

FROM THE DESK OF WOLFGANG PUCK

February 10, 2012

Dear friend and fellow restaurateur,

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying 2012. As you may know, as a result of a state law passed in 2004, both the sale and production of foie gras will become illegal in our state of California, effective July 1st.

As a chef, a businessman, and someone who cares about the humane treatment of animals, I'm writing to let you know why I support this particular law, and why I hope you'll give it your full support, as well.

I stopped serving foie gras in 2007 as part of a broader animal welfare program I'm very proud of.

Every major animal welfare charity in the country from The Humane Society of the United States to the ASPCA to countless California humane societies agrees that force-feeding ducks and geese for foie gras is extremely detrimental to animal welfare.

I was impressed in 2004 when the sole foie gras producer in California supported this legislation, urging then-Gov. Schwarzenegger to sign it into law. He admirably wrote, "I have the moral stature to accept that if within the seven and a half years established by S.B. 1520, science and government don't arrive to the conclusion that the methods used in our foie gras production are acceptable...I will be ready to quit."

In fact, the science is so clear that countries throughout Europe, as well as in Israel—which used to be the world's number four producer—have banned force-feeding for foie gras.

And here in California, our own customers understand the need for all animals, including those raised for food, to be treated humanely. California voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 2 in 2008, with nearly two-thirds of voters supporting an end to extreme confinement of farm animals. We chefs have the ability to create delicious and original dishes our customers will love without causing torment to animals.

I very much hope you'll join me in supporting this common sense law.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wolfgang Puck" with a registered trademark symbol (®) at the end. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Wolfgang Puck

CALIFORNIA'S 2012 BAN ON FORCE-FEEDING FOR FOIE GRAS

Foie gras, French for “fatty liver,” is the diseased and enlarged liver of a duck or goose, produced through force-feeding. Each day for several weeks, a pipe is shoved down the birds’ throats to force-feed them. As a result, the birds’ livers, diseased with hepatic lipidosis, grow up to ten or more times its original, healthy weight. The livers are then sold as *foie gras*.

HISTORY OF FORCE-FEEDING IN CALIFORNIA

In 2004, California banned the “force feed[ing of] a bird for the purpose of enlarging the bird's liver beyond normal size.” Then-Senator John Burton—now chairman of California Democratic Party—championed the law, which will take effect July 1, 2012. Sonoma-Artisan Foie Gras—the only *foie gras* producer in the state—supported the prohibition because the law allowed for ample time to find an alternative to force-feeding. Company owner Guillermo Gonzalez wrote in 2004, “I have the moral stature to accept that if within the seven and a half years established by SB 1520, science and government don’t arrive to the conclusion that the methods used in our *foie gras* production are acceptable...I will be ready to quit.”

DISEASE, STRESS, PAIN & MORTALITY

Behavioral evidence suggests ducks and geese experience fear, as well as acute and chronic stress from the multiple daily force-feedings and the pain associated with them. Force-feeding causes a number of injuries: bruising or perforation of the esophagus; hemorrhaging and inflammation of the neck resulting from the repeated insertion of the pipe to the throat; and asphyxia caused by food improperly forced into the trachea. Wounds of the esophagus may subsequently become infected. Force-feeding also results in numerous illnesses and disease, including hepatic lipidosis, bacterial and fungal infections, malnourishment, and lameness. For these reasons, mortality rates for force-fed ducks are 10 to 20 times higher than those for non-force fed ducks.



“We asked the governor to sign the bill.”

Guillermo Gonzalez, owner of Sonoma-Artisan Foie Gras, in his 2004 letter supporting CA’s

“The force feeding of ducks and geese for the production of foie gras is a cruel and inhumane practice that should be banned.”

– Dr. Ian J.H. Duncan, Emeritus Chair in Animal Welfare, University of Guelph

FORCE-FEEDING BANNED

Due to the animal cruelty involved, more than a dozen countries—including the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Israel (formerly the world’s fourth-largest *foie gras* producer), Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, and Argentina—have either outright prohibited force feeding for *foie gras* production or have interpreted it as illegal under existing anti-cruelty laws.

PUBLIC SENTIMENT

According to a 2004 Zogby poll, 77 percent of US adults believe the process of force-feeding ducks or geese to produce *foie gras* should be banned. In California, well over 95% of restaurants do not serve *foie gras*. Several cities throughout California have passed resolutions condemning *foie gras*, including: San Diego, San Francisco, Berkeley, West Hollywood, Carlsbad, Solana Beach, Los Angeles and Laguna Woods. Additionally, several restaurants and retailers—such as Costco, Safeway, Target, Giant Eagle, Whole Foods Market and Wolfgang Puck—refuse to sell *foie gras*.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND FORCE-FEEDING VIDEO FOOTAGE PLEASE VISIT:

www.humanesociety.org/CAfoiegras

