



RECOGNITION OF ABUSE

The cruelty of foie gras has led more than a dozen countries around the world to ban its sale and/or production. Some of these include:

- The U.S. state of California (effective in 2012)
- European countries, such as Denmark, Germany, Norway, Poland, the Czech Republic, Italy, Finland, and Austria
- Israel (once the world's third largest producer of foie gras)
- South Africa

After assessing foie gras production practices, the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare of the European Commission, arguably the world's most credible body in charge of evaluating animal welfare, issued an 89-page report that concluded: "Force feeding, as currently practiced, is detrimental to the welfare of the birds." But while lawmakers, culinary masters and citizens around the globe increasingly agree that foie gras is cruel and unnecessary, there is still much work to be done before this deadly "delicacy" is relegated to the history books.

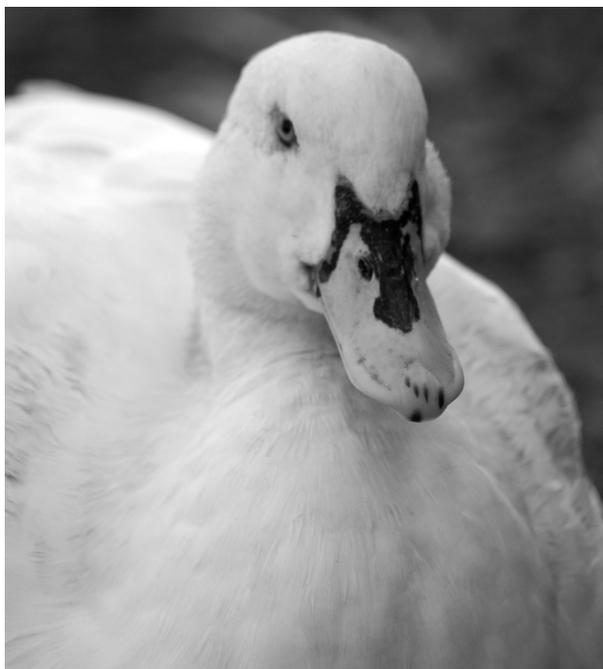
The truth behind foie gras is that it is cruel and ethically indefensible, but we can only stop the horrendous treatment of ducks and geese by taking action to end it. Visit nofoiegras.org or farmsanctuary.org to find out what you can do to help.



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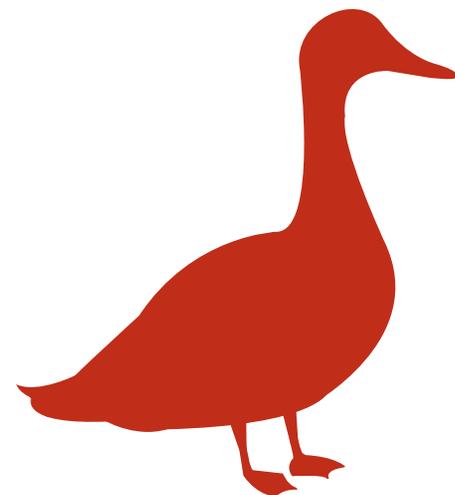
Farm Sanctuary is the nation's leading farm animal protection organization. Since incorporating in 1986, Farm Sanctuary has worked to expose and stop cruel practices of the "food animal" industry through research and investigations, legal and institutional reforms, public awareness projects, youth education, and direct rescue and refuge efforts. Farm Sanctuary shelters in Watkins Glen, N.Y., and Orland, Calif., provide lifelong care for hundreds of rescued animals, who have become ambassadors for farm animals everywhere by educating visitors about the realities of factory farming.

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The Truth Behind FOIE GRAS



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Foie gras (“fwah grah”) is produced by shoving pipes down the throats of ducks or geese and force-feeding them as much as one third of their own body weight daily for a period of two to four weeks. The force-feeding process (known as “gavage” in French), swells their livers up to 12 times their normal size. The abused, bloated birds are then slaughtered, and their livers are used to make the expensive pâté known as foie gras (which translates literally as “fatty liver”).



CULINARY CRUELTY

Foie gras producers force-feed ducks to intentionally induce a state of disease called hepatic lipidosis. After only a few weeks of being force-fed, most birds have difficulty standing, walking and even breathing. Some become so disabled that they can only move by pushing their wings against the feces-encrusted wire floors of their cages, injuring the birds’ leg joints and breast bones and making their skin prone to infected sores. Other ailments suffered by foie gras birds include:

- Respiratory distress, caused by an enlarged liver pressing on the birds’ air sacs
- Aspiration pneumonia (from food particles forced into the birds’ lungs)
- Lacerations on the trachea and esophagus
- Bacterial and fungal growth on internal organs
- Foot infections (known as bumblefoot)

- Cracked and broken bills
- Asphyxiation from feed impacted in the birds’ throats
- Hepatic encephalopathy (a buildup of toxins in the brain caused by liver failure)

Based on these and other symptoms, veterinarians and pathologists have deemed force-feeding inhumane. Even foie gras industry representatives concede that the process would be fatal if it continued beyond a few weeks. Not surprisingly, the mortality rate for ducks raised on foie gras farms is tremendously high — more than 20 times greater than that of conventional duck farming.



UNNATURAL ABUSE

Foie gras producers portray force-feeding as a natural extension of the pre-migration gorging many waterfowl engage in to build up energy stores for long flights. However, no bird would ever voluntarily ingest so much food that he could not even walk or stand — much less fly. Further, the Moulard duck used in foie gras production is a cross between the Muscovy and Pekin breeds — neither of which even migrate.

One former employee of a large North American foie gras facility explained, “The best way to maximize profits is to get the biggest — and hence, the most diseased — liver. As my supervisor stated, ‘the point of gavage is to make a duck as sick as possible, to bring them to the brink of death.’”



MORE FACTORY FARM HORRORS

In addition to being cruelly force-fed, birds used for foie gras endure other abuses, including:

- **Cruel culling** — Because their livers are thought to be too “veiny,” female hatchlings are disposed of by being ground up alive, gassed or suffocated inside plastic trash bags.
- **Mutilations** — Because the intensive confinement of birds generates frustration and aggression, foie gras producers sever the ends of the ducks’ upper bills and the ends of their toes without analgesic to limit their injury to one another, a practice that results in chronic, lifelong pain.
- **Insufficient access to water** — Although ducks and geese, as primarily aquatic birds, require water for preening, maintaining plumage condition and engaging in other instinctual behaviors, factory-farmed ducks and geese are barely given enough water in which to dip their beaks.