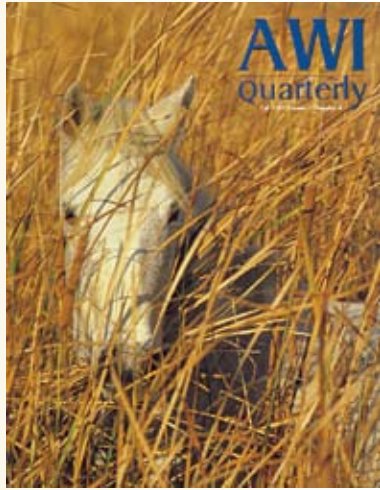




AWI

Quarterly

Fall 2006 Volume 55 Number 4



ABOUT THE COVER

Wild horses are often maligned for being a nuisance or destructive to the lands they graze. And following changes made by Senator Conrad Burns (R-MT) to the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act two years ago, they may be rounded up for slaughter. Wild horses 10-years-of-age and older or not adopted after three tries are sent to auction, where they will likely fall into the hands of a slaughterhouse “killer-buyer.”

However, these magnificent creatures are actually a vital part of many ecosystems in the United States and abroad. The wild horse, a reintroduced native species, maintain lands by keeping vegetation in check. Without the animals’ presence, many areas would become impenetrable and overgrown. Accomplished horse photographer Bob Langrish generously donated this cover image for the Fall 2006 *AWI Quarterly*. Passage of the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act is needed to make sure our horses, both wild and domestic, are protected. (see stories pages 4-5).

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Law Finally Catches up with Arkansas Animal Dealer Dynasty

On July 14, Judge Leon Holmes sentenced notorious former Class B Dealer C.C. Baird and his wife Patsy for their crimes. Tracy Silverman, the Animal Welfare Institute’s legal associate, was present in the courtroom, along with Last Chance for Animals President Chris DeRose, representatives of other humane groups and several reporters. It had been nearly one year since C.C. Baird pled guilty to money laundering and Patsy Baird pled guilty to neglecting to report mail fraud in connection with their activities as Class B Dealers supplying random source dogs and cats to laboratories for experimental research.

This time, C.C. Baird was sentenced to three years of supervised probation, six months of home detention, and a \$7,500 fine, while his wife was sentenced to two years of supervised probation and a \$2,500 fine. Unfortunately, prosecutors did not expect either to receive jail time, since an initial agreement for leniency by the US Attorney’s Office had been arranged with the understanding that C.C. Baird would cooperate fully with respect to the case and others currently under investigation.

This deal completely overlooks the severity of the Bairds’ offenses during their 15 years in business. The unthinkable cruelty that occurred on their facility harmed an incomparable volume of dogs and cats. We appreciated their prosecution by the US Attorney’s Office, but we believe no deal should have been cut. While the couple had previously surrendered approximately 700 acres of land valued at \$1.1 million, forfeited \$200,000 cash from ill-gotten gains to the government, and paid more than \$40,000 to animal welfare groups that had cared for dogs and cats seized from their property, these fines are nothing compared to the millions of dollars they profited in the name of animal suffering.

Still, the case is an important one, in that it is the first in which individuals were convicted of felonies in association with Class B Dealer activities. Moreover, Judge Holmes made it clear that, had it not been for the government’s motion for leniency, he would have sentenced Baird to jail time—specifically, one year and one day. The exposure of this operation and the results of the trial illustrate the need for passage of the Pet Safety and Protection Act (H.R. 5229 and S. 541), currently pending before Congress, to prohibit Class B Dealers from acquiring random source dogs and cats and selling them to research facilities. 🐾



Animal Welfare Institute

QUARTERLY

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Choosing the right books can foster benevolence and understanding toward animals and the environment.

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Jayanand Govindaraj/Dreamstime.com

Improved oversight of the wildlife trade can protect tigers and other species currently under threat.

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Garrett Seibold/United Poultry Concerns

Contract farming is a practice used by agribusiness that exploits both animals and farmers with its disregard for welfare.

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Kimerlee Curry

brought to you by the **SOCIETY FOR ANIMAL PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION**

One Step Closer: The US House of Representatives Makes a Key Move to Stop Horse Slaughter

Sept. 7 was a landmark day for America's horses. In perhaps the biggest legislative move of the decade to protect animals, the House of Representatives voted in favor of H.R. 503, the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act (AHSPA), to end the slaughter of horses for human consumption and the domestic and international transport of live horses or horseflesh for the same purpose. Just before the vote, opponents from the horse slaughter industry, with the lead of former Representative Charlie Stenholm (D-TX), tried to introduce numerous "poison pill" amendments and lobbied Members of Congress aggressively on the issue.

Two of these bad amendments were rejected before the 263 to 146 vote for the AHSPA. Thanks to tremendous grassroots pressure and effective floor debates by bill sponsors Representative John Sweeney (R-NY), Representative John Spratt (D-SC), Representative Ed Whitfield (R-KY) and Representative Nick Rahall (D-WV), the House was able to see past the rhetoric presented by those looking to make a quick profit at the expense of the welfare of thousands of horses. More than 92,000 US horses last year endured this

horrific cruelty in transport and slaughter at the three foreign-owned plants.

While the brutal facts about horse slaughter won over the House of Representatives, the bill must now go to the Senate and the battle will not be easy. The time remaining in this session of Congress is running out, and legislators such as Senator Conrad Burns (R-MT), whose infamous rider removed protections for wild horses in late 2004, will do all they can to prevent the AHSPA's passage. Pressure for passage of the legislation must be intensified.

Compassionate celebrities and public figures such as actress Bo Derek and Texas oilman T. Boone Pickens have spearheaded the bill on behalf of the horses by speaking out and meeting with Members of Congress. "We must open peoples' eyes about this appalling practice that is so often hidden from the public," Bo said while lobbying Capitol Hill with SAPL. "As exhibited by the over 500 equine associations, rescue groups and leaders, banning the practice of horse slaughter is the only way to ensure our beloved horses will receive the protection they deserve." 🐾

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- 1) Please contact your Senators as soon as possible, urging their co-sponsorship of the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act and a vote on the legislation in the current session of Congress. Although a vote in the Senate will not occur before the November election, you are entitled to know where your Senators stand NOW.
- 2) If your Representative voted in favor of H.R. 503, please contact him or her to say thank you for protecting America's horses. You can locate this information on the Compassion Index (www.compassionindex.org) under "Issues" or by contacting us. Letters should be addressed to:

The Honorable (Name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable (Name)
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Transport Cruelty Charges Bolster Anti-Horse Slaughter Fight

In a tragic twist, while representatives of the horse slaughter industry testified before Congress on Aug. 27, an incident involving a truck packed with horses in appalling conditions belied their statements. Thirteen of the 19 horses crammed into the trailer were stallions—an apparent violation of transport regulations. The Mississippi vehicle blew two tires en route to the Beltex horse slaughter plant in Fort Worth, Tex., and driver Bryan Morgan pulled into a Texarkana tire shop for repairs. Soon after, GCR Tires employee Greg Fett called 911 to report the animals' poor state.

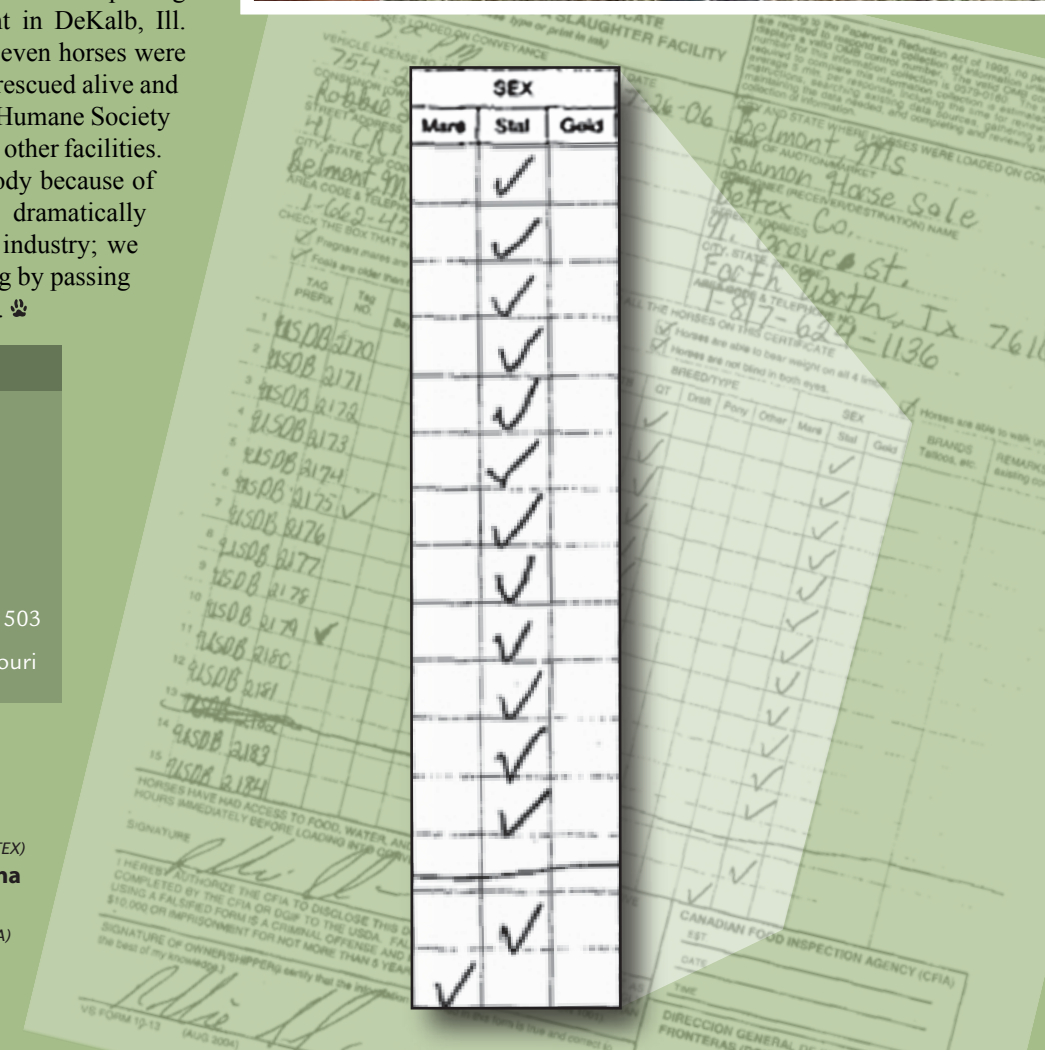
Twenty citations for animal cruelty were initially written by local police, though the driver was still allowed to take the horses on to the slaughterhouse. Morgan, who was later revealed to be under the legal age to operate a commercial vehicle and without proper insurance, was eventually charged with five counts of cruelty in transport under Arkansas state law. A bond in the amount of \$1,125 has been set. Should he fail to pay the bond, trial will commence on Oct. 31 of this year. In addition to assisting in Morgan's prosecution, the Society for Animal Protective Legislation has filed a formal complaint with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) against Robbie Solomon, the owner/shipper of the horses, for violating several federal regulations regarding the commercial transportation of horses to slaughter.

Only a month later, a double-decker trailer transporting 43 horses to the Cavel horse slaughter plant in DeKalb, Ill. overturned while passing through Missouri. Seven horses were killed and nine had to be euthanized; 27 were rescued alive and are fortunately being held and cared for at the Humane Society of Missouri's Longmeadow Rescue Ranch and other facilities. The driver of the vehicle was taken into custody because of outstanding warrants. These two situations dramatically illustrate the brutality of the horse slaughter industry; we are now pressing Senators to stop this suffering by passing the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act. 🐾

Sequence of Events

- Aug. 25: Hearing before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee
- Aug. 27: Hearing before the House Agriculture Committee
- Aug. 27: Hauler cited for cruelty to animals in Texarkana
- Sept. 7: House of Representatives passes H.R. 503
- Sept. 28: Packed horse trailer overturns in Missouri

- Photos: 1) The scene of the Missouri accident was gruesome.** (Humane Society of Missouri)
2) Abused horses being transported to Texas were allowed a brief reprieve after their driver was charged with animal cruelty. (Dixie Wilson/ARTEX)
3) The majority of the horses found in Texarkana were stallions, and should never be housed together due to the potential for fighting. (USDA)



Teaching Kids Kindness and Compassion

In this day of multimedia, television and video games, the act of reading to a child can provide immeasurable benefits. Books with messages of compassion for animals can spark the inherent interest in animals all children seem to possess. Yet while *Winnie the Pooh* and *Clifford the Big Red Dog* will always be popular, there are innumerable lesser-known books that promote caring, respect and empathy for animals and the environment. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, other relative, teacher or friend, here is a sampling of the Animal Welfare Institute's favorite books for teaching younger children the importance of being kind to animals.

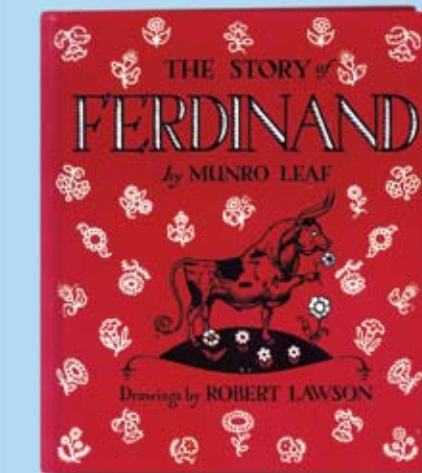
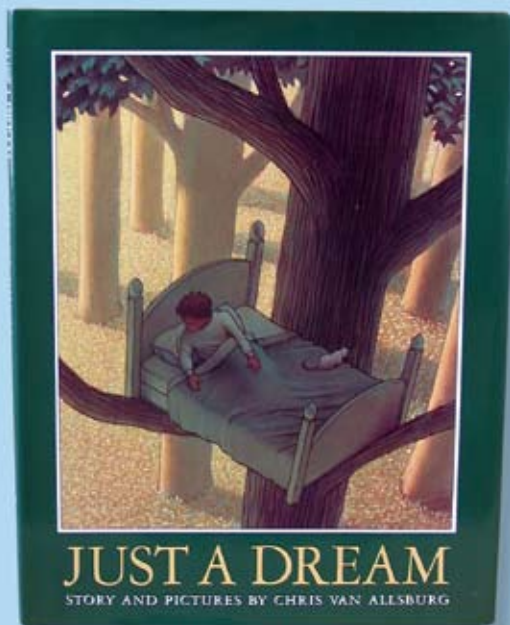


Stellaluna
by Janell Cannon
Harcourt, Inc.
1993
ISBN: 0152802177

Children are often afraid of bats, but after reading *Stellaluna*, they will learn these small mammals are interesting and adaptive. Stellaluna is separated from her mother after an owl attack, eventually landing in a bird's nest. She learns to be just like the other birds, until one day she is reunited with her family. This book teaches children about bat behavior, from eating fruit to sleeping upside down and flying at night.

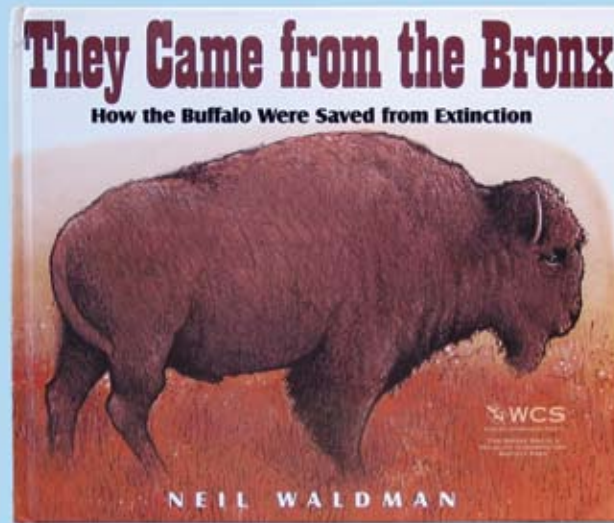
This glimpse into the future provides a boy named Walter with a shocking look at what may happen to our world if we do not start protecting our environment. After a journey to see mountains of garbage, a clear-cut forest, choking pollution, excessive development, depletion of our wildlife, and a smog-filled Grand Canyon, Walter is transformed from an inconsiderate litterbug to a committed conservationist. This is a great story for getting children to care about our environment.

Just a Dream
by Chris Van Allsburg
Houghton Mifflin Company
1990
ISBN: 0395533082



The Story of Ferdinand
by Munro Leaf
Viking
1936
ISBN: 0670674249

Ferdinand is a gentle bull who likes to sit quietly in the shade and smell the flowers. One day, he sits on a bumblebee and becomes alarmed, bucking around. Men who want to demonstrate their bravado come to take him away to the bullfights, thinking he is the fiercest bull in all of Madrid—but when Ferdinand enters the ring, he just sits down. When the kind bull refuses to fight, the foolish men must take him home. This book shows children the absurdity of being cruel to animals for entertainment purposes.

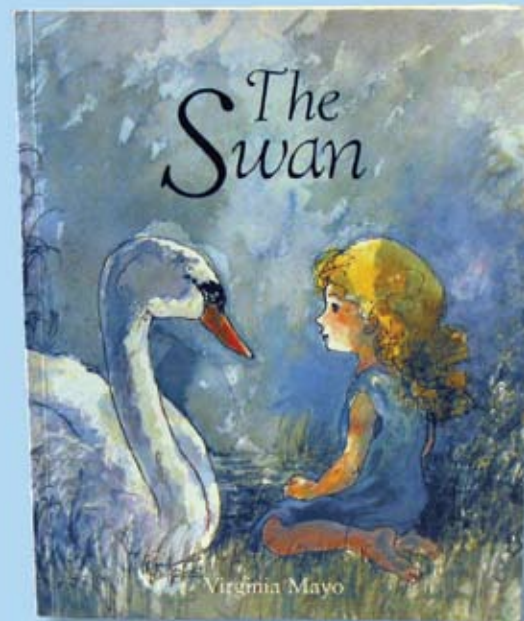
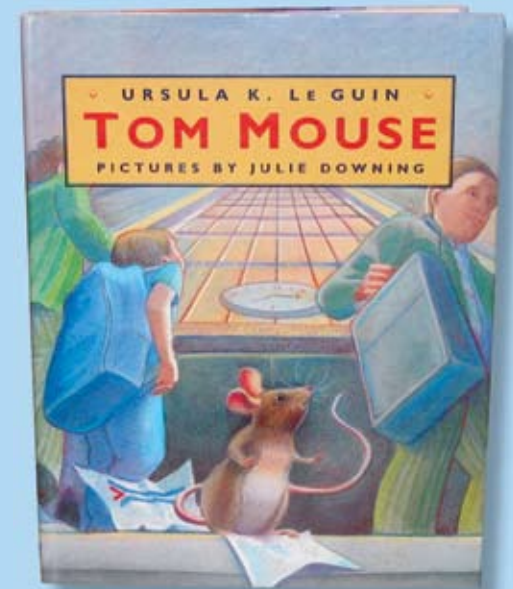


They Came from the Bronx—How the Buffalo Were Saved From Extinction
by Neil Waldman
Boyd's Mills Press
2001
ISBN: 1563978911

By 1899, the once vast herds of American bison, commonly known as buffalo, had nearly disappeared because of overhunting by white men. *They Came from the Bronx* contrasts the story of a Native American grandmother telling her grandson about the importance of the bison to native culture and the tragic tale of their annihilation. The story of individuals who reintroduced captive bison to Oklahoma as the first step toward restoring wild bison to the western United States is told as well. This book is a must-read for anyone who cares about these remarkable animals.

A conversation with an old “hobo rat” prompts Tom Mouse to set out to be free as a wind by jumping on a train. After sneaking bits and pieces of food from a woman’s pocket and dancing in the moonlight, Tom eventually gets caught—but the kind woman doesn’t scream at the sight of him, she just tells him where to hide and brings him more food. Tom finds out he is very lucky because the old woman loves animals and travels all around the world. She invites him to join her as a friend, and he promises to dance for her every night. *Tom Mouse* is a tale that will show children they should be kind to the animals our society often regards as “pests.”

Tom Mouse
by Ursula K. LeGuin
Roaring Book Press
2002
ISBN: 0761315993



The Swan
by Virginia Mayo
Barron's Educational Series, Inc.
1994
ISBN: 0812019385

In this story illustrated with beautiful watercolors, a young girl goes on a picnic by the river with her mother and her brother Rob. The mother shows her children the importance of being kind to animals by speaking up to an irresponsible fisherman. The trio also sees a swan, who looks at the girl as if she is a friend. That night, the girl dreams that the swan comes to her. Together, they fly all around the world. In the morning, her mother mysteriously finds a feather on the girl's clothes. Later that summer, the family goes back to the river and finds that the swan and her mate have had six babies.

Beijing Olympics 2008

Can We Stop the Abuse Before the Games Begin?

Part One: The Bear Bile Trade

C*itius, Altius, Fortius* (Faster, Higher, Stronger) will again be the call to the world's best athletes as they compete in the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, China. From its politics to the pageantry of the Olympics and its culture to the intense athletic competition, the world will be exposed to China like never before. Yet while the country's poor human rights record may be mentioned, the television networks are unlikely to report on the poor treatment of animals and the environment within the emerging economic superpower. It is a record steeped in blatant cruelty—from the physical and psychological torture of bears to collect their bile to the decimation of wildlife through international trade. In an article series leading up to the event, the *AWI Quarterly* will expose these issues, with the goal of contributing to the increasing international plea for China to institute improved animal welfare and wildlife management standards.

A Brutal Business

As the world's athletes prepare for the 2008 Olympics, over 7,000 bears (mostly Asiatic black bears) continue to endure physical and psychological abuse to satisfy China's demand for bear bile. At only 2 to 3 months of age, cubs born on bear bile farms are taken from their mothers to spend their first few years of life in barren facilities, where they are forced to perform demeaning tricks to entertain farm visitors and customers. By the time they are 3, their lives turn from bad to worse, as their pens are replaced with steel cages and they become bile production machines. Though conditions vary, many farm bears—who can weigh up to 440 pounds—are forced to spend days, weeks, months or even years stuffed into small cages only slightly larger than an average refrigerator to be “milked” for their bile. Only a few “lucky” bears have access to slightly larger separate cages or sterile concrete and steel cages outdoors, in between the daily milking sessions they endure.

Such severe confinement results in stereotypic behaviors, such as rocking, head bobbing, body weaving, cage banging and the tracing of their routes. Physical



Fisher/MSPA

wounds on the bears' faces, heads, paws and backs are caused by rubbing against the cage bars. The bears' diets are grossly inadequate, and they are deprived access to water because their thirst is used to entice them into the “milking” cages. On some farms, the stench and filth is indescribable, and bears are forced to live in their own excrement. Yet the cruelty is not limited to the consequences of confinement, as the bile extraction process causes severe physical pain. Bears tremble, kick, bite, gnash their teeth, shake their heads, hit their cages and moan during and after the process.

In China, bile is extracted through the surgical implantation of a catheter or the creation of a tissue fistula from the abdominal wall to the gall bladder. The making of a fistula, which the Chinese government claims is humane, requires a rod be inserted into the gall bladder multiple times daily to access the bile. Because veterinarians are not employed by most farms, the surgical procedures are conducted by technicians or farm workers, often in unhygienic conditions, using equipment that is not sterile. The result is festering wounds, severe inflammation and infection, septicemia, peritonitis, formation of huge gallstones, internal abscesses, abdominal hernias—and in all cases, suffering. Not surprisingly, 60 to 80 percent of bears die during or shortly after their initial surgery. Those who survive rarely live longer than 10 years—less than half of their normal life span. Bears who do not succumb to infection or disease are eventually slaughtered for their paws, teeth and other parts. Even some live bears may have their paws cut off when farm customers desire fresh bear paws.

Why Bear Bile?

Bear bile is used by some practitioners of Traditional Chinese Medicine to treat swelling, inflammation, pain, fever, and liver and eye disorders. Sold in liquid, crystallized and powdered forms and manufactured into a number of medicinal and non-medicinal products, bear bile is more in demand than ever. It has increased in China from 500 kilos per year in the 1980s to 4000 kilos today. With current production exceeding 7000 kilos per year, new products

“If the Chinese medicine community ceases to use endangered animals as medicine, it can not only join in helping to save endangered species from extinction, but can also raise the international reputation of Chinese medicine to that of a sophisticated branch of medicine.”

Dr. Lo Yan Wo, Chinese Association of Medicine and Philosophy, Hong Kong

like tonics, shampoos and even wine have been created to use up the surplus. Though the trade in bears and bear products, including bile, is prohibited by the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) documented that nearly 60 percent of 694 Traditional Chinese Medicine shops visited in Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Australia, Canada and the United States were illegally selling contraband bear products.

A 2005 WSPA report entitled “Finding Herbal Alternatives to Bear Bile” identified over 40 viable and humane alternatives to ursodeoxycholic acid, the active ingredient in bear bile. In addition, over 100,000 kilograms of a synthetic version of the acid is being consumed in China, Japan and South Korea, with global consumption up to twice that amount. And fortunately, many practitioners of Traditional Chinese Medicine oppose the use of bear bile. Since alternatives are available and in wide use, China's government has no excuses to allow these cruel farms to remain open. Though thousands of bears remain imprisoned, thanks to the ongoing efforts of organizations and individuals around the world, there is reason to believe this unnecessary and abusive industry may eventually be relegated to a sad footnote in Chinese history. 🐾

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Please write a polite letter to the Chinese Ambassador to the United States, asking him to continue to promote herbal and synthetic alternatives to bear bile and requesting that China take urgent action to end bear farming before the 2008 Olympics.

The Honorable Zhou Wenzhong
Ambassador of China
2300 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Telephone: (202) 328-2500
Fax: (202) 588-0046
Email: chinaembassy_us@fmprc.gov.cn

Trade, Trophies and Trust: WHAT'S WRONG WITH CITES

At the Los Angeles International Airport in July, a man from Japan was arrested for attempting to illegally smuggle Queen Alexandra's birdwing butterflies—one of the largest butterfly species in the world—into the United States. In Singapore in 2002, customs agents discovered a 20 foot long cargo container filled with 13,000 pounds of illegal elephant ivory. And in the United Arab Emirates, more than one-half of the monkeys illegally smuggled from Pakistan in water tankers with false bottoms arrive dead. Whether the trade is in skins, shells, bushmeat, gall bladders, bones, sport-hunted trophies or live animals, our world's wildlife is under threat from a burgeoning illegal business. Trade in wildlife and wildlife

products, worth over \$10 billion in annual revenue, ranks only behind drugs and guns as the most lucrative illegal trading activity in the world.

The Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was created in 1973 to regulate wildlife trade, recognizing its threat to animal populations. To fulfill its mission, CITES contains increasingly restrictive trade criteria for species listed in Appendices I, II and III. Trade in Appendix I species, such as tigers, sea turtles and most species of bears and elephants, is prohibited with minimal exceptions, while trade in Appendix II and III species is permitted with proper documents. Yet with mounting evidence of increasing anthropogenic threats to wildlife, particularly those associated with trade, CITES is in dire need of an overhaul. Convincing the majority of member countries—many of whom generate significant revenue through wildlife trade—of this need may be difficult, but as the world's leading importer of wildlife, the United States is uniquely situated to strengthen its CITES standards and provide an example for the rest of the world to emulate.

Recently, in response to a proposed rule to update the US CITES regulations, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) submitted a letter that provided ample evidence of the urgent

need for the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to establish national standards addressing the deficiencies inherent to CITES. Of particular importance is the need to simplify the process by eliminating loopholes. These loopholes are being exploited to facilitate the illegal smuggling of wildlife or wildlife products across international borders.

Even more urgently, the FWS must toughen the requirements for trade in Appendix I and II species. CITES requires the issuance of non-detriment findings (NDFs) for the export of Appendix I and II species and for the import of those in Appendix I. These findings are intended to ensure the trade will not harm the survival of the species in the wild. CITES does not require such findings be made in writing or even that they be shared between exporting and importing countries. As a consequence, there is no accountability in the system because a country with neither the population data nor resources to issue a valid NDF can manufacture a fraudulent NDF, issue a verbal NDF, or ignore the requirement altogether—with little chance that the shipment will be rejected or confiscated by the importing country.

AWI also urged the FWS to make its CITES process more transparent by informing the public when it receives trade applications for all CITES-listed species. At present, the public is only informed of applications received (cont.'d)



Wildlife Trade Case Study: ZIMBABWE

What do the Chinese, American trophy hunters, hunger, corruption and economic instability have in common? They are all causes of the decimation of Zimbabwe's wildlife heritage. Under the corrupt rule of President Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's economy has been in a free fall, resulting in skyrocketing unemployment rates and increased hunger. Combined with the forced takeover of farms, wildlife conservancies and game ranches, bushmeat hunting, poaching and trophy hunting are quickly eradicating the country's wildlife populations.

Many Zimbabweans have turned to bushmeat poaching to feed their hungry families, and the Mugabe government has initiated its own campaign to allow police and defense forces to alleviate hunger by killing wildlife. The government attributes the increase in hunger in part to drought, but according to Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force Chairman Johnny Rodriguez, the record rainfalls in 2006 suggest the current hunger problem is occurring due to other causes. To make matters worse, in 2005, the government instructed national park rangers to shoot 10 elephants for a barbecue in honor of the country's 25 years of independence and started allowing national park officials to kill wildlife as part of their rations. It now permits wildlife to be killed to feed its military forces.

Bushmeat and commercial poachers operate throughout the country with virtually no restriction. An audit by

Zimbabwean officials revealed that poaching was rampant partly because of a lack of rangers to patrol and enforce wildlife laws. In addition, because of Mugabe's land seizure program, only 14 game ranches and 84 wildlife conservancies still exist. Poachers emptied a ranch in Matabeleland of its 6,000 animals, including many of its 50 endangered black rhinos. Rangers who want to enforce Zimbabwe's wildlife laws are not able to engage in anti-poaching patrols due to a lack of fuel. In July, despite these difficulties, rangers were able to arrest 285 fish and wildlife poachers—though it is unclear if the arrests, given the severity of the problem and the lack of sufficient criminal penalties, will significantly reduce poaching in the country.

Zimbabwe's national parks are also in disrepair, with no funds to operate pumps to provide groundwater to wildlife, which has forced elephants and other animals to find habitat and flee poachers by crossing into Zambia. But most are not so fortunate. As a result of a controversial decision by CITES member countries in 1997, Zimbabwe was authorized to sell ivory from its ivory stockpiles. Sadly, this has led to an increase in elephant poaching in Zimbabwe and neighboring countries to fulfill China's demand for ivory. Indeed, during the first seven months of 2006, Chinese dealers purchased 30 tons of ivory tusks, representing 2,250 elephants from Zimbabwe's Parks and Wildlife Management Authority. This compelled the government to "temporarily prohibit ivory sales or trading (cont.'d)



for species listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Consequently, most people are unaware of the vast amount of wildlife trade—including the trade in live wildlife and sport-hunted trophies—of CITES-protected species that the FWS approves every year. According to trade data compiled by the World Conservation Monitoring Center, in 2004, the United States reported over 1,600 import permits issued for an unknown number of animals representing more than 100 species, including bottlenose dolphins, jaguars, African and Asian elephants and lilac-crowned and red-spectacled Amazon parrots. For the same year, the United States also reported 270 import permits issued for the sport-hunting trophies of an unknown

number of Appendix I, II and III animals of over 110 species and subspecies, such as hamadryas baboons, gray wolves, grizzly bears, polar bears, caracals, African lions, leopards, African elephants, hippopotami, argali sheep and Nile crocodiles.

Illegal trade is second only to habitat destruction as a threat to the survival of wildlife around the world. Legal wildlife trade also contributes to these threats due to the aforementioned problems with the CITES process and the increasing demand for imperiled wildlife. As even the FWS concedes, this can create a market for protected wildlife that, if not met through legal trade, results in increased illegal trade. Some believe making wildlife valuable by allowing trade is the only means to save these animals.

Preliminary data compiled by AWI suggests that this claim is erroneous. Indeed, for those Appendix II mammal species for which World Conservation Union population trend data is available, the majority of species have a downward trend suggesting that whatever value is allegedly generated through trade does not correspond to increased species protection. 🐾

within the country.

While poachers continue to decimate Zimbabwe's wildlife, many of Mugabe's followers ignore national and international wildlife laws by allowing sport hunters to operate virtually without restriction on game ranches and other lands throughout the country.

Many of these government insiders ignore arbitrary hunting quotas, allow hunters to kill animals (including endangered species) inside protected wildlife areas, hunt using fake permits, and fail to keep track of wounded wildlife. These government insiders-turned-hunt ranch operators reportedly often reap significant profits from such operations—most of which ends up in private bank accounts, while a pittance goes to the local population.

Despite a US government declaration of Zimbabwe as “an outpost of tyranny” and its imposition of economic sanctions against at least 128 of Mugabe's relatives and cronies, Americans make up 80 to 90 percent of the hunters who visit the country. Though clearly concerned about the corruption within Zimbabwe, the US government has ignored the significant sums of money being spent by American trophy hunters. In doing so, the US Fish and Wildlife Service is contributing to the destruction of Zimbabwe's wildlife heritage. 🐾



Karen Benzel, IBRRC

Responding to the Effects of Oiled Wildlife

In early August, the tanker Solar I sank off the coast of Guimaras Island in the Philippines. The outflow of 50,000 gallons of oil engulfed over 125 miles of the once pristine coastline with a thick sludge, damaging more than 1,000 acres of mangrove forests and seaweed plantations, according to Guimaras Governor Joaquin Nava. Not only has this been deemed the worst oil spill in the Philippines history, but environmentalists have also called the tanker now resting on the seabed a “ticking time bomb.”

Conservationists' frustration and concern has mounted as time passes without a decision as to how to raise the tanker, currently sitting beneath almost 3,000 feet of water and containing 450,000 gallons of still-leaking oil. As the Philippines waits for recommendations from experts, former Environment Secretary Angel Alcala fears “some species of fish, shells and birds may disappear from the area due to the destruction of the mangroves and coral that serve as their spawning and feeding grounds.” It may take up to three decades for the coral reefs and mangrove forests to recover in full.

Approximately 3 billion gallons of oil are used every day across the globe, creating hazardous conditions for wildlife when spills and pollution occur. Careless and accidental oil spills from tankers and barges account for only about 15 percent of the oil entering our oceans each year, but they still account for “most of the world's largest oil spills,” according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Since 1960, these large oil spills have occurred in the waters of 112 nations. The Gulf of Mexico, the coast of the northeastern United States and the Mediterranean Sea are considered the top three “hotspots” for spills by Oil Spill Intelligence Report analysts.

Environmental and economic effects are immediate, enormous and long-term to the areas they devastate. Nearby residents may lose their livelihoods when fishing and tourists

industries are destroyed or closed. And inevitably, marine mammals and birds are harmed in myriad ways. Oiled birds may perish from being completely or only partially covered with oil. Pollution to the habitats of the animals who survive the initial impact can include contamination of food sources and of nesting and dwelling sites, reduction of the number of breeding animals and plants that provide future food stocks, and a lessening of their breeding success.

Fortunately, a handful of organizations in the United States are capable of responding to wildlife involved in large-scale oil spills. Founded in 1976 after a major spill in the Delaware River, Newark, Del.'s Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research operates an Oil Spill Response program with a dedicated staff trained to respond to these crises around the world. Tri-State's methodology emphasizes the need for a collaborative effort among responsible parties, state and federal wildlife professionals, regulatory agencies, concerned citizens and peers. To learn more, please visit Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research's website at www.tristatebird.org.

On the West Coast, the International Bird Rescue Research Center (IBRRC) was founded in 1971 after the collision of two oil tankers under the Golden Gate Bridge. This unfortunate accident released 900,000 gallons of crude oil into the San Francisco Bay, killing over 6,500 birds—despite devoted volunteer efforts. Today, with locations in Cordelia and San Pedro, Calif., IBRRC continues its mission of responding to wildlife injured or threatened by oil spills. For more information, visit the IBRRC website at www.ibrrc.org. 🐾

(Top of page) A great horned owl saved from an oil spill by the IBRRC is in poor condition before he is washed. Oil spills, large and small, occur around the world and harm many species of birds and other wildlife.

Ringling Eliminates Tigers from Show

For the first time in 50 years, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus has modified a touring unit, and one of the biggest changes is its elimination of an act featuring tigers. The company denies they were removed as a concession to campaigns to end the use of exotic animals in entertainment—and we know better than to believe it was done out of concern for the animals themselves. Instead, Ringling reports its action was an effort to appeal more to its core audience, which consists mainly of women and children. Ironically, it is because of this target demographic that the company hired female tiger trainer Sara Houcke in 2000.

And what about the elephants? Ringling unfortunately has no plans to remove them from its shows and claims they are its largest attraction. At the same time, the elephants are again plagued by tuberculosis. A male housed at a Ringling facility in Florida tested positive in September. He joins another elephant already under quarantine.

In related news, our lawsuit with other animal advocacy groups against Ringling for its mistreatment of Asian elephants remains in the discovery phase, with an expected trial date sometime late next year. In the meantime, we are confident that the trend toward circus entertainment without animals, as popularized by performing groups such as the magnificent Cirque du Soleil, is increasing. Clearly, money can be made by providing entertainment for audiences without forcing wild animals to perform unnatural acts. 🐾



Rita Richer | Dreamstime.com

The sooty mangabey, an endangered old world primate, should not be subjected to lethal research.

Mangabeys Saved from Lethal Research

UNITED STATES The Yerkes Primate Research Center in Atlanta, Ga. has withdrawn an amendment to its application for a permit under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to kill endangered mangabeys as part of its ongoing AIDS-related experiments. The amendment sought approval to kill 50 of the animals. However, under the ESA, research facilities cannot engage in such activities unless they benefit the species in the wild. Yerkes, in its attempt to secure the amendment, offered to provide money toward a primate conservation project in the wild. The Animal Welfare Institute and other animal advocacy groups represented by the law firm Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal submitted comments in opposition to these lethal experiments. Primatologist Jane Goodall and 18 fellow scientists also sent a letter to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, warning that allowing lethal research on endangered species in exchange for monetary contributions would “open the floodgates” for similar research in the future, to the detriment of imperiled species. 🐾

William Moy Statten Russell (1925-2006)

UNITED KINGDOM Bill Russell, an esteemed leader in promoting alternatives to the use of animals in research, died on July 27. With his colleague Rex L. Burch, he introduced the concept of the “3Rs” in the groundbreaking 1959 book, *The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique*. Its guidelines found their way into the biomedical research establishment very gradually, but they are now recognized as both humane and as the essential ingredients of sound scientific methodology. Russell was a valued colleague and his work will remain an inspiration for students, researchers and scientists who regard animals in research laboratories as sentient beings who deserve to be treated with utmost care. 🐾

Shahtoosh Shawls Seized

THAILAND In July, Thai police authorities raided three luxury stores in downtown Bangkok, confiscating over 250 shahtoosh shawls made from the fur of endangered Tibetan antelopes called chiru. A single shawl requires killing three to five antelopes and commands very high prices on the black market. Credit in the successful sting operation has been given to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Wildlife Enforcement Network, a new integrated network of law enforcement agencies spanning many nations. According to the trade monitoring network TRAFFIC, the investigation “reflects a bold shift in strategy in battling syndicates decimating Asia’s wild animals and plants.” 🐾

Caught in a War Zone

LEBANON Located near a Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut’s southern suburbs, an animal shelter run by Beirut for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (BETA) was partly destroyed by a missile, just days after violence erupted in the country in mid-July. Its 113 dogs and 100 cats quickly became traumatized by the constant shellings, and volunteers visiting the shelter risked their lives twice a day in order to care for them. Within two weeks, the animals were all safely moved to an abandoned farm east of the capital. Yet perhaps tens of thousands of companion animals still roam the war-torn city, since the US Embassy and others told evacuees they could not bring their pets on the cruise ships and helicopters that would transport them to safety.

BETA volunteers have also rescued several primates, exotic birds and other animals in a mini-zoo in Beirut, and they continue to feed, water and take in abandoned pets when possible. Additionally, the area’s marine life is at risk due to a massive oil spill that started spreading over 60 percent of the Lebanese coastline in early August. The oil leaked into the Mediterranean Sea after Israeli aircraft targeted an oil tank at a power plant outside Beirut. Officials from the United Nations Environmental Program fear turtles and other marine animals have already been affected by the disaster. 🐾

The Wind Dilemma

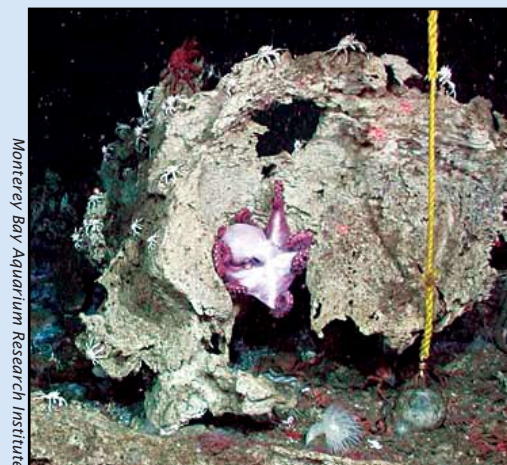
UNITED STATES One environmental group is putting its electric bill where its mouth is. Audubon New York, the state’s largest bird conservation organization, recently announced plans to purchase the amount of wind power necessary to compensate for 100 percent of the energy used in its New York offices. The group picked a favorable site in Nebraska that impacts birds and other wildlife minimally, avoiding migration routes and densely forested areas. Given the destructiveness of fossil fuel-based power and the immediacy of global warming, we commend Audubon for its decision to help the environment and prevent the unnecessary harm of bats and birds. 🐾

Disrupting the Balance of the Sea

Three scientists first learned about “whale falls” in the 1980s and have since made hundreds of dives in a tiny submarine designed to collect data. They say a whole community of organisms can thrive for up to a century by sucking the fats and sulfides from one whale skeleton. But with this knowledge comes a realization: two centuries of commercial whaling have taken a tremendous toll on the ocean floor.

Dead whales in the ocean are like fallen trees in the forest. Just as decomposing wood turns into a powder to nourish plant nutrients in the soil, the sediment that falls from a whale’s carcass turns the sea floor into a rich environment ideal for clams, mussels, enzymes, bacteria, worms and other mysterious deep sea scavengers.

At the Deep-Sea Biology Symposium held in England this summer, marine biologist Craig Smith told conference attendees that commercial whaling has reduced the number of whale carcasses by up to 95 percent, and many species of sea scavengers who would have been feeding on these skeletons are most likely extinct or going extinct in areas where intense whaling has persisted. “The possibility that whaling has caused species extinctions at the remote deep-sea floor gives me new appreciation for the scale of human impacts on the ocean,” Smith said. 🐾



Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute

Marine biologist Craig Smith and researchers from the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute in 2002 discovered a whale fall in the outer portion of Monterey Canyon.

Contract Farming:

The New Serfdom
by Tom Garrett



Diane Holmerson/AWI

“Quite early one morning,” wrote the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, “I heard the cock’s crow from hidden farmyards.” For thousands of years, in innumerable cultures, the cock’s crow has been synonymous with first light of morning.

In the rural America of 50 years ago, the silver of a summer’s dawn brought the crowing of roosters, from east to west, farm to farm, all across the heartland.

If one wishes to hear a rooster crow today outside the farms of a few stubborn traditionalists, one must go to the third world. America’s clucking barnyard flocks are gone; in their place are huge, lightless factories. As the cock’s crow heralded the dawn, its absence signals industrial darkness that has robbed most that was joyous and natural about American agriculture.

The statistics tell the story. In 1950, 95 percent of American farmers had at least a few chickens; rare was the farm on which you could not buy eggs. Today, barely over 2 percent of farms raise chickens commercially. In the overwhelming majority of these cases, those raising the chickens do not own them—the chickens are owned, processed and marketed by corporations. The corporations supply the feed the chickens eat and supervise every phase of production. Farmers are no more than cogs in an industrial machine that now produces 35 billion pounds of chicken annually.

The corporate blitz of poultry, largely consummated in the 1970s, was followed in the 1980s and 1990s by a takeover of hog production. In the period immediately post-World War II—good times for farmers—there were around five million farms in the United States. Well over 2 million farmers raised hogs. In 1986, there were still 670,000 hog farms. Today, as the corporate conquest nears completion, there are barely 80,000 hog farmers remaining. Once again, many are “contractors” who do not even own the hogs they raise.

While mega-projects such as Premium Standard Farms’ (being absorbed by Smithfield Foods; see opposite page) huge hog factory complex in northern Missouri draw more public attention, the contract system that began in the American chicken industry is becoming a prime engine of corporate dominance. It is not only a feature of corporate hog raising, but it is also now spreading into dairy, beef and field crop production, and even showing up in Europe and the Indian subcontinent. Smithfield Foods is aggressively trying to establish contract hog farming in Poland and Romania. “Why buy a farm,” asked one trade journal, “when you can buy a farmer?”

In March, Polish consultant Marek Kryda traveled to the United States for an Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) contract farming workshop with American experts—representatives from Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI) and the Delmarva Poultry Justice Association (DPJA) and Arkansas hog contractors Tim and Christy Hays. Both RAFI and DPJA were established to try to protect contractors from the tyranny of corporate “integrators.” The Hays’ are

involved in a quixotic and desperate lawsuit against Cargill, the world’s largest privately held company. Our hope in hosting the workshop was to learn enough about the tactics of corporate integrators in America to thwart their advance in Central Europe.

A farmer who becomes a contractor commits to being part of a vertically integrated system in which every aspect—production, processing, distribution—“from embryo to market shelf” is controlled by the integrator. According to DPJA President Carole Morrison, herself a chicken contractor, farmers (called “growers”) “provide the land, buildings, equipment, utilities and labor in raising the birds to a marketable age, while the companies supply the chicks, feed and medicine. The grower is also responsible for dead bird and manure disposal.” Hog contracting is essentially the same.

The contracts themselves are stunningly one-sided. The integrator arrogates to itself the right to arbitrarily amend or terminate. Payment is made according to a set formula based on pounds of meat delivered minus company financed “inputs.” But the integrator performs the calculations, and the books are closed to inspection. The grower has no say as to the quality of the chicks provided or the content of the feed and medicine. The grower stands liable for environmental damage, though it is the integrator who is eligible for federal disaster relief and farm subsidies. On top of all this, the grower is forced to surrender the right of legal recourse and accept “compulsory arbitration” in disputes with the company.

The economic results of such contracts are about as one would expect. Industry moguls like Don Tyson and “Bo” Pilgrim have grown fabulously rich, sometimes enjoying a 20 to 30 percent annual return on their investments. The contractors, on the other hand, average 1 to 3 percent annual return—despite the fact that their land and buildings equal at least half of the industry’s capital investment. A survey by the Louisiana Technical University revealed that 71.6 percent of American chicken growers have incomes below the poverty level.

“But why,” we asked, “would 30,000 chicken farmers and thousands of hog farmers submit to no-win contracts that relegate them to serfs on their own land? Why would they sign them?” Former RAFI President Mary Clouse had the answer. “Most of them didn’t!” she said. “The contracts most people signed when they entered the business were much fairer. But the renewal contracts have been progressively more vicious. Once you have borrowed hundreds of thousands of dollars to build 300 to 500 foot long chicken sheds, you must have chickens and a market for them to pay off the loan. Without a contract, there is no market. The grower has little choice but to accept company terms. The alternative is to lose your farm—thousands have—or spend years working to pay off loans on useless empty buildings.”

“When my husband and I began raising chickens,” Clouse continued, “there were a thousand integrators

Smithfield Foods Swallows Premium Standard Farms

In a startling development, Smithfield Foods, the world’s largest pork production company, announced its intended purchase of Premium Standard Farms—the sixth largest pork producer in the United States, second only to Smithfield in the number of sows it owns. If the deal, reportedly involving \$810 million in stock and cash, is voted for by Premium Standard stockholders and agreed to by the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice (both virtual certainties), Smithfield will add 221,000 sows to its current US herd population of 798,000.

This leaves Smithfield with over a million sows and an annual production of feeder pigs approaching 20 million, as well as 1.2 million sows internationally. The company will own nearly 20 percent of the hogs in the United States and slaughter 31 percent of the animals processed annually. Currently, only 10 percent of the hogs marketed in the United States are sold on the free market; the rest are owned by corporations or “locked up” under contract. Despite the outcry of farm state Senators, this situation is all but certain to deteriorate or become even more anti-competitive.

Premium Standard, whose hogs are concentrated in three northern Missouri counties, has long been notorious for its flouting of environmental laws and domination of the Missouri legislature against the fierce, but unavailing resistance of local citizens. While the circumstances promise to become even worse with Smithfield in control, in the meantime, three families unhappy with the smell associated with one of Premium Standard’s Kansas City facilities have been awarded \$4.5 million in compensation. In a separate class-action lawsuit, a consortium of law firms is seeking to represent owners of property within 10 miles of the company’s Missouri facilities. ♣



Garrett Svard/United Poultry Concerns

How do men like Frank Perdue and Don Tyson gain control so rapidly and act with such ruthless impunity? They have a partner — a silent partner, but one of enormous power: the US government.

competing with each other for growers. Business was done with handshakes. But as the most efficient and ruthless companies eliminated their local competitors, this changed. Today, there are only 40 integrators left; five of these—Tyson’s, Pilgrim’s Pride, Gold Kist, Perdue Farms and Wayne Farms—distribute 60 percent of the chicken produced. And believe me, they are absolutely remorseless.”

At this point, I asked a question that revealed how little I really knew. “You say contractor ranks include inexperienced people, farmers down on their luck, even city folks who have sold their homes to buy land. What possesses banks to loan huge sums to such people? Do the integrators countersign the notes?” I inquired. “Of course they don’t,” Clouse responded. “The integrators assume zero risk! At one time, the Farm Home Administration loaned money directly to growers. Today, banks make the loans, but they also take very little risk. Most loans are guaranteed to 90 percent of the principal by the Farm Services Agency of US Department of Agriculture.”

There, like a flash of lightning in blackest night, was the answer to the puzzle of how men like Frank Perdue and Don Tyson could gain control so rapidly and act with such ruthless impunity. They have a partner—a silent partner, but one of enormous power: the US government. There is no way, absent federal loans and loan guarantees, that they could have turned growers, in the felicitous language of the Baltimore Sun series “The Plucking of the American Chicken Farmer,” into “landowning serfs in an agricultural feudal system.”

The iron rule of agribusiness economics is to force others, ultimately the public, to pay much of the real costs. To achieve this, it is necessary to gain control of the political and administrative processes. This is the *sine qua non* of Big Ag. It always was, through centuries of European feudalism, to the East India Company and the slave-tilled plantations of the New World to the present day. No one, it seems, managed it more efficiently than those who industrialized meat production in the United States. In a repulsive but revealing bit of megalomania, Tyson runs his Arkansas-based empire from an exact replica of the White House oval office.

Corporate chicken is cheap and plentiful, but the real costs of industrialized animal production are staggering. It has brought mass cruelty to farm animals, on a scale and to a degree unique in human history. It led to the elimination of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of independent farmers. And it has created such absurd economic distortions that the state of Iowa—in the heart of the nation’s “breadbasket”—imports 80 percent of the food its citizens eat.

Animals in confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) now generate 500 million tons of feces a year, three times more than America’s human population. Unlike human sewage that receives primary, secondary and tertiary treatment, this feces is left untreated. Some is strewn on the ground; some is liquefied and stored in fetid “lagoons” that blanket entire rural counties with nauseating stench. Agricultural runoff has created bights—anoxic zones where nothing lives—in scores of estuaries. For instance, Chesapeake Bay was once renowned for its productivity. Today at its late summer peak, 40 percent of the Chesapeake is covered by a “dead zone” fed by the massed chicken factories of Eastern Maryland and Virginia.

Nor do consumers themselves necessarily escape unscathed; since 1970, meat-borne food poisoning has increased by up to 500 percent. A national non-governmental organization called Safe Tables Our Priority (STOP) was founded entirely by mothers of children who died or were made desperately ill by meat-borne pathogens. If this is not enough, it has emerged that 70 percent of chickens raised in the United States are being fed an organic arsenic called Roxarsone as a growth promoter. Much of the chicken sold has slight but detectable traces of arsenic.

Worse, the compound, which breaks down into metallic arsenic, is present in chicken litter in amounts of 30 to 50 milligrams per kilogram. Twenty to 50 tons of arsenic are “distributed” each year on the Delmarva Peninsula of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia alone, as well as hundreds of tons nationwide. Arsenic is a potent human carcinogen. A lawsuit now underway alleges that a “cancer cluster” in Prairie Grove, Ark., in the state’s

The Stench Spreads to Central Europe

Whether Big Ag will be able to transplant the extraordinary contractor racket it has perfected in America to Central Europe (where AWI is active) depends on two things. The first is whether it can corrupt government sufficiently to flout environmental, health and safety, immigration and antitrust laws as they have in the United States. The second is whether it can inveigle governmental institutions into providing loan guarantees and other

“chicken belt,” is caused by arsenic from chicken litter. Whether this lawsuit will open the lid on an enormous scandal or be suppressed remains to be seen.

The hog factory infestation of the 1990s ended public passivity. Afflicted communities are defending themselves, often successfully. Hundreds of groups, local and national, have taken the field against animal factories. At the same time, the demand for organic food now exceeds supply. The giant fast food franchises, scenting the wind, are pressuring their corporate suppliers to reform.

But for all these encouraging signs, the pervasive corruption that lubricated the corporate takeover to begin with is unrelieved. All three branches of the federal government are infected; honest officials and judges are as Prometheus on his rock. Local victories are often drowned in state legislatures, reeking with corporate influence. Companies such as Smithfield and Cargill have shifted the main thrust of their takeovers to Europe and the third world. The system remains rigged in their favor, and there is no sign of general retreat.

Of the many evils that beset us—war, global warming, tropical deforestation, extinctions, declining productivity of the oceans, and the massive third world influx of rural people to urban slums—few are unlinked to the drive by transnational companies to take control of the world’s food supply. Issues currently boiling up in the press, such as the “obesity epidemic” and illegal immigration are intimately connected. Corporate agriculture is a voracious consumer of immigrants—legal and illegal—for jobs too dangerous, unhealthy and poorly paid to draw American workers.

subsidies. In Poland, the “Law and Justice” government struggling to remain in power as we go to press is dedicated to establishing honest government and rooting out vested interest domination. In Romania, despite the fact that European Union funds can be used for 50 percent of “improvements,” the effort to enlist contractors has fallen on stony soil. There is still a chance to stop the pernicious system in its infancy. We shall surely try. ♡

The course of meat processing should surprise no one who knows something of its earlier history or has even read *The Jungle*. But both factory farming and the contract system we must now confront began with domestic fowl—the earliest, most widely distributed, most benignly husbanded of farm animals. How can seemingly beneficial developments, beginning with the invention in 1900 of the electric hatchery by Granville Woods, the self-taught genius known as the “Black Edison,” have combined to such malignant result? A comprehensive history has yet to be written.

But our forbearers, with their sterner view of human nature, would hardly have been surprised. About slave owners, of whom those who now control Big Ag are surely spiritual descendents, Abraham Lincoln said this: “It is the same spirit that says, ‘You work and toil and earn bread, and I’ll eat it.’ No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle.”

The generations before us could hardly have imagined the nature and magnitude of the planet’s reaction to industrial civilization, converging like a vast, fleeing nimbus front over all the future. But Lincoln, returning, would grasp at once that the Jeffersonian vision of a “nation of virtuous and independent farmers” that seemed to have found its substrate with the Homestead Act of 1862 has been subverted—and the “same tyrannical principle” is again enthroned. ♡

Bequests to AWI

If you would like to help assure the Animal Welfare Institute’s future through a provision in your will, this general form of bequest is suggested:
I give, devise and bequeath to the Animal Welfare Institute, located in Washington, D.C., the sum of \$_____ and/or (specifically described property).

Donations to AWI, a not-for-profit corporation exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), are tax deductible. We welcome any inquiries you may have. In cases where you have specific wishes about the disposition of your bequest, we suggest you discuss such provisions with your attorney.

Hawaiian Marine Life Needs Effective, Not Selective, Stewardship

Promising “140,000 square miles of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to receive our nation’s highest form of marine environmental protection,” President Bush announced on June 15 the establishment of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands National Monument. If properly enforced, this will provide a safeguard for the flora and fauna of the vast area for future generations. But the good news is tempered by notable exclusions in the small print, including an exemption for “all activities and exercises of the Armed Forces.” The timing of the monument announcement coincided with the seventh meeting of the United Nations Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea in New York, at which there was a discussion of ocean noise from all sources—including military sonar. Notably, the United States tried unsuccessfully to have the issue removed from the report of the meeting.

Key to the effectiveness of the monument is the money allotted for its management. Shortly after the Presidential proclamation, the Senate Appropriations Committee set aside \$6.1 million for management and research in this area under the stewardship of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). A few weeks later, the House

passed its appropriations bill and proposed the slashing of the 2007 NOAA budget by a whopping \$500 million. The move was inconsistent with the recommendations of both the US Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission, the chairs of which issued a joint letter expressing their concern about the proposed funding cuts.

The irony of the monument’s military exemption was not lost on those paying close attention to Navy’s biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises that took place around the more populated Hawaiian Islands in July. RIMPAC exercises two years ago led to the live stranding of over 150 melon headed whales in Hanalei Bay, Kauai, most likely caused by the Navy’s sonar use, according to NOAA Fisheries. This year, the Navy applied for a permit for its deadly sonar use. NOAA Fisheries issued an inappropriate “incidental harassment authorization,” with some added (though still insufficient) mitigations.

The Navy should have applied for an “incidental *take* authorization,” since active sonar use has the potential for serious injury or mortality that could not be negated through mitigations. The added mitigations imposed by NOAA Fisheries included requiring a minute reduction in the level of the sonar when animals were

spotted close to the source vessels. Yet the source levels would still have been many thousands of times greater than those that have caused mortality in previous cases, even if observers had been able to spot the diving animals and react in time. Active sonar use during the RIMPAC exercises was almost halted, until a settlement on a temporary restraining order was reached, and the Navy proceeded with nominal extra precautions—none of which assured the safety of marine animals. 🐬

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Please help us continue our fight by telling President Bush and the governor of Hawaii that the monument’s announced protections must address all human-induced threats and be properly enforced, and ask that protections be given to the other Hawaiian Islands as well.

President Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Governor Linda Lingle
Executive Chambers
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813



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