

# Readers comment on food, legal aliens

## Letters

### Food production: not a pretty sight

Obviously Lewis Coulter (Letters, Dec. 3) has been reading too many "Farmer Brown" books.

You know, those books we read as children depicting the friendly farmer feeding his animals, where the cow grazes in the field with her wobbly calf. The chickens roam the yard, pecking for worms. Evidently, Farmer Brown keeps these animals around for his enjoyment, for this is nothing like the meat industry of today.

That "raising animals for food is not cruel and inhumane" is a popular misconception. It is popular with meat eaters who would rather not know the origin of their dinner. It is popular with meat producers who wouldn't want their profit potential ruined by bad press.

Animal husbandry is big business, and animals are treated as machines. The problem is, machines can't feel pain. Animals do.

Most animals never see the light of day. They are crowded into buildings that are constantly lit with artificial light or kept in constant darkness. Often they are insufficiently heated

and cooled.

Calves are whisked away from their mothers before being weaned and tethered into stalls 2 feet wide, making it impossible to turn around.

Pigs and cows suffer severe injuries in their legs and feet from standing on hard concrete or wooden slats with no bedding. Stalls are never cleaned. Medical care is not cost-efficient, so the many animals who die of infections, broken bones, heart attacks caused from stress and heat-stroke are quickly gathered and made into pet food.

Coulter insists farm animals are well-fed, but Farmer Brown doesn't feed them. A conveyor belt brings the food saturated with growth hormones and chemical vitamins. The animals are never allowed to graze or exercise for fear of spoiling the meat.

Male chickens hatched in an egg production facility are suffocated in plastic bags and used for fertilizer.

Hogs are routinely castrated, have their tails cut off and have notches cut in their ears, all without anesthetic.

Cows are artificially inseminated or strapped to "rape racks" for quick and easy reproduction.

There may be a few Farmer Browns left, but these conditions are very much the rule, not the exceptions.

Your pet dog yelps when its tail is caught in a door. Animals feel pain as much as we do. Sometimes animals are electrically shocked so they are unconscious at the moment of death,

but their entire lives are stories of pain and suffering. As for animals being "dumb," pigs have been proven to be smarter than dogs, yet we cry out with anger when we find out dogs are raised for food in the Philippines. Clearly, brain power is an excuse, not a reason.

What makes this treatment even more inhumane is that it is not necessary. Millions of people live long and healthy lives having never eaten meat, milk or eggs. Doctors have proven time and time again that all necessary nutrients are easily, efficiently and abundantly provided in the vegetarian diet. Even the leanest meats contain dangerous levels of fat and cholesterol, and no fiber. And it hardly bears repeating that vegetarians are much less likely to suffer heart disease, strokes, colon cancer, obesity and osteoporosis than even moderate meat eaters.

In the time it took to read this letter, more than 5,000 chickens were hung upside down on a conveyor belt and slaughtered.

And for what? Because some of us like the taste.

I suggest that Coulter visit a veal farm or a slaughterhouse and then tell us that "raising animals for food is not cruel and inhumane."

Ginger K. Dzerk  
freshman  
arts and sciences

### Alienation of foreigners encouraged by Bourne

Jeanne Bourne's editorial (Daily Nebraskan, Dec. 1) is intriguing. I wish she had defined "foreigners" explicitly. If, on reading between the lines, she wishes that these people whom I shall refer to as legal aliens are detrimental to the American society, should hence be asked to leave the United States.

It is in my firmest opinion that there ought to be such an exodus as never seen before in the annals of history, considering that this country, with the possible exception of the descendants of the passengers of the Mayflower, is made up of "foreigners" who immigrated to this country in one era or the other; thus bringing this country to a full stop.

Let me highlight some facts that seem unknown about these legal aliens. They leave their home, thousands of miles away, come to this alien land with the primary intentions of gaining more knowledge. They rally up domestic resources to pay tuition that costs 300 percent more than their peers at school pay. As a part of admission, they are subjected to academic persecution by taking trivial and expensive exams such as tests of spoken English, English as a foreign language, etc.

Even more environmental changes, courtesy, local mores, diction, phonetics, academic alike puts

an enormous pressure on them, leaving very little or no time at all for social activities — so we speak for more than half the population. But then, when we, legal aliens, take time to let loose our pressures, we now have Bourne warning Americans to stay clear of them.

What amazes me is the sheer hypocrisy of Bourne, considering she took the pains to write another column extolling these legal aliens a few months ago. To quote her, "... Americans are so often ignorant of foreign cultures. They assume all foreigners, especially non-Europeans, are barbarians."

Now she preaches to avoid them. She carries on, "But often Americans don't listen, if they did, they would hear a whole new perspective of things they take for granted." Though falling prey to her own advice, she now restricts her vision.

Summing up, quoting her, once again, "Open your eyes, kids, there's a whole other world out there."

Bharat Savel  
graduate  
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