birds to be ideal for slaughter.

Foie Gras Production Is *Illegal* In Fifteen Countries

The force feeding of ducks and geese to produce “foie gras” is so cruel that it is illegal in Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, England, Switzerland, Austria, Poland, The Czech Republic, Austria, South Africa, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom. Israel, the world’s third largest producer of foie gras has also recently ruled that force feeding violates their existing anti-cruelty laws. Most other countries would also find force feeding illegal if it were practiced there, but only a few countries have farms engaging in this cruelty. ***Governor Schwarzenegger signed a law to phase out the production and sale of “foie gras” in the state of California, creating a permanent ban in 2012. Similar legislation is pending in NY, MA, IL and OR.***



What The ASPCA Has To Say About Foie Gras

“Foie gras is the grossly enlarged liver of a duck or goose, obtained by restraining the animal and inserting a long tube down his throat, through which large quantities of food are forced into his stomach. The bird’s liver becomes so enlarged that, according to the documentation of veterinarians, the animal must experience unspeakable pain and suffering. The results of necropsies performed on dead birds that had been force-fed have shown ruptured livers, throat damage, esophageal trauma and food spilling from the birds’ throats and out of their nostrils....Foie gras production involves, indeed necessitates, untold suffering and violates section 353 [New York State’s anti-cruelty statute].” —*Stacy Wolf, Esq., ASPCA*

Debunking the Myths of Foie Gras

MYTH — Force feeding mimics natural gorging of birds before migration.

REALITY— Ducks used in “foie gras” production are an artificial hybrid of two species, one of which does not migrate in the wild. Ducks that do migrate will eat more than normal before migration, and their livers may expand one and a half to two times. However, ducks force fed for “foie gras” experience the very painful state of having their livers expanded by FIVE to TEN times their normal size. To claim that this torturous force feeding process somehow mimics nature is absurd. Ducks in this state can barely walk, let alone migrate.

MYTH— Force feeding does not injure the birds because they have hardened esophagi.

REALITY— This is a lie. Ducks do not have hardened or “calcified” esophagi, as the foie gras industry often claims. Ducks do have a calcified gizzard—the organ preceding the esophagus that grinds the food—but their esophagi are just as soft and susceptible to injury as a human’s. Thus, the force feeding pipe does injure the throats of the ducks, as one would imagine it would.

MYTH — Ducks enjoy being force fed and run to the feeders.

REALITY— There is simply not a grain of truth in this statement. The Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare of the European Union observed, in contrast to ordinary hand-fed ducks who *do* run to be fed, force-fed ducks try to get away from the feeder as much as possible, and this behavior has been documented in controlled scientific studies as well.