

# Readers attack production of veal

## Calf mistreatment won't be tolerated by informed public

In reference to the letter from Nick Hytrek (letter to the editor, DN, Oct. 16) concerning the treatment of veal calves, there remains some details that need to be published that would give the subject more clarity.

Mr. Hytrek states that he grew up on a dairy farm and that farmers are "not the hicks that most people make them out to be." I would like to assure him that most of us that are championing the cause of animal rights do not believe that "farmers are hicks." In fact, we feel that farmers are often the victims of economics that, in order to stay competitive, seem to require streamlined, high-tech agricultural production systems that do not have the welfare of animals within their design. Ag chemical and pharmaceutical companies also have a heavy hand in the farm animal scene, convincing both consumers and farmers of the necessity of their products.

In the case of veal calves, the male offspring are indeed sold at two or three days of age to a veal farmer. Perhaps Mr. Hytrek's dairy farm kept their own veal calves, but the "normal" procedure within the dairy farm and veal industry remains one that the calves are removed soon after birth.

Mr. Hytrek claims that the veal calves suffer from diarrhea if they have roomy pens — that's not quite right. Actually, veal calves suffer from chronic diarrhea from being exclusively fed a liquid diet of growth stimulants, antibiotics, powdered skim milk (NOT their mother's milk, but a

milk substitute that is purposely iron-deficient in order to produce "premium" veal) and mold inhibitors.

To prevent muscle development and to speed weight gain, the calves are allowed no exercise and are chained in tiny crates. They are tethered by the neck inside the crate to prevent movement and to abnormally increase weight to produce as many pounds as possible of unnaturally tender and muscleless flesh.

Veal calves are also deprived of drinking water. In a futile attempt to quench their thirst, the calves gain weight quickly by drinking more of their milky liquid feed.

Hytrek also states that "you don't know what it's like to stuff pills down a sick calf's throat and give it shots." These pills and shots would be totally unnecessary if the calf were given actual mother's milk, which provides the young calf with antibodies which protect him from disease. But the "milk-replacer" is designed to speed weight gain and to cause anemia, all for the purpose of producing "white" and "tender" flesh for fancy restaurants. In addition, straw bedding is denied because it contains iron and, if eaten, would darken the flesh.

I certainly can understand that Hytrek is upset over the negative exposure that has been given to veal production — it is one of the more prominent humane issues at this time and has garnered much public sympathy on a national level. But he needs to understand that this type of production will not be tolerated by the public when they are fully aware of it, and a change is in order.

And we realize that we can no more harbor stereotypes of farmers than farmers can harbor stereotypes

of vegetarians and animal-rights advocates.

Marcia Andersen  
coordinator  
Nebraska Vegetarian Society

## Defender of veal falls short, nitpicks in his retaliation

The overly defensive letter attacking Adam Hodges (letter to the editor, DN, Oct. 10) for urging a veal boycott needs clarification. In his zeal to retaliate against Hodges, Nick Hytrek responded to charges that were never made against him (letter to the editor, DN, Oct. 16). Hodges did not charge Hytrek with being "a hick"; he didn't even charge him with cruelty, unless Hytrek wishes to confess. What were you so defensive about Nick? Your guilty conscience?

Hodges gave dimensions of 22 inches by 58 inches for veal crates and delineated some of the hardships this put on veal calves. Hytrek whined that those measurements are adequate for a baby calf. Perhaps that is true, but the thing is calves grow (maybe "farmer" Hytrek didn't know that?). Hodges was right in all he wrote.

Hytrek sure nitpicked about "taking calves away from their mothers immediately after birth." Oh, "It is very important that the cow lick off the calf first," he said in negations of that charge. Gee, really? So who is it that we are defining "immediately" here? Within three seconds, one hour, one day. Some difference, buster.

OK, OK, Hodges could have been a little more clear in his letter by specifying that factory farms and not independent farmers are performing the worst cruelty to animals in veal operations.

I have written statements concerning the vicious treatment of animals in factory farms from people who have worked in them. I won't get space for the whole list, so I'll give

you just these: a worker helping to lead veal calves from their crates onto trucks testified that the calves could not walk properly and were crudely dragged by other employees, and that skin and all sometimes went with the too-tight, grown-in chains when they were jerked from the calves necks.

If there are "government regulations regarding sanitation and ventilation in barns where a commercial product is produced," Hytrek, they are worthless or not enforced. There are no laws protecting farm animals as there are laws to protect pets. Farm animals are specifically excluded from the federal Animal Welfare Act.

Hytrek wrote, "We take care of our animals as if they were our own children." Damn lucky thing for any potential offspring of his that he won't be able to get 50 cents a pound for them.

Hytrek, who do you think you're fooling, saying "Any death is a sad incident, not only because of the loss of potential profit, but because of the loss of a life." I'm not stupid enough to think that your care about any "loss of life" when an animal dies in your barn, if you don't care (and you don't) when you load animals in trucks for their last ride to the packing plant. Apparently, the truth is that you don't care at all about "loss of life" when you're making money from it.

People, I'm giving you credit for not knowing the crimes against nature committed in factory farming. I think that if you knew you would care. Even if I'm wrong about that, here's something sure to impress anyone: the antibiotics routinely fed to animals in factory farms end up in your dinner.

There'll be no one producing veal if we refuse to eat it. If enough of us complain, UNL residence halls won't serve it. Think about it. Will you fight this cruelty/health hazard? You can make a difference.

Fran Thompson  
junior  
sociology

**Forget the Computer Lab Lines.**  
Call and ask about our \$49<sup>95</sup> a month lease-to-own \*STUDENT SPECIAL (IBM compatible and software)  
**Rent-A-Computer**  
16th & 'M' Streets  
**435-RENT**  
(435-7368)  
Price based on 30 month lease

**The Gift of Comfort**  
Express your affection with a gift of Birkenstock sandals, clogs, or shoes.  
  
Irresistible comfort in a variety of styles & colors... appreciated day after day, all year long!  
Gift Certificates available.  
**Birkenstock**  
Footloose & Fancy  
1219 P Street  
476-6119

**BEFORE HE CAN FOLLOW HIS DREAMS, HE'S GOT TO FOLLOW THE RULES.**  
Selective Service Registration. It's Quick. It's Easy. And It's The Law.

## Ecology Now member, student disagree on group's actions

Rod Hansen's letter about Ecology Now (letter to the editor, DN, Oct. 25) showed how little he really understands about Ecology Now and the realities of corporate America.

"Coors has made some mistakes." Yes, they have, Rod. If they can correct them (i.e. as in it is financially feasible to correct them) they will, and they will milk all the public relations they can out of it. The problems with Coors and most of corporate America is their own greed blinds them to the ramifications of their own overproduction. This isn't true of all corporations, nor do I think all people working for the Coors corporation are guilty of this error. The point is why should people who have the power to make the changes in their company (and have been slow to start said changes) be given prestigious honors like being made keynote speakers? When such changes have been effected, sure, give them the forum to speak out, tell how they corrected their own mistakes. Kissing up to them, just because of their wealth and position won't change a damn thing.

Corporate leaders aren't monsters. They just don't seem to care a great deal about anything that may make them alter the way they do things. I'm glad you were able to have a good conversation with Mr. Coors. I'll be interested to see when (if ever) he directs his corporate agenda to the concerns you expressed. I hope for our future he does.

I'm also rather stunned at how little background you seem to have on Ecology Now. Sure, the group has been involved in many protests, but they have done many things besides protests. You're completely in the dark about things that this group has done. Well and fine that the UNL Wildlife Club did a cleanup. I hope they do more. Ecology Now has conducted numerous cleanups in the last year. We just saw no reason to make public our efforts.

Cooper Park was not an Ecology Now event! I realize some people from the group were involved so I will address this issue. The protest at Cooper Park was a mixture of both environmental and political protest. It was citizens from across the community trying to make a point and get the Lincoln City Council to listen to them. The protest was evidence of the people in power, corporate and political, ignor-

ing and avoiding the issues brought up by the citizens of the Lincoln community.

Strange you should mention that the hours spent at Cooper Park could have been used to plant trees in a desolate area. Last spring numerous members of Ecology Now spent Easter weekend in Smiley Canyon in Fort Robinson State Park planting thousands of trees in this fire-damaged area.

If you really want corporations, or the government, to listen to our concerns about the future of our planet, then we have to make ourselves heard. The only way that anything will really change is if we make the little people, those who vote for politicians, those whose money buys a company's product, realize that it is our right and obligation to send a clear, no-nonsense message to the people in control of our country. If this means protest, so be it. I'd bet if you went to Peter Coors today and asked him what concerns you had expressed to him after his speech, he probably wouldn't remember. You can only get so far listening to these corporate flunkies, Rod. Actions speak louder than words. Never once in your letter did you express what Mr. Coors has done to protect the environment. I haven't heard that they have stopped producing their products so it is a good bet they are still out there damaging the environment. What plans do they have? How soon are they going to implement it? Are they willing to part with some profits to protect the environment? Are they willing to cut back production to a level that they can cope with? Is Peter losing sleep over this? I strongly doubt it.

My impression of you is that you are truly concerned with environmental issues. Instead of portraying Ecology Now as a bunch of glory hounds who are unwilling to get our hands dirty with positive action, why don't you make an effort to join with us? The race to save our planet is on, and it doesn't make sense to waste time in arguing with those who have similar goals.

James A. Zank  
junior  
arts and sciences

Our 20th Anniversary Sale  
November 7-11  
**2 1/2¢ Copies**  
99¢ Color Copies  
99¢ Oversize Copies  
**kinko's**  
the copy center  
NEW Downtown Location! (The Old Baekin Robbins)  
1201 Q Street 330 N. 48th  
475-2679 466-8159  
Open 24 Hours Open 24 Hours  
2 1/2¢ price is for black & white, 8 1/2 x 11, autofed copies on 20# bond.  
99¢ copies are 8 1/2 x 11, Canon laser copies.  
99¢ Oversize copies in black & white up to 24" x 36".