

## CTV shows cruel reality of factory pig farming

Canadians recently got an eye-opening look at practices inside a factory pig farm courtesy of CTV's national current-affairs show *W5*. The segment titled "Food for Thought" aired December 8, 2012 and included extensive undercover video shot at Puratone, a major Manitoba pig producer now owned by Maple Leaf Foods.

The video was part of an undercover investigation conducted by Mercy for Animals Canada. An MFA investigator (his identity is kept secret) was hired by Puratone and worked for several months at a Puratone facility south of Winnipeg.

"Nothing could prepare me for what I saw," he tells *W5* investigative reporter Tom Kennedy. Practices he videotaped include workers kicking and pulling pigs by their ears, botching the euthanasia of a sow, and "thumping" piglets: slamming them head-first against hard objects to kill them. The sows also were confined in tiny gestation crates, or sow stalls.

In its response to the program, the pork industry has suggested these practices are isolated. A news release issued by Maple Leaf Foods states: "The video shows treatment of animals that is disturbing, portraying this treatment as accepted industry practice. It is not and is not tolerated at Maple Leaf."

At the same time, many of these practices, including

thumping piglets and confining sows in stalls, is standard among pork producers. In response to the thumping, Karl Kynoch, Chair of the Manitoba Pork Council, says, "It's part of doing business."

Ontario and Alberta veterinarians who viewed the footage said it "clearly shows evidence of abuse and neglect" and depicts "a life filled with privations, unrelenting physical, mental pain and emotional distress."

With increased public awareness, and at the same time Canada's new pig Code of Practice stalled again (please see the story on page 2), this is an ideal time to contact members of the pork industry as well as grocery retailers and let them know that:

- a) You know what's going on behind the closed doors of Canada's pig farms, and
- b) These practices are cruel and unacceptable.

You can find key contact names and email addresses at [Helpthepigs.com](http://Helpthepigs.com).



**Canadian Coalition for Farm Animals** is a *non-profit* coalition of 28 organizations dedicated to the welfare of animals raised for food in Canada.

**Our work is only possible through donations from individuals such as yourself.**

Contact us: [info@humanefood.ca](mailto:info@humanefood.ca) Our website: [www.humanefood.ca](http://www.humanefood.ca).

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## Pig code stalled — again

Our last issue of *News in a flash* reported that Canada's pig Code of Practice had been moved back from late 2012 to early 2013.

The Code has now been stalled again.

In a December 14, 2012 update from the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC — the body responsible for coordinating Canada's farm-animal codes of practice), the NFACC states: "We anticipate that the Code Development Committee will be able to meet a June 1, 2013 target for the start of the pig Code's public comment period. This is a pivotal date for ensuring that the pig Code is finished before the end of 2013."

NFACC says, "Recent media pieces have suggested that the pig Code's development has been delayed due to a request from the pork industry to evaluate the potential economic impact of possible changes. This is not the case."

Yet NFACC appears to contradict the above by noting, "The Canadian Pork Council (CPC) has requested the opportunity to conduct an economic analysis prior to releasing the Code for public comment."



If candid input at a recent Stratford, Ontario seminar on gestation stalls is any indication, economics related to open housing is the key factor causing the industry to drag its heels. Ironically, however, while industry representatives are pushing back, it would seem from the general comments at

the seminar that many pig farmers themselves are willing to move forward.

We will keep you posted, and in the meantime, please take a moment to send a quick email to NFACC using their [Contact us page](#) to let them know that these delays are unprofessional and reflect poorly on Canada's farm industry.

### Can you use more Loblaw postcards?

CCFA would like to send you sow stall and battery cage postcards pre-addressed to Loblaw's CEO, Galen Weston, to encourage Canada's largest grocer to move ahead on farm animal welfare. Just tell us how many, and which cards you want. Email us at [info@humanefood.ca](mailto:info@humanefood.ca), with your request, and don't forget to include your home mailing address.

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