

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) stunning of pigs –time for a humane alternative



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Eyes on
Animals

Watching
out for their
welfare



Eyes on Animals...



...inspects, trains and advises all parties that have a duty-of-care towards farm animal welfare.

Our aim: Reduce suffering

Our tools: EU animal-welfare legislation



Background



Visit to a pig slaughterhouse
that did not want to switch
from electric stunning to CO₂

Major trend-switch to CO₂



*2004: The **European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)**, established by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament has adopted opinions on the welfare aspects of the main systems of stunning and killing. Recommendations to phase out the use of carbon dioxide for pigs are not included in this Regulation because the impact assessment revealed that such recommendations were not economically viable at present in the EU. However, it is important to continue this discussion in the future.*

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.



11.04.2014

Tesco is:

committed to achieving high levels of animal welfare throughout the production system and have specified that all suppliers must ensure that animals must not be caused any avoidable excitement, pain or suffering. As part of our continuous process of looking at ways to improve welfare we have specified in our most recent code of practice that at the point of stun for pigs, all suppliers must move to a Butina back loader CO₂ stun system or equivalent. All sites must have this system in place by 31 December 2017.



Eyes on Animals felt the urgent need to stimulate a serious discussion about aversiveness of CO₂ before things got out of hand...

Everyone had an opinion that CO₂ was humane, but few people could see it.



2012: Eyes on Animals obtained permission from three pig slaughterhouses to make a film.

Two independent scientists were selected to comment on the behaviour of pigs with regard to CO₂.



Paternoster/Gondola system (Tesco recommended)



Dip-lift CO₂ system





Behaviour indicators of suffering:

While violent, these movements in the first 15 -20 seconds are intentional, the pigs are clearly suffering.

- Head shake/gasping
- Screaming
- Burning sensation when breathing in
- Foam
- Breathlessness (hyperventilation)
- Climbing on each other/Attempts to escape
- Hitting against side bars



2013- present



- **Eyes on Animals** regularly meets with scientists and slaughter equipment manufacturing companies. Research on an alternative gas will start in late March.
- **Eyes on Animals** regularly meets with pig slaughterhouses building new facilities or renovating old ones to warn them to not yet invest in new CO₂ system (Hungary, the Netherlands).
- If plants invest tens of thousands of euros in a new CO₂ system now, it will take a long time later to be able to implement a humane alternative once its available!
- A large group of campaign-oriented NGOs lead by Animal Welfare Foundation in Germany is planning a campaign against CO₂ in upcoming months.



Thank you



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