

Compassion in World Farming - Ireland opposes efforts to re-start live cattle exports from Ireland to the Middle East and North Africa

Compassion in World Farming - Ireland is appalled by media reports of efforts to re-start live cattle exports from Ireland to countries in the Middle East and North Africa, such as the Lebanon, Egypt and Libya.

Following a long campaign by Compassion in World Farming and other animal welfare organisations, in 2005 the EU ended the subsidies that fuelled live cattle exports from EU countries to the Middle East and North Africa. Trade from Ireland virtually ceased once the subsidies were stopped.

Standards of animal welfare protection, both at slaughter and during transport, can be very poor in the Middle East and North Africa. Animals delivered into this environment can suffer terribly. Over the years, investigations by Compassion in World Farming and other animal welfare organisations have brought back harrowing footage showing the inhumane treatment of animals. *For example:*

- a bull at a very basic slaughterhouse in Egypt having the tendons in his hind legs cut to make him easier to handle before being slaughtered (filmed by Animals Australia in December 2006);
- chaotic conditions inside a large slaughterhouse in Cairo, where some cattle were seen to die very slowly after having their throats cut whilst fully conscious, with one animal trying to struggle to his feet whilst “bleeding out” (filmed by Compassion in World Farming in 2004 - a 2006 investigation by Animals Australia found there had been no improvement at the same slaughterhouse).

The situation is unlikely to be much different today. There is evidence from a range of countries in the Middle East/North Africa showing that OIE international standards on animal transport and slaughter are not kept. The OIE is the World Organisation for Animal Health, and the standards lay down basic animal welfare protection measures.



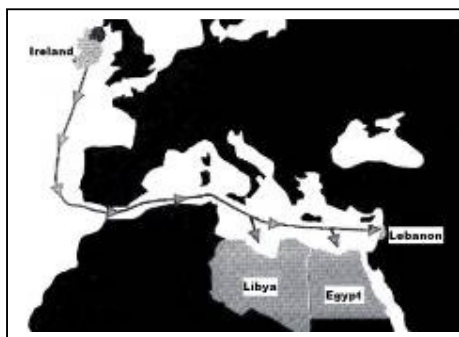
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We all remember this photo of an Irish bull in a Lebanese slaughterhouse: left to wait before he is slaughtered, he struggles desperately with his front leg tied high above him to the side of the truck he arrived in. (Filmed during Compassion in World Farming's investigation in the Lebanon in 1997).

Slaughter in the Middle East and North Africa is often carried out by cutting the animal's throat without stunning the animal first, for religious reasons (sadly, this is permitted by both OIE standards and EU law).

Scientific research has shown that slaughter without stunning is inhumane. The problems are added to considerably by cruel treatment prior to slaughter, such as animals being heavily beaten or having their leg tendons cut, as seen in investigations in Egypt.

The sea-journey from Ireland to the Middle East or North Africa is very long, e.g. it is over 3,000 miles to the Lebanon and takes about a week or more by ship. Bad weather or other delays can result in conditions being very difficult for animals.



Libya, Egypt and the Lebanon are countries mentioned in the media as possible destinations for Irish cattle.

Compassion in World Farming - Ireland has written to Agriculture Minister Brendan Smith, expressing our total opposition to any resumption of live cattle exports from Ireland to the Middle East and North Africa, on animal welfare grounds.

We believe that Irish animals should not be transported on very long journeys to countries where we know that their welfare is not properly protected. This trade should be in meat, not live animals.

ACTION

As a matter of urgency, please write to Agriculture Minister Brendan Smith, saying that you are opposed to any resumption of live cattle exports from Ireland to countries in the Middle East and North Africa. You can say that the welfare of Irish animals cannot be protected once they arrive in these countries, where standards can be very poor; and that any trade should be in meat, not live animals.



Write to (a letter is best): Minister Brendan Smith,
Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Food,
Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

Email: minister@agriculture.gov.ie

Pity the poor mink

"Pity the poor mink. Confined in tiny battery-style cages on Ireland's fur farms or hunted to death if they manage to escape because, as a non-native species, they endanger our wildlife (Irish Independent, May 11).

Frankly, it is pointless killing feral mink whilst fur farms continue to operate here, as there will always be a risk of escapees.

Mink farming is already illegal in Northern Ireland. It is best to now phase out the remaining five or so fur farms in the Republic - without delay - as set out in the agreed Programme for Government."

The above letter, by Mary-Anne Bartlett, Compassion in World Farming - Ireland's Director, was published in the *Irish Independent* on 13th May 2010.

You can read a report about the cull of feral mink in Ireland from our website (www.ciwf.ie).

Progress of the phase-out of fur farming

Asked about progress of the three year phase-out of fur farming, agreed in the renewed Programme for Government, Green Party Senator Dan Boyle assured Compassion in World Farming - Ireland that he is confident that the necessary legislation is "imminent".



Caged mink on an Irish fur farm

Photo © Compassion in World Farming / Respect for Animals

ACTION ON FUR FARMING

- The Green Party is doing admirable work on animal welfare issues, and we must continue to give them support and encouragement in this. **Please write to Senator Dan Boyle and Minister John Gormley** of the Green Party, supporting their Party's stance against fur farming, and urging them to ensure that the necessary legislation to phase-out fur farms is put into place as soon as possible.

Senator Dan Boyle, Seanad Éireann, Leinster House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

Minister John Gormley, Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Custom House, Dublin 1

- Fianna Fáil, in the past, did not support a ban on fur farming. Therefore it is very important to continue to **write to Agriculture Minister Brendan Smith**, calling on him to end fur farming without delay. (See address on p1.)



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Battery cage ban on track

The EU-wide ban on the barren battery cage for laying hens comes into effect on 1st January 2012. This marks a very major milestone for the welfare of farm animals.

Some in the egg industry, and some countries, have tried to get the battery cage ban deferred.

It is our view that the battery cage ban is an important animal welfare improvement that must come into force in 2012 as agreed. Compassion in World Farming (international) has pointed out that EU poultry farmers have had plenty of time to organise replacing battery cages with alternative systems.

The latest attempt to defer the ban came from the Polish government earlier this year. Compassion in World Farming (international) immediately mobilised its



Photo © Compassion in World Farming

lobbyists across Europe, and in the end this attempt to push back the date of the ban failed.

Compassion in World Farming - Ireland was delighted that Ireland did not support the Polish proposal.

Recently, the EU Commissioner responsible for consumer health and animal welfare, John Dalli, re-

confirmed to Compassion in World Farming's (international) Chief Executive, Philip Lymbery, that there will be no delay to the 2012 ban on barren battery cages. This is very welcome news.

We will remain vigilant until the ban is safely in place, and look forward to celebrating this very significant animal welfare achievement on 1st January 2012!

Dear Supporter,

We're heartened by the Green Party's recent success with the passing of the *Wildlife (Amendment) Bill 2010*, which surely marks a new awareness in Ireland about the importance of animal welfare.

At EU level, there are more steps forward: the ban on barren battery cages for laying hens is on track to come into force in 2012, followed the next year by the ban on confining breeding sows in narrow individual stalls after the first 4 weeks of pregnancy (pictured, right).

Things are moving on, though sadly there is still a long way to go yet. Thank you so much for your continued support and much appreciated donations, which are very welcome.

Mary-Anne Bartlett

Director, Compassion in World Farming - Ireland



Inhumane sow stalls will become illegal in 2013

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