

Kentucky Livestock Commission Drafting Cruel Farm Animal “Care” Standards

In 2010, the Kentucky Livestock Care Standards Commission (KLCSC) was created to “... establish, maintain, or revise standards governing the care and well-being of on-farm livestock and poultry.” Commissioner of Agriculture Richie Farmer stated that agricultural standards should be “based on sound science and widely accepted practices.”

Unfortunately, the Commission’s current draft standards fall woefully short of providing for the care and well-being of Kentucky’s farm animals and are out of step with mainstream veterinary opinion and sound science. Two of the most obvious areas where the draft standards fall short are those permitting veal calves to be confined in crates and dairy cows to have their tails amputated without pain killers.

Intensive Confinement of Veal Calves in Crates

“[Veal crates are] inhumane and archaic practices that do nothing more than subject a calf to stress, fear, physical harm and pain.” -- Randy Strauss, CEO, Strauss Veal

Most calves raised for veal are intensively confined and tethered in individual crates and stalls too narrow for them even to turn around, let alone walk, during their entire 16-week lives before slaughter. Unfortunately, the practice of confining veal calves in crates is common, despite overwhelming scientific evidence that it is inhumane. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) says that calves should be able to turn around. Numerous states have already banned this cruel practice, but the KLCSC wants to explicitly allow it.



Tail Docking: A Painful & Unnecessary Practice

“The cumulative body of research on tail docking speaks loudly. The early reported benefits do not exist, and tail docking is now more of a producer preference than a cow cleanliness/udder health issue... The dairy industry should eliminate the routine practice of docking tails.” -- Thomas Quaife, editor, Dairy Herd Management

Tail docking is the partial amputation—typically without pain killers—of up to two-thirds of a cow’s tail. Scientific studies show that tail docking is a serious welfare problem, causing distress, pain, and increased fly attacks, and that it creates no benefit for the animal. The AVMA and numerous dairy industry representatives all oppose routine tail docking of dairy cows. Even though major dairy states like Ohio and California have taken regulatory action against the practice, the KLCSC wants it to continue here in Kentucky.



Without your help, these two cruel practices could soon become enshrined into law!

Please help protect Kentucky farm animals by contacting Dr. Robert Stout, Livestock Commission Chair (502-564-3956; robert.stout@ky.gov) and voice your opposition to cattle tail docking and veal crates!



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