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CAPS 4360.13

26 April 2007

Should factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations be more strictly enforced?

Animals and animal byproducts have been used for the gain of mankind for as long as mankind has been capable. All cultures in some way rely on animals as a major part of their diet, so much that meat and dairy have their own food groups. Although animals are a necessity to humans, the process in which meat is acquired and prepared can be rather controversial. Factory farms process most generic meat and animal byproducts sold in common grocery stores today. According to the Britannica Encyclopedia, factory farming is the “system of modern animal farming designed to yield the most meat, milk, and eggs in the least amount of time and space possible.” This type of farming describes most of the large-scale farms within the United States today. Poultry, swine, beef, and dairy farms are all considered factory farms, many of which contain their own slaughterhouses. The Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulate these farms, although many argue that they are not regulated well enough. There has been a large amount of criticism of factory farming not only due to the treatment of animals, but in factory farming’s effects on the environment and human health. Should factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations be more strictly enforced?

Some do not see how the welfare of animals in the meat and dairy industry can be considered a social issue. There are people who lack compassion for animals bred for human consumption, but if such people knew more about the practices of factory farming they might

become more concerned for their own welfare. According to Dr. Michael W. Fox, author of Eating with Conscience: The Bioethics of Food, in the United States alone around 25 million animals are killed everyday to support the diet of American people (13). According to Joby Warrick, Washington Post writer and author of “They Die Piece By Piece”, it takes 25 minutes to turn a live animal into a steak and during this time several illegal practices occur that often go unnoticed or are purposely ignored by officials (1).

If more people were aware of factory farming’s potential negative effects on the environment, there might be more public concern for this issue. Excessive animal waste production can easily pollute the environment (Fox 35). There are too many animals being kept on land that does not have the resources to uphold them, which causes major water contamination when mass amounts of manure is washed into water-ways, along with chemicals and pesticides. Also, the amount of methane gas that cattle produce can even in turn be a cause of global warming. Factory farming can indeed have a large affect on the environment.

The quality of meat and food produced from factory farms can be greatly decreased due to the use of hormones and antibiotics administered to the animals. These practices threaten consumers’ health and factory farm workers are at risk for injury. One of the main conflicts when concerning animal welfare and the welfare of workers in factory farming is high production speeds. Ever-increasing production speeds can cause animals to be improperly killed during factory processes. Any consumer of animal products might be more concerned about factory farming and where there food is coming from if they knew exactly how it could affect them.

The issue of factory farming has personal significance because I have been a vegetarian for over five years. I am interested in researching factory farms and slaughterhouses to become

more knowledgeable about the debate of their regulations and also hear both sides of the story. I understand that people will forever eat meat but I want to learn about what the USDA is doing or attempting to do to ensure that factory farms slaughter animals humanely, and prevent harm to the environment and human health.

Factory farms use many specific tools and terms in the slaughtering of animals. Most terms concerning the environment and human health are rather self-explanatory. The act of slaughter at Tyson Food's plant in Pasco, Washington is described in Joby Warrick's article, "They Die Piece By Piece". First of all "prodding" is a technique used to get large animals to move along when they are being stubborn or slow. Prodding is the use of an electrical prod or blunt/sharp object to scare or force the animal to move to a desired location and can be used all throughout the factory farm (Warrick 4). The actual slaughter begins after the animals have arrived at the slaughterhouse by herding from the buildings they were raised in, or by truck or train from another farm or ranch. The first step begins in a chamber after the animals have traveled through a narrow chute from their holding pen. Here they will be "stunned" or "knocked" by workers who are paid around nine dollars an hour to kill almost 2,000 animals per shift (Warrick 4). Stunning is not using electrical shock to cause the animal to go unconscious, but is actually using what is called a captive-bolt stunner. This device is designed to quickly shoot and retract a metal rod through the animals forehead, skull and into its brain to render it unconscious (Warrick 4). Any action of inaccurate, ineffective or repeated stunning is illegal according to the USDA's "Guidelines for the Slaughter of Animals for Human Consumption" (Appendix A).

The animals are then shackled and pulled upside down by one leg by a chain on to the subsequent step of the line. The HFA describes the next step in its "Petition to Stop

Slaughterhouse Crimes” as “sticking”. Sticking means that the major artery in the neck is cut in order for the animal to be bled, which will kill them if the stunning did not do so (6). Then the skin is removed from their heads, stomachs, and legs (HFA 6). Then the animals legs are cut off at the knee, or in the case of hogs, they are first immersed in water with temperatures close to boiling to soften their hides (HFA 6). The animals’ horns and ears are also removed and their bodies are then sliced open at the stomach, legs and neck for carcass inspection (HFA 6). Next the internal organs are removed and specific meat cuts are made and refrigerated. Lard is sent to a rendering plant along with other remains while waste water is treated in a plant much like sewage. Eventually the meat is sent off to distribution centers and into stores (HFA 7). Mentioned before, this process takes only 25 minutes (Warrick 1).

When anyone writes or speaks about the meat industry, the issue of animal rights is usually included. People disagree on whether or not animals should be raised for human consumption. Some extremists say that humans should not use animal products of any kind. The issue of animal rights, although an important issue to some, is outside the scope of this paper. This paper is not about whether factory farm animals deserve to be treated better or whether animals should be eaten at all. This paper is about factory farming as a social issue, not just an animal issue.

There are laws and regulations that prevent inhumane treatment of animals in factory farms and their slaughterhouses. In 1958, Congress enacted the Humane Slaughter Act (HAS) that requires animals to be stunned before they are slaughtered. It was amended in 1978, to also prohibit any slaughterhouse methods that cause pain to the animals. The USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) also has many extensive regulations that assure proper and humane handling and slaughtering methods listed under their most recent “Terrestrial Animal Health

Standards Commission Report” of March 2006. Their regulations are listed in Appendix A, “Guidelines for the Slaughter of Animals for Human Consumption”. Their basis for these regulations (mentioned in the Appendix) is stated as “These guidelines address the need to ensure the welfare of food animals during pre-slaughter and slaughter processes, until they are dead” (USDA 1).

According to Jennifer Weeks, author of “Factory Farms: Are They the Best Way to Feed the Nation?”, in the 18th and 19th centuries, animal agriculture consisted of animals living and roaming freely (12). Farmers took care of their animals, and slaughtered them when food was needed. Into the 19th century and during the Civil War cities like Cincinnati and Chicago became settings for large meatpacking centers (Weeks 12). Open range ranching expanded after the war was over, onto federal lands that were unsettled, which led to some overgrazing. When harsh winters came in the late 1800’s a good majority of cattle died in the cold (Weeks 13). Ranchers decided to obtain private lands for their ranching, which they also farmed. In 1890, Congress passed its first Meat Inspection Act (Weeks 13). In 1905, the release of the famous book, The Jungle by Upton Sinclair, exposed dirty conditions in the meat packing industry and caused the public to go up in arms about food regulations.

Therefore, soon after the book was released, Congress passed the Pure Food and Drug Act, which prevented the sale of wrongly labeled food across states (Weeks 13). Also in 1906, Congress passed its second Meat Inspection Act, which imposes sanitation regulations on slaughterhouses, and also requires the USDA to inspect animals before and after slaughter (Weeks 13). In 1921 Congress passed the Packers and Stockyards Act whose goal was to maintain competitiveness among the meat industry by banning price discrimination (Weeks 13). In 1900, 41% of the population worked in agriculture but by 1945 only 16% were left working

on farms (Weeks 14). In 1951 the Food and Drug Administration allowed antibiotics into animal feed, and in 1954 hormones began to be used on cattle (Weeks 14). Genetic advances also led to an increase in animal production numbers. Hens that laid more eggs and cows that produced more milk were created (Weeks 14).

Another major uproar within the meat industry began in the late 1980's and 1990's. Mad Cow Disease, otherwise known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, killed less than 50 people in Europe, and consumers were surprised to find that mad cow disease occurs when cattle are fed neurological tissue of other infected cattle (Weeks 15). Regulations soon came to prevent animals from being fed parts of each other, and in 1989 the European Union banned any importing of meat treated with hormones, which meant that the United States could no longer export their meat to Europe (Weeks 15). In 1990 the first organic standards came about, creating a new wave of farming and industry (Weeks 15). In 1993 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the use of hormones in dairy cows in order for them to produce larger amounts of milk (Weeks 15).

Factory farms received more attention as their numbers grew. Between the years of 1995 and 1999 large amounts of rain cause major flooding in North Carolina, which led to lagoons filled with hog waste to overflow and contaminate near by rivers and water (Weeks 15). Again, regulations were tightened and new factory farms were prevented from being built for the next ten years within that specific area (Weeks 15). In 2003 the first case of mad cow disease in North America was found in a dairy cow that originated in Canada. During the same year a legislation came about proposing that seven classes of antibiotics were banned from use unless it could be proven that they do not cause bacteria resistance in human consumers (Weeks 16). In 2005 the FDA removed the use of Baytril, an antibiotic, in chickens because it was proven to

cause an increase in bacteria that was resistant to the antibiotic. Also in 2006, natural grocery stores made it a company standard to only sell eggs that were produced by cage-free hens (Weeks 16). That same year, the natural grocery store Whole Foods made a goal to sell only humanely raised and slaughtered meats by 2008 (Weeks 16). There was also an E. coli bacteria scare in 2006. It was found present on Californian grown spinach, which was attributed to cow manure contamination (Weeks 17). Nine states now have bans on factory farms within their state lines to keep corporate owners out of farming (Weeks 17).

There are many future plans set out for factory farms and slaughterhouses. In 2007 Congress plans to readdress the 2002 farm bill and make some improvements (Weeks 19). Regulations for water and air quality will be revamped and made stricter along with better manure management of factory farms. Advocates of public health hope Congress will pay attention to and make changes towards the overuse of antibiotics in the farming industry. Organic farmers want Congress to increase the amount of funding that goes towards education and research of organic farming. In 2005 only 0.35% of the USDA's Agricultural Research \$1 billion dollar budget went to organic farming. Organic research received less than \$2 million dollars. Organic farming is becoming increasingly popular and is supported through research that it can be much healthier than typical farming methods therefore, organic farmers hope that Congress will supply them with a larger budget in 2007 (Weeks 19). Another proposal made by organic and smaller farms is that Congress should require all animal products, including those in grocery stores, to have country of origin labeling, otherwise known as COOL, meaning that packaging should state the product's location of origin (Weeks 16). They believe that this will notify consumers if their products are originating in places with lower standards than that of the U.S. Factory farms do

not support COOL because they believe it will cost them billions in marketing but economists disagree and believe it will cost far less (Weeks 16).

Small-scale farmers have a problem with factory farms having the majority over the market. This will most likely become a realization when Congress reassesses the farm bill. According to Jennifer Weeks, the reason they have the majority in the first place is that the Packers and Stockyards Act is not enforced to its best ability (18). The farm bill of 2002 originally had a provision that kept factory farms from owning their own livestock. This costs corporations less because they do not have to buy from others, but the provision was not included in the final bill and will most likely not reappear in 2007 (Weeks 18). If this were to change, corporations would most likely become upset because they claim it would interfere with them being able to get the most money out of their animals. It is cheaper to slaughter your own animals than it is to buy from others, because others will seek a profit from the sale of the animal. Small-scale farmers will not get everything they want out of Congress but more and more natural food stores, consumers and communities are becoming local farm supporters and advocates of natural and organic foods. Take Whole Foods for example, I have been an employee for the company for almost three years and have already seen the growth and popularity that natural and locally grown foods have produced. The Gateway store in Austin, TX, already gets almost twice the business it did when I first began working there. Although Whole Foods is a corporation, they do their best to support naturally grown foods without the use of pesticides, antibiotics and hormones that are present in large-scale factory farms.

If Congress decides to give more money to organic farming it could cause a small shift in conventional farmers switching towards organic farming because of its growing popularity. The popularity of natural and organic foods has caused more concern for farming methods that use

antibiotics and hormones to increase their production. People are becoming more aware of these unnatural foods and companies are realizing this as well, even corporately owned Wal-Mart sells organic products now. If the number of companies that require humane and natural practices increases, factory farms might just have to adapt in order to keep up. Unless the United States agricultural policy stops putting emphasis on pursuing the cheapest way of producing food, factory farms and their operations will continue to exist (Weeks 19).

If the United States population does not stop eating the highly produced, hormone and antibiotic laden processed foods then there will be no real change. Over 30% of the U.S. population is considered obese. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, food and meat consumption is obviously a problem because of this statistic (1). Therefore, with the growing number of fast food restaurants present in America, obesity has become an epidemic and eating mass amounts of processed foods is the cause of this problem. Unless there is some kind of change in how food is produced and its cheap availability the number of overweight and obese people in the United States will continue to grow.

Different sides have different opinions concerning topics within the issue of factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations. When pertaining to the animals, environment, and human health, the Humane Farming Association (HFA) has a lot to say along with a few individuals who have written extensively on the issue. They believe animals are treated inhumanely in factory farms and their slaughterhouses, and that USDA regulations are not enforced well enough to protect the environment and human health. Some farmers and individuals have opinions to why certain practices, that the HFA deem inhumane, occur in farming and slaughter. They believe it benefits the animal itself and/or workers. The USDA believes they uphold their regulations to the fullest

extent and that their regulations ensure the humane treatment of animals and prevents harm to the environment and human health. The USDA responds much to the HFA's claims that they do not uphold their regulations. There are two main sides to the issue who have differing opinions behind each issue within factory farming and slaughterhouses regulations.

One major issue that appears when people think about factory farms and slaughterhouses is the welfare of the animals, although this is not the only reason that factory farm regulations can be considered a social issue. All of the animals including cattle, veal, hogs, and chickens play major roles in factory farming. There are many concerns about dairy cattle. Some include stanchioning, the early separation of baby calves from their mothers, dehorning, constant state of pregnancy while producing large quantities of milk and the use of the recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH). Lilly Hall, in the Department of Animal Science at Purdue University, believes that keeping dairy cattle stanchioned, or tied to their pen with a restraint where they have the ability to lie down but not move around, keeps cows safer (8). It keeps them from harsh weather, any threatening predators, lets workers take better care of the animals, and is where the milking takes place (Hall 8). Around 70 percent of dairy farms keep their cattle stanchioned, which means that most cows get very little exercise. Cows may be released for a short period of time to be milked, though some farms have mobile milking machines, which involves cattle staying in place and the machines moving around (Fraser, Mench, Millman 91). According to Bernard E. Rollin, author of the book Farm Animal Welfare, a problem when considering any type of dairy housing for cattle is that "they fail to allow for grazing on pasture, an activity for which cattle have evolved and which, if permitted, they will spend eight to ten hours a day doing" (104). People and organizations who do not support factory farming believe that denying a cow the right to graze and get exercise is inhumane, but according to many farmers, animals

have a nice life being kept indoors. They are kept out of harsh weather and that factory farm operations are a must when raising animals indoors (Weeks 4).

Cows in the dairy industry are typically impregnated by artificial insemination and since milk production is for human consumers, the calves are typically taken away from their mothers within one day. According to the authors of “Farm Animals and Their Welfare in 2000, David Fraser, Joy Mench, and Suzanne Millman (91). Male calves have no use to the dairy industry so they are often quickly killed after birth, or are sometimes raised for veal. Calves need “colostrums”, or first milk, in order to receive proper nutrition and antibodies in their systems (Hall 9). Typical to free range cattle, the mothers might leave the herd to give birth and keep her calf away for a few days and only come back to nurse. After she decides to rejoin the herd with her calf, the young ones tend to group together (Hall 9). Nursing forms a strong bond between mother and calf just like human mother and child. According to R. Harrison, author of In Animals, Men and Morals: An Enquiry Into the Maltreatment of Non-Humans, separating the calf from its mother is an extremely sad and pathetic occurrence within factory farms (Weeks 6).

Another practice in factory farming is that of dehorning of cattle. Dehorning is recommended, according to most farmers, to protect both animals and humans from injury and preventing aggressive behavior (Weeks 7). This seems like a smart decision to make, although some believe the method of dehorning cattle can be rather painful. Dehorning typically happens when cattle are young where a hot iron is used “...to cauterize the developing horn buds” (Fraser, Mench, Millman 91). Most United Kingdom farms use a painkiller for this procedure, but there is no real evidence that United States farmers use any kind of anesthetic. On older cattle, tools like saws and giant clippers are used to remove horns.

The act of continuous pregnancy in dairy cattle, which causes production of large quantities of milk, is also an issue of concern. There are two ways for a dairy cow to produce a large amount of milk. Either she is continuously pregnant and therefore naturally produces a large quantity or she is fed the recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) to increase milk production while she is lactating (Hall 11-12). A dairy cow's body is prepared to carry a lot of milk when she is pregnant, naturally which doesn't occur too often. Some believe if a female cow is continually pregnant and producing large quantities of milk at the same time she is likely to be burdened. Dairy farms aim to impregnate a cow every two months after she has given birth, but there is no documented evidence that anyone abides by this (Hall 12).

As I mentioned before, there are many regulations and laws made by the USDA and Congress that state what can and cannot happen in factory farms and slaughterhouses. According to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of the USDA on their website named "Key Facts: Humane Slaughter", the "USDA considers humane methods of handling animals and humane slaughter operations a priority, and has a Farm Animal Well Being Task Force to address sound standards for the care, handling, transporting, and slaughter of farm animals" (1). The FSIS is responsible for inspecting factory farms and making sure that every process is in compliance with the Humane Slaughter Act (FSIS 1). The USDA claims that there is a veterinarian and multiple inspectors at every federally inspected slaughterhouse who are required to oversee the slaughter line and all processes throughout the building. They are also responsible for stopping the production line to take action against any violations that they might see (FSIS 1).

In the year 2000, the USDA inspected around 900 slaughterhouses (FSIS 1). The veterinarians brought in for inspection, are not typical veterinarians. The USDA states that all

veterinarians are trained through a computer program and are tested on slaughter inspection practices (FSIS 1). New trainees also watch videos informing them on proper slaughter practices therefore making slaughterhouse veterinarians properly educated not only in their profession but also in regulations and slaughter practices (FSIS 1). In 2001, the FSIS issued a memorandum to all factory farms and slaughterhouses to remind inspectors, officials, and workers of how important the USDA's regulations on humane methods of slaughter are to their establishments (FSIS 1). During the same year, the USDA was also working on how to better handle downer animals, who arrive to slaughter already injured. They were looking into changing their regulations so violations could be dealt with better. According to their website about Humane Slaughter the FSIS states that it "...continues to work with other government agencies, industry, and academia to develop and take steps to improve food safety. We support the development and implementation of sound standards for the care, handling, transporting, and slaughter of farm animals..." (1). According to the USDA and the FSIS, they take their regulations very seriously and enforce them to the fullest extent.

Regardless of these regulations, the Humane Farming Association (HFA) claims that animals are routinely mistreated and harmed while consciously experiencing their own slaughter and that they have evidence to prove it. In the HFA's "Petition to Halt Slaughterhouse Crimes", the organization states that they have uncovered the truth behind slaughterhouse doors through speaking with slaughterhouse workers and USDA inspectors who see it first-hand. Therefore the next concern for cattle would be slaughter (1). The HFA claims to have video of conscious cows being slaughtered alive, but the FSIS claims on their website titled "Inaccuracies Concerning Humane Slaughter" that the HFA cut out footage of the improper stunning being corrected and that the HFA was precisely trying to incriminate the slaughterhouse and its inspectors (1). The

inhumane treatment of animals within slaughterhouses is against the law, and the HFA states that it continues to occur because the USDA does not enforce its laws and regulations (1). The FSIS claims on their website that the “USDA takes very seriously any violations of humane animal handling and humane slaughter regulations. USDA has taken and will continue to take strong enforcement action against slaughter plants that fail to follow humane handling and slaughter requirements” (1). The USDA yet again, strongly believes that they enforce their regulations.

In 1958, the Humane Slaughter Act was created. Within the Act’s 1978 amendment, any painful methods of animal handling and slaughter were prohibited (HFA 1). The first concern of slaughter is the improper handling of animals before and on their way to being slaughtered. The HFA states “According to the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service, each year about 10 percent, or 900 million, of the animals raised for food never reach the slaughterhouse” (1). These animals either die on the farm or in transit to slaughterhouses. Although farmers claim that living conditions are nearly a necessity for the animal, many die because of injuries, stress or diseases (HFA 1). Farmers will go as far to say that animals on their factory farms are as well taken care of like a family pet (HFA 2). According to Bernard E. Rollin, author of Farm Animal Welfare, many die from stress of traveling by eighteen-wheeler or train. They are also subjected to possible bruising, back injuries, heat exhaustion or freezing (67). Animals are also subject to rough handling while being loaded and unloaded which can also cause injury.

The HFA states that they have spoken with factory farm workers who made direct statements about the mistreatment of disabled animals (Rollin 69). If immobile cattle are present chains put around their neck are used to drag them, which typically leads to strangulation. The HFA claims that animals are also beaten to death with large objects like pipes if they are crippled (3). The USDA specifically states in its “Guidelines for the Slaughter of Animals for Human

Consumption” that animals should be transported to slaughter in a way that minimizes any harm, and that animals should be moved only through methods that do not cause pain or physical injuries and no animal should ever be dragged (1). A lot of slaughterhouse animals are also excessively “prodded” or using with an electrical device, or sharp blunt object to get an animal to get up (HFA 4). The USDA prohibits excessive prodding, and no prodding is allowed on any area of the body except the hindquarters but slaughterhouse workers have stated that cattle have been prodded in all areas, including ears, eyes, mouths and rectums (HFA 4). The HFA claims that this is severely inhumane but because the USDA does not enforce its regulations it happens daily (4).

The main concern of slaughter that can lead to cattle being unconscious throughout the process is ineffective and improper stunning. If a cow is not properly stunned it can remain conscious throughout the production line of slaughter. The higher the speed of production, which factory farms highly endorse, the more meat will be produced for sale, incurring more profit. Workers state that when cattle come down the chute they are scared and bouncing around and when you are expected to “knock” around 300 cattle an hour at high speeds it can be hard to properly stun the animals (HFA 5). Some animals get stunned in ears and sides of their faces, but supervisors only concentrate on keeping the speed of the line (HFA 5). If an animal is not properly stunned it can continue down the line to be bled, skinned and severed until it dies. A worker stated that he would “...estimate that one out of ten cows is still alive when it’s bled and skinned” (HFA 6). Supervisors have even told workers that you can work on a cow when it is still alive (HFA 6).

There are no statements from supervisors or factory farm owners that state that this type of treatment is humane. Thomas J. Billy, the Administrator of the FSIS, in his response to the

HFA, claims that the USDA and the FSIS does not approve inhumane treatment of animals before and during slaughter, and that it enforces "...humane slaughter requirements every day" and takes any violations of its regulations extremely seriously (1). The HFA states that the main problem with is that the USDA does not enforce its regulations, although the organization claims to do so. The USDA has a program that ensures that factory farms comply with the Humane Slaughter Act, which includes clear statements of what is and is not supposed to happen. They also have inspectors who are supposed to assess situations and deal with violations with utmost importance (HFA 7). The HFA claims that in two and half years only three violations were actually dealt with by the USDA (7). USDA inspectors and veterinarians, whom sometimes are not highly trained, and might not even know about the Humane Slaughter Act, according to the HFA are frequently present in slaughterhouses but are never stationed in the stunning area or see much of the actual slaughter (7). They are present to inspect carcasses long after the slaughter but not the actually process (HFA 7). They can not even monitor the unloading of animals, whom of which are all supposed to be inspected by a USDA veterinarian before they go to slaughter according to USDA regulations (HFA 7). Some slaughterhouses, like Tyson Food's, otherwise known as IBP, in Wallula, Washington have made modifications to prevent USDA inspectors from even being able to see what goes on in the stunning chamber. They put up a metal wall to block the view of the chamber from the inspection station (HFA 8).

Years ago, long before production lines were at the speeds they are now, if a USDA inspector saw a problem, the line would be stopped for the day. This created great losses for the company, but it would never be heard of today according to the HFA (9). Even if inspectors do catch violations, there is not much that anyone can do about it. If a production line stops, whomever the inspector is will have to answer to his supervisor that could likely fire him,

because inspectors are not supposed to really see the slaughter (HFA 9). The FSIS claims that inspectors and or veterinarians will “...stop the production line if they see any violations of humane slaughter regulations. If they do not, they are negligent of their duties” (1). The HFA claims that there is no way that the USDA can enforce their regulations if they do not even allow their own inspectors to see any possible violations in animal treatment but the FSIS claims that its officials have access to every room in slaughterhouses and factory farms are required to report any violations and take action against them (1).

Another concern is that of unwanted calves that are taken away from their mothers and killed or kept for meat. When they are kept for meat, they become veal. In a paper written by Lowell L. Wilson of the Dept. of Dairy and Animal Science at Penn State, Carolyn L. Stull of the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California, and Richard G. Warner of the Animal Science Dept at Cornell, the veal industry is stated to get receive large amount of public criticism because the calves are younger animals, and have inhumane living situations and specific malnourished diets (1). Veal calves are kept in the same type of stanchioned pens as regular cattle with little room to move around, but yet they are fed an all-liquid diet to keep their meat pale (Wilson, Stull, Warner 2). Some critics of the veal industry say that keeping the animals tied to their pens prevents social interaction that young calves would normally be involved in but according to the paper I mentioned above, “Individual stalls are arranged in rows, allowing calves to have visual and head to head contact with their immediate neighbors” (Wilson, Stull, Warner 3). Their all-liquid diet that is a combination of milk, sweet cream and water that cause the young calves to have constant diarrhea. This manure falls into lagoons below them and since they are malnourished they are highly susceptible to diseases (Wilson, Stull, Warner 4).

The next animal of concern are pigs. Pigs are slaughtered much like cows, although there is one more step. Before they are skinned they are immersed in almost boiling water to soften their hides. Pigs tend to live their whole lives in factory farms. They are born there as piglets and grow into adults, create more piglets if they are female, and are then eventually slaughtered. Allocated space comes up again, especially for breeding mothers. According to the HFA's article "Bringing Home the Bacon", soon after she is impregnated she is put in a two by seven foot pen (1). She is locked in this pen for four months while she is pregnant, and barely moves in the process. Factory farms claim that the pigs do well in this situation because they continue to rear young, although her hardy reproductive system is more likely to be responsible for her ability to reproduce (HFA 1).

Much like the female cow, when it is time to give birth, a mother pig in open range will leave the herd to build a nest and will stay there a few days after she has given birth (HFA 2). Yet again, strong bonds between mother and young are formed. In the factory farm, soon before she gives birth, the mother pig is transferred to a different pen that is not much larger than the first in which there is room on the other side of a metal bar for her piglets (HFA 2). The pen is set up this way, according to farmers, to prevent the mother from laying on and suffocating her piglets. The HFA believes this will never happen because mother pigs instinctively snoot around in the dirt searching for her young before they lay down (HFA 2). She still lies, nurses, eats, sleeps, and goes to the bathroom all in the same place. The piglets are separated early of course, after about 10 weeks and the female pig is yet again impregnated and sent back to her old pen (HFA 2). This occurs again and again until she can no longer rear piglets and then she is sent off to slaughter (HFA 2). The piglets are kept in large numbers in without bedding. Piglets have a

habit to tail bite when stressed out, so many farmers cut off their tails to prevent spread of disease (HFA 2). Pigs are treated just as inhumanely as cattle.

According to Joy. A Mench, of the Department of Animal Science at the University of California and Paul B. Siegel of the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, “The poultry industry is the largest (in terms of animal numbers) and the most highly automated, vertically integrated, and intensified of the animal production industries” (1). The poultry industry has received a lot of attention concerning the welfare of chickens because around 7 billion of them are slaughtered yearly (Mench, Siegel 1). Around fifty years ago egg laying hens in the poultry industry were kept outside and were free to roam. Eggs were available on a seasonal status and meat was a by-product when hens could no longer produce eggs (Fraser, Mench, Millman 89). Because farmers began producing genetically specific chickens for either egg laying or meat, hens were soon kept indoors in wire cages so their environment could be better controlled for optimum egg production. Wire cages today are stacked in rows and they have sloped bottoms so any eggs that are produced will roll forward into an area for collecting (Fraser, Mench, Millman 89). Hens are kept by the thousands, possibly millions, indoors, in unending amounts of cages.

Hens usually produce their first laying cycle at 7 weeks of age. In order to keep egg production from being seasonal, Dan Johnson states in his article “Defending the Rights of Chickens” in the May 1998 issue of Futurist Journal, that farmers use a method called forced molting which resets the chickens seasonal cycle (2). Forced molting entails restricting feeding so their bodies are tricked into a fake harsh winter, so they will start producing eggs again after the short molting break (Fraser, Mench, Millman 89). Chickens typically have the sharp part of their beak cauterized off and the same goes with their toes so they will not have any way to

injure themselves or others. This occurs when they are very young, where just like dehorning cattle, a hot object is used to burn the end tissues. Another aspect of the poultry industry is that male chicks are of no use. Typically within a day of them being born, all male chicks are either gassed or are ground up by a machine called a macerator while they are alive (Fraser, Mench, Millman 90). This is deemed more humane by farmers because the chicks die instantly (Johnson 2). . Broiler chickens, which are intended for slaughter, are typically kept in large free roam areas inside buildings. They grow rather fast and females and males are kept together so breeding will occur. A drawback of this kind of containment is that disease can spread very rapidly therefore there is a high mortality rate.

When it comes time for slaughter, broiler chickens are caught and put into crates to be transferred over to the processing plant (Mench, Siegel 4). They are subject to harsh weather conditions, over crowdedness, and stress while in transport, just like cattle and pigs. Similar USDA regulations apply to chickens as well. The first step of slaughter is to be “stunned” or electrocuted in what is called a brine-water bath (Mench, Siegel 4). This has the same intention like cattle stunning, to render the animal unconscious to pain but around thirty percent are not properly stunned and therefore can remain conscious during slaughter (Mench, Siegel 5). Next the animals are typically hoisted upside down and attached to a line that passes them by a high speed rotating circular shaped razor that severs the chickens’ main arteries in their necks. The rest of the process continues much like the slaughter of cattle and pigs.

Animals in factory farming today, according to the HFA, are treated very inhumanely regardless of any regulations the USDA or Congress might have. The HFA has a large amount of evidence to prove this but there is very little evidence or statements from farmers to disprove

it. The HFA believes that if the USDA does not begin to strictly enforce its regulations things will only get worse for animals and that they will continue to be slaughtered alive everyday.

Another main concern behind factory farming that causes it to be a social issue, is how its practices can affect the environment. According to Jennifer Weeks, some environmentalists claim that factory farming causes pollution in the environment. The runoff from factory farms "...can pollute streams and groundwater with antibiotics, insecticides and pathogens and emit poisonous gases that are hazardous or create offensive odors" (Weeks 3). The Sierra Club, an environmental organization, believes that factory farms produce "...500 million tons of animal waste a year" (Weeks 8). One dairy cow can produce around 20,000 pounds of manure annually (Weeks 8). The HFA, according to their factory farm report, states that farm animals produce over a hundred times more waste than humans (3). Most manure is stored in "lagoons", or large pits, where it has the ability to greatly threaten the environment including land, air and water (HFA 3). It is usually kept for fertilizer, which is mostly dumped on land in overabundance, so the soil cannot absorb it, but when heavy rains occur lagoons can overflow and contaminate nearby water sources. The water is contaminated with not only bacteria but also with hormones and antibiotics, pretty much everything that cattle are fed (HFA 4). The HFA claims that this severely threatens drinking water quality and contamination can lead to the death of many aquatic animals as well (HFA 3). The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated that because of factory farming, some 35,000 miles of rivers all over the United States have been contaminated (Weeks 8).

According to the HFA, in 1998, after many years of no action, the EPA "...began implementation of a plan to impose new pollution controls on cattle, hog, and poultry farms" (3). In 2002, regulations were finally made which enforce factory farms to manage their animal

manure while in 2003, the EPA made a regulation that all factory farms had to get discharge permits in order to be able to release pollutants into the environment (Weeks 8). The release of any pollutants is only allowed during heavy rains or storms but many factory farms do not actually abide by this regulation. If they are caught, they are fined up to \$50,000 a day but this does not necessarily prevent it from happening (Weeks 8). This regulation was somewhat amended though by the Second United State Court of Appeals who made the EPA only be able to regulate actual discharges that occurred not potential pollution discharges (Weeks 8). Unfortunately though these regulations do not apply to most chicken farms (HFA 3). Not all regulations apply to all states though. At least 75% of all factory farms are not required to regulate their pollution, especially in California (HFA 3). Cecilia Conway, an owner of large dairy farms in Michigan, claims that manure from farms is controlled more than human waste and agricultural groups believe manure that is properly managed is not harmful.

Some states have even put bans on the building of new factory farms because of pollutants that they produce. Two professors from the University of Chicago's Department of geophysical science named Gideon Eshel and Pamela Martin, stated that because Americans are so reliant on meat in their diet that an effect of this is the production of greenhouse-gas emissions, which is specifically methane gas and nitrous oxide from manure, that causes the atmosphere to warm which affects the whole world (Weeks 4, 8). Supposedly the animal agriculture industry creates more greenhouse gases than automobiles (Weeks 4). Factory farms not only produce water pollutants, but also air pollutants as well. According to Jennifer Weeks, "...decomposing manure, dust and gases produced by the animals can contain up to 160 separate chemical substances" which caused the EPA to eventually regulate and monitor air emission of factory farms.

Another reason why factory farming and slaughterhouse regulations can be considered a social issue is because it not only can greatly affect the animals, but human can be negatively affected as well. Factory farm and slaughterhouse workers are also subject to dangerous conditions when handling and slaughtering animals. Employees can be trampled, kicked, horned, etc. Workers are also subject to harm through unclean air conditions, which pig farms are especially guilty for. Since pigs are raised indoors, the air quality of the buildings can be severely hazardous. The air can contain "...noxious fumes, including ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, feed dust, and decomposing fecal matter" (HFA 4). According to the HFA, the American Lung Association has stated that around 70% of all workers in the pig farming industry have experienced respiratory issues related to their working conditions (4). The most common illness experienced is chronic bronchitis (HFA 4). There have been cases where lagoon-emptying equipment was broken and workers who attempted to repair it have died from being engulfed in the smell (HFA 4).

Animals in factory farms are fed drugs such as hormones and antibiotics to increase profits. These such drugs are used to accelerate growth and weight gain so animals can be slaughtered quicker therefore speeding up the process of profit gain. According to George Saperstein, a veterinary professor at Tufts University, the faster an animal grows and puts on weight, the more profit can be made (Weeks 5). Animals are fed antibiotics to keep the rate of disease down so humans who eat the meat are also ingesting these antibiotics. According to the HFA, "In 1954, American farmers used about half a million pounds of antibiotics a year in raising food animals. Today, about half of the 50 million pounds of antibiotics produced in the U.S. each year is used for animals, 80 % of which is poured directly into feed to make animals grow faster" (2). The most widely used antibiotics in factory farming are tetracycline and

penicillin, which are largely used to cure human illnesses (HFA 2). The more antibiotics people use, the more likely they are to become resistant to them. Some doctors are even reluctant to give out antibiotics for minor illnesses for fear of this occurring. The more antibiotics people ingest from factory-farmed meat, the more illnesses they are susceptible to because of antibiotic resistance. Large companies such as McDonald's, Tyson Foods, Foster Farms, etc. have finally begun to stop promoting the use of antibiotics in farming (HFA 2).

Factory farming and slaughter methods can also threaten human health if they are not properly regulated. Their practices can lead to food poisoning, which is referred to by the USDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as an epidemic (HFA 3). Most food poisoning is a result of E-coli bacteria present in animal fecal matter that contaminates meat, milk, or water (HFA 3). Animal feces could contaminate any product produced from a factory farm. The HFA stated that at least 80 percent of sampled ground beef and poultry tested positive for fecal bacteria (31). At least 81 million Americans get sick from food poisoning each year along with the 9,000 die each year from the sickness (HFA 3). In 2006 there was an outbreak of E. coli contaminated spinach that first occurred in California but spread to other states that ended up killed three people and made over 200 others. This contamination most likely occurred from factory farms dumping manure on land and polluting it (Weeks 7). Michele Rossman, director of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), claims that the beef industry worked to reduce E. coli contamination on factory farms and slaughterhouses by using "...carcass washes and steam pasteurization" (Weeks 7).

The recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) which is used to promote milk production in dairy cattle, increases profits and production. The company, Monsanto who produced rBGH, claim that having less cattle that produce just as much milk, actually helps out

the environment because less manure will be produced. Hormones given to dairy cattle are prevalent in the milk they produce. No studies have been made to seek out the affects that hormones in milk might have upon humans. Members of the NCBA have claimed, "...science supports giving cattle hormones" (Weeks 7). Michele Rossman, stated that for at least 50 years, hormones given to cattle have helped meet meat production demands without affecting the health of humans and that hormones are completely safe to use in farming (Weeks 7).

The HFA tries very hard through their website, (www.hfa.org), to get people to realize the problems within factory farming and slaughterhouses. They hope this will cause more people to take action against factory farming. The HFA has a list under their campaign page, which shows the actions they have taken against many mid-West factory farms. Their actions have actually caused authorities to press charges against companies that run factory farms and slaughterhouses. Actions of animal cruelty and regulation violations have been exposed. The HFA simply tries to urge people to help them take action so maybe one-day regulations will be more strictly enforced.

The FSIS and USDA attempts to prove through their website, www.fsis.usda.gov, that they uphold all of their regulations. They describe these regulations in extent and their methods for making sure all veterinarians and inspectors are properly trained to be able to recognize violations. They ensure the public that actions are taken against any and all violations that occur. They have no future plans because they feel that factory farms and slaughterhouses are regulated to their fullest extent.

There are many reasons as to why the question, "Should factory farm regulations be more strictly enforced?" can be asked. First of all, according to the HFA, there are millions of animals killed every year inhumanely, although the USDA denies this. Factory farming can also

greatly affect the environment through contamination of water and other pollutants. Human health can also be greatly affected through consumption of meat or animal products that have been contaminated with bacteria or through the consumption of antibiotics and growth hormones fed to factory farm animals. Whose claims are more convincing when it comes to considering whether or not factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations should be more strictly enforced?

The cases that exist within my paper can be simplified into one side that believes that factory farm regulations should be more strictly enforced and the other side that believes their regulations are very well enforced. I plan to analyze each side of the story to see which group makes stronger claims on the issue. Side A which includes the HFA, multiple authors, and environmentalists, who claim that regardless of regulations, animals are continually mistreated and slaughtered inhumanely in factory farms. They also claim that the environment is continually hurt and threatened while human health is also at stake because factory farms and their animal products. Side A supports themselves with evidence, video, testimonials, and scientific facts to show that factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations are not strictly enforced. They believe that none of these things would continue to happen if the USDA and FSIS lived up to its regulations. Side A proposes a stronger, more believable case because of their hard evidence against factory farms and slaughterhouses.

. Side B, including the USDA and FSIS, simply claim that all of their regulations are enforced to the highest degree but they lack evidence to support their claims. They make statements but do not and cannot back them up with evidence. The only slightly convincing statement they made was that the HFA took out video footage of improper stunning correction to further incriminate a specific factory farm. This is very likely but one statement is not going to convince anyone. Side A's evidence, video, testimonials and scientific facts are much more

convincing for their argument and would lead one to believe that factory farm regulations may exist but they are just not fully enforced. These problems would not be occurring as often as they supposedly do if regulations were enforced. Just because the USDA and FSIS claim that they enforce their regulations does not mean it is a fact. They might try to do so, but after all, the amount of animals processed through factory farms and the high production speeds of slaughter, are just so overwhelming that they could not possibly keep up with it

Of course it is not fair for Side A to just continually degrade the lack of regulation enforcement without giving Side B some benefit of the doubt that they might be trying. It is not that the USDA and FSIS do not care, there are just too many animals, factory farms and slaughterhouses to try and regulate. These two organizations need to make a massive improvement in their work force. Side B is trying hard, but they just do not have enough information to support their claims. They could have made their own video footage of stunning correction and action being taken against violations or get testimonials from workers, etc. They do not have any of these though; all they have are their statements and claims.

Side A on the other hand has much more to offer to support their claims. If there were not people and organizations that investigate factory farming, then it could be very unlikely that the USDA and FSIS would be proposing their claims at all. They are simply trying to defend themselves, not promote what they do. Side A and Side B both support animals rights and believe that animals should be well treated, its just that Side B has control of whether or not this happens. Side A cannot do anything about it but make their reports and their criticisms of the factory farming industry. Side A believes that harm to animals, the environment and humans caused by factory farming and slaughterhouses should be and can be prevented. The USDA gives no comment about environment and human health, which could suggest that their claims

are false. Side B could change their processes and prove that they are enforcing regulations instead of simply defending themselves against claims like those made by Side A.

When analyzing the moral reasoning of both Side A and Side B, I have come to the realization that they have rather similar obligations and values, although their opinions differ very much. Obligations stem from human relationships. Therefore, obligations to animals within the factory farming industry cannot necessarily occur, but I believe that Side A feels obligated to protect both humans and animals from possible harm. They want to protect humans from possible environmental and health hazards caused by factory farming and slaughterhouse methods, as well as protect animals from inhumane practices. Side A want to keep people from being harmed so they feel obligated to inform them about the supposed lack of regulatory actions within the industry. Most, if not all, people would want to know if they are in harms way. Side A believes that this could be the situation therefore they want to inform people about it.

Side B also has similar obligations. The reason they have regulations in the first place is because they want to protect people from possible hazards that could come out of the factory farming and slaughterhouse industry such as contaminated food and so on. These regulations would not exist if Side B was not obligated to keep people out of harm's way. Side B also has an obligation to the government to do their job because the government employs them. The government hires inspectors and veterinarians and expects them to complete certain tasks. Side B also has obligations to themselves in order to keep their job. One would think that if employees of the USDA do not carry on their tasks well, they could easily lose their job. They need to keep their jobs so they can support themselves and their families.

Side A and B also have similar values. Side A's values consist of equality, compassion, health and honesty. Even if they do not outright state it on their website, the HFA, along with

some individuals, believe in equality between animals and humans. Many believe that animals should have the same rights as humans. If Side A did not believe in equality they would not go to such lengths to uncover animal cruelty and violations within factory farms and slaughterhouses. Side A believes animals deserve to be treated as well as humans, without cruelty and inhumanity. Side A also believes that animals deserve compassion like any other living thing. They care about animals and it causes them much upset to see them suffer unnecessarily. That is why the HFA has such a vast amount of campaigns against factory farms and slaughterhouses. They believe animals in the factory farming industry are treated and slaughtered inhumanely and they want to educate people about what they believe goes on behind closed doors. Side A believes in the value of health as well, for both animals and humans. If animals have to endure life in factory farms and death in slaughterhouses, Side A believes that they at least should be able to remain healthy throughout the process and not have to suffer. Side A would not research how factory farming and slaughterhouse methods can affect human health if they did not value it. They believe that people's health is in harms way because of lack of regulation enforcement. Since most would want to remain healthy, Side A believes they are responsible for educating people about how they can be harmed.

Side B's values consist of order, efficiency, compassion, and health. First of all, Side B believes in order because they want factory farms and their slaughterhouses to run smoothly with little problems. Order, in turn, leads to an increase in production and profit, and is a major key in Side B's next values of efficiency. The more efficient factory farm and slaughterhouse are, the greater amount of production and money can be earned in less time. It is common knowledge that the more organized and efficient any business is, the greater amount of production and profit can occur. The next value that Side B has is compassion. If Side B were not the least bit

compassionate for animals, there would not be regulations in the first place to ensure that the animals are treated and slaughtered humanely. They might not be as compassionate as Side A to get involved in animal rights, but they still believe in it. Side B also believes in good health for animals and humans, just like Side A. They want the animals to remain healthy, another reason they have regulations, along with the humans that consume factory farm products. Side B's main reason for their regulations is to keep food clean for humans to consume. If humans do not remain healthy, it might look as though Side B is not doing their job, which will cause nothing but negative affects.

Considering consequences is another aspect of moral reasoning for both sides. The only consequence that Side A could incur would be if laws were broken in the attempt to investigate factory farms and slaughterhouses. Many animal activists have been blamed with terrorist-like acts of breaking enterings and destroying property, etc. As long as Side A does not go too far in trying to expose animal cruelty, they most likely will not run into any consequences from their actions. Side B could run into consequences such as the loss of jobs if it turns out that the USDA is not enforcing their regulations and lying about it. I doubt that anyone wants to lose his or her job so that could be a major consequence for Side B to consider. Side B might also be subjected to even more criticism if they were ever exposed for what Side A believes is happening, that they do not enforce their regulations. People would be angered to realize that they have a high risk of consuming contaminated water and food because of this.

There are many normative principles that apply to Side A and Side B. The principle of least harm applies to both sides, because each wants to cause the least amount of harm to the animals, environment and humans that are affected by factory farming and slaughterhouse methods. When possible, Side B states that they do their very best to prevent inhumane

treatment of animals, while Side A wants no harm to come to the animals, environment or human health. It is not that Side B wants harm to come to the environment and humans; they just do not make statements about either.

Utilitarian theories also apply to both Side A and Side B. The Principle of act (or direct) utilitarianism applies to Side A because they want the greatest good for the greatest number, meaning both animals and people. Side A wants USDA regulations to be strictly enforced so animals are treated humanely overall, creating the greatest good for them. Side A also wants the greatest good for all humans involved. They do not want the environment to be harmed nor people be harmed because of it, or from the foods that they consume. If animals and humans are kept healthy and treated well, then the greatest good is created for all. The Principle of rule (or indirect) utilitarianism applies to Side B because it states that a rule is right if it produces the greatest good. Even though Side A disagrees that the USDA does not enforce its regulations, the Principle of rule applies to those regulations because they are in affect because Side B wants to try and create the greatest good for all factory farm animals. There would not be regulations if Side B did not believe in treating the animals in the best way possible.

Under social contract theory there are many principles about equality. I believe that Side A believes in animal equality but since they do not come right out and make any statements concerning it I do not feel that it would be right for me to try to apply principles. The Principle of Paternalism under social contract theory applies to Side A. This principle has a goal to minimize human suffering that is unnecessary. Side A wants regulations to be more strictly enforced so humans do not have to suffer through sickness because of contaminated water or food that they consume. This principle does not apply to Side B because they made no statements concerning the health of humans in relation to contamination. The Conventionalist

principle applies to Side A and Side B because it considers an act morally right if it complies with rules in society. These rules could be the FSIS and USDA regulations pertaining to factory farms and their slaughterhouses. Both sides consider it right to abide by these regulations it is just a matter of whether or not factory farms and slaughterhouses are in compliance with these regulations and if the USDA strictly enforces them. Therefore, the Conventionalist principle does apply because both sides see it right to abide by these regulations.

Both Side A and Side B have very logical moral reasoning. It is understandable that each side would have similar morals because the dispute is not about whether each side cares enough; it is whether or not regulations that are in place are strictly enforced. I do not believe that there are really any moral conflicts of obligations or values between Side A and Side B. Each side has obligations towards humans to keep them from harm, and they both share the values of compassion and health. Any differing obligations or values are simply the result of one side being involved and working in the factory farming industry and the other are not. All obligations, values, consequences, and normative principles are all just situational results. Side B works in the factory farming and slaughterhouse industry, and Side A does not.

After taking both Side A and Side B's claims into consideration I support Side A in the opinion that factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations should be more strictly enforced. Side A proposes evidence, video, testimonials and scientific facts to prove that factory farming does have a negative affect on animals, the environment and humans. Side A proves that animals are treated and slaughtered inhumanely. They also prove that factory farm run off contaminates water. Side A proves that food, not just products from factory farms but nearby crops as well, can be contaminated with manure bacteria from factory farms. I firmly support Side A's argument that factory farms and slaughterhouse regulations need to be more strictly enforced in

order to protect the animals, environment and humans. Side B tries very hard to convince us that they uphold their regulations but they really have no concrete evidence to prove it. I do not believe that the USDA is trying hard enough to enforce their regulations otherwise Side A would not be able to obtain the evidence they have.

I suggest that the USDA doubles their workforce and number of inspectors and veterinarians. There are millions of animals that are slaughtered every year in thousands of factory farms and slaughterhouses around the United States. So many, that the USDA is just in over their head. If they acquired more employees they would better be able to enforce their regulations. There also needs to be regulations that prevent factory farms from keeping inspectors out of certain areas. USDA inspectors and veterinarians need access to everything and need to not be sheepish in stopping and taking care of violations. Something has got to change to better enforce regulations. If not, millions of animals will continue to be treated and slaughtered inhumanely while land and water continue to be polluted. More and more humans will get sick but I believe that it will take decades for change to occur. I hope that organic farming popularity continues to grow and people realize the cons of factory farming and the pros of alternative methods. Factory farms will forever exist, and people will always eat animals, but regulations are there for a reason and need to be enforced so animals, the environment and humans can stop suffering.

After thoroughly researching the topic of factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations through multiple books, papers, and online sources, I have come to the conclusion that these regulations need to be more strictly enforced. In order to find new perspectives on the issue, this writer interviewed two local experts who have great knowledge and differing opinions of factory farm and slaughterhouse methods. Each expert was given a series of unbiased questions

(Appendix B) that when answered, showcased their knowledge and opinions of regulations and the affects factory farming has on the world. The first expert was Thomas Linney. Linney is a soon to be University of Texas at Austin law school graduate. He is President of the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund, which, according to their website, is a student organization all across the United States that is “devoted to enhancing the welfare and legal status of all nonhuman animals” whose primary goals are to educate people about “the issues and laws that affect animals and to influence positive change” (SALDF 1). Linney was also responsible for getting Animal Law brought to the University of Texas. Linney was chosen as an interview subject because of his knowledge of factory farming and slaughterhouse issues through his extensive study of animal law and personal research.

The second expert I interviewed was Jodi A. Stearle, Ph. D. Stearle is an Associate Professor at Texas A&M University and is the Extension Swine Specialist for the state of Texas. She received her bachelors from Michigan State University and has her masters and Ph. D in swine reproductive management from the University of Missouri. Stearle’s role as Extension Swine Specialist means she is responsible for educating students who participate in show pig competitions to the educating large-scale farming operators about swine. Stearle was chosen as an interview subject because she has multiple degrees in animal science and is a very active member in the animal agriculture industry.

Both experts were first asked what they knew about factory farming to get a background of their knowledge. Both Linney and Stearle acknowledged that this type of farming operates on a large scale but Stearle stated that people in the livestock industry do not refer to these large livestock operations as factory farms because “...each individual animal is properly cared for”. She believes that the media and people who oppose the industry, who generally know very little

about it, are the only ones that use the term factory farming in order to give it negative connotations. On the other hand Linney stated that he knows 95% of all animals are raised for food, and that factory farming is largely responsible for processing them. He also keyed in on an unknown fact to me, that in September of 2006, the Humane Society filed a lawsuit against the USDA because all poultry and turkeys in factoring farms and slaughterhouses were excluded from humane USDA regulations.

Next Linney and Stearle were asked their opinions of factory farming and slaughterhouses. Linney believes that factory farmed animals experience one of the greatest injustices that exists in the world today, and that it is severely overlooked. Linney is strongly opposed to factory farming and he believes that there are far better ways to operate them. He is sickened by the way the industry treats animals like machines and believes that all animals basic needs are disregarded when they are raised in a factory farm. On the other hand, Stearle supports any enterprise, of any size, that provides safe, wholesome food to consumers, which she believes most do, both in America and exported around the world. She is a large supporter of the United State food industry because she believes it creates the safest food supply out of any country.

Linney and Stearle were then asked if they believed that factory farms and their slaughterhouses were well regulated. Linney does not believe that they are. He stated that the high rate of food-borne illness in humans is evidence enough to confirm this. He believes that the main reason illness occurs is because of poor conditions present in factory farming and slaughterhouses. Linney believes that USDA regulations are not tough enough, nor strictly enforced to make any difference for animals and humans. Stearle believes that factory farms and their slaughterhouses are absolutely well regulated. She stated that most food producers are involved in livestock agriculture because they "...enjoy working with and caring for animals"

and truly do care about their wellbeing. Second, she believes that in order to maintain the business of agriculture, regardless of what type of food is produced, proper management, care, stockmanship and husbandry are essential. Stearle also mentioned that the United States and local governments have many laws to protect all animals including the Human Slaughter Act of 1960, which she believes strictly regulates the livestock harvesting process.

Linney believes that upholding USDA regulations is not a priority for the government, and that it will not be one until people convince the government that it is important to them. He believe this will not happen soon until more people are educated about factory farming. Stearle acknowledges that the act of USDA regulating factory farms and slaughterhouse will never be a perfect system, but she believes all parts of the regulating process are very effective and that the USDA does everything possible to uphold its regulations.

When asked if he believes that animals within factory farming are treated and slaughtered humanely, Linney replied with an absolute no. He believes they are treated like machines, not given the basic necessities to be healthy and socially stable, and experience a tragic and painful death. Stearle believes that animals are treated and slaughtered humanely because of the same reasons as to why they are well regulated: people get into the industry because they care about animals, the business has to be run with certain standards, and that the United States has numerous laws to protect the animals from harm.

Next the experts were asked whether or not they believed factory farming can harm the environment. Lenney stated that it has been scientifically proven that factory farming damages the environment through groundwater contamination, air pollution, and chemical releases. Stearle, on the other hand, believes that any type of production system can have a potentially harmful affect on the environment if it is not handled correctly. She stated that she knows from

personal experience of working in the animal industry that local, state, and federal governments very tightly regulate large livestock operations. She also mentioned that the producers who run these systems live in the same communities as their farms, meaning they breathe the same air, and drink the same water as everyone else. Her personal experience includes working with a large-scale farm that has a full time staff to ensure proper handling of nutrients, but also to preserve and enhance the environment within their land. She believes that the producers are stewards of the land and the natural resources surrounding them.

One of the last questions I asked the experts was if they believed factory farm practices and slaughter could have harmful affects on human health. Linney believes that these practices can and do cause harm to human health. He believes that conditions are not clean enough which cause sickness in animals and humans from food-borne illness. He stated that people who live near factory farms experience headaches, sore throats, bronchitis, depression, etc, either from breathing in the polluted air or ingesting dangerous bacteria from manure remains. Stearle believes that there are some inherent risks associated with food production, like machinery risks, food safety risks, and risks associated with animal handling.

This writer did not find it necessary to ask Stearle her opinion on my proposed solution to better enforcement of regulations since she firmly believes that the USDA strictly regulates factory farms and slaughterhouses. Linney was asked his opinion on my proposed solution that the USDA doubles their workforce in order to be able to more strictly enforce their regulations and he believes that is one of the many things that could be done to improve regulation enforcement. He also believes that educational efforts need to be made in order to get people to realize what is happening behind closed doors and he also wants them to realize how much the economy is being hurt through medical bills from people getting sick by bacteria ingestion. He

also wants people to realize that factory farm and slaughterhouse workers typically barely make above minimum wage and are mostly minorities. He believes that if also people realize how many resources are going into factory farming while people in Africa continue to starve, that maybe someone will want to take action against this. Linney wants USDA inspectors to receive more training and thinks that regulations and laws need to be tightened. Linney believes that the disappearance of factory farms would be the biggest and best step to occur to ensure the safety of millions of animals and humans, although he realizes that this will never happen. As part of the duties of the Student Animals Legal Defense Fund, Linney and other members made one major recent achievement in which they got a un-disclaimed large company in California to vow to stop using gestation crates. I hope that he and the SALDF continue to succeed in the improvement of lives of animals and the humans that are affected by factory farming and slaughtering methods.

I am confident that both interview subjects were very knowledgeable in their fields of study. Linney has extensively studied animal law and is very knowledgeable about animal welfare issues. Stearle has personal experience through working at farms and has an extensive education in animal science and the farming industry. Although very little statistical evidence was used to support their comments, I believe that each expert's education is enough to support their differing opinions. Linney confirmed all research that I have found for Side A. He had very similar statements like the HFA and seems to be very passionate about injustices of factory farms and slaughterhouses, to both humans and animals. Linney does respect the fact that people in the factory-farming industry do need to support themselves and their families. Linney agreed that the USDA should double their workforce and train their employees more extensively but he

also had many more suggestions to how factory farming and slaughter regulations can be improved and more enforced.

Stearle was very confident that large-scale farms, she prefers not to call them factory farms, and their slaughterhouse are very well regulated, therefore I found it unnecessary to ask her if she thought my solution of doubling the USDA workforce would make factory farms better regulated. She was very professional and passionate about her career in educating people about swine production. I feel that Stearle would not be very open minded to other perspectives because she was cautious to agree to answer my questions and she wanted me to send her a copy of them to see if she was comfortable answering them first. I do not blame Stearle for being cautious though, because the farming industry is subject to a large amount of criticism from Side A organizations and individuals. Stearle is steadfast in her opinions, and this writer respects that. Although her experience in the farming industry indeed makes her opinions likely, Stearle did not change my mind about whether or not regulations need to be more strictly enforced.

After long hours of research, contemplation, and interviewing two local experts, I am still not convinced that factory farms and slaughterhouses are well regulated. Both interviews caused I, myself to respect and understand why each side has their specific opinions, but it also reconfirmed my conclusion that factory farms and slaughterhouses are not well regulated. The main reason I believe this is because there is such a large amount of evidence provided by Side A to prove it. Scientific facts do not lie. The statistics of how many rivers are contaminated, and how many people get sick or die each year are not made up. Factory farms and slaughterhouses have the potential to negatively affect the environment and human health. The problem is that this does happen because USDA regulations are not enforced well enough. Video footage cannot lie either. Millions of animals are slaughtered alive every day, but if regulations were

enforced, the majority of the animals would at least be dead during this process because they were stunned or killed correctly. The number of people and animals experiencing these negative affects are just too high to be the result of simple daily slip-ups. If factory farms were as well regulated as Stearle and Side B claim, then Side A would never be able to accumulate the extensive amount of evidence they have. Although Stearle defends the USDA and the farming industry, the USDA themselves does not do a proper job of supporting their claims that they strictly regulate factory farms and slaughterhouses. I am with Side A, factory farm and slaughterhouse regulations need to be more strictly enforced.

I chose to volunteer at an animal sanctuary as part of my supporting action to this issue. I volunteered three different times at Southern Animal Rescue Association (SARA) in Seguin, TX. SARA is a no-kill, non-profit organization located on 380 acres of land. SARA is the home for multiple factory farm rescued animals, such as goats, pigs, donkeys, chickens, turkeys and cows, along with over 400 dogs and around 100 cats. Many of these animals have been subjected to abuse and neglect and now call SARA their home. Tracy Frank created the sanctuary in 1996, and she lives among the animals in a house at the middle of the sanctuary . She is very dedicated to preserving the lives of these animals. I did not know what to expect upon her first visit. I knew most of the animals had experienced some form of neglect but I did not know the extent of it. There were pit bulls that had no ears because their owners had cut them off with scissors so they did not get in the way when the dogs were involved in fighting. There was one particularly large hog that had an especially sad story. His name is Homer and he weighs roughly 400 pounds. Homer was a downer hog that received injuries by being trampled on his way to a slaughterhouse. He was somehow saved because he had a broken back and was brought to the sanctuary. He has been living there for a few years and is about as happy as a hog can be. When

I got close to his pen, he stood up and waddled over to the fence because of his permanently mangled back.. He automatically thought he was going to be fed and got rather excited. Needless to say, I saw some very traumatized and neglected animals, but they are being well taken care of now. I helped clean out pens, washed dogs, and spent time just petting the animals and giving them comfort. Seeing these animals with their scars and mangled bodies brought tears to my eyes more than once. How people could treat animals this way is unbelievable. I developed a very high respect for Tracy Frank because she devotes her life to these animals. She feeds them through donations and is constantly accepting new animals into the sanctuary. The term euthanasia does not exist at the sanctuary. This experience caused I, myself to be even more pleased that I am a vegetarian and I used the sanctuary as a subject for a photographic project as part of my major. I never got to bring anyone else to the sanctuary, but my photos and story did have a great affect on my fellow classmates and made them realize the injustices that animals experience. I believe that neglected animals will continue to be brought to the sanctuary as long as they are being rescued, but many are not. There is a small amount of people who will go out of their way to care for animals and unless many more learn and actually care about the injustices animals experience nothing will be able to stop animal neglect and abuse.

After interviewing two experts on factory farm and slaughterhouse practices and completing a vast amount of library research, I have come to the conclusion that Side A presents a much stronger case. Side A would not have been able to acquire the evidence they have if there were not at least some occurrences in factory farms and slaughterhouses that are against USDA regulation policy. I have come to the realization though, that much more could be done than just doubling the USDA workforce to improve enforcement of regulations. Thomas Linney made it apparent to me that people need to be educated, and inspectors need to be better trained

as well. Linney also mentioned that laws and regulations need to be tightened and that is my main point in writing this paper. Factory farms and slaughterhouses need to be more strictly regulated.

In conclusion, more people need to come to the realization that animals are not the only ones who experience injustices. If more people became aware of how factory farming affects the environment and their health, hopefully they could show the government that they now care about the lack of regulation enforcement. The USDA would be forced to acquire a larger workforce and better train its employees, and in turn better enforce their regulations. Until people realize how factory farming and slaughter can affect them, then nothing will be done to improve regulation practices. Millions of animals will continue to be slaughtered inhumanely and the environment and human health will continue to be negatively affected. I do not see that there is any other way to improve regulation enforcement. First people must be educated, and second, the USDA must make improvements to their workforce. The arguments that I find most convincing are the facts that because factory farms are not well regulated, millions of people get ill by ingesting bacteria either from food or contaminated water sources, not to mention those that get sick simply by living in the same areas as factory farms. These are scientific facts that prove factory farms and their slaughterhouses are not well regulated. I am also convinced that animals are treated and slaughtered inhumanely. There is so much evidence in videos and worker testimonials that prove animals are experiencing injustices. Regardless of the fact that the USDA states that the HFA cut out their correctional actions in the cases of improper stunning, the point that improper stunning is even occurring means that slaughter is not well regulated.

I found that even though most obligations are of human relationships, I have an obligation towards animals to not support their inhumane slaughter and therefore not consume meat. I believe that the way animals become our food is outright disgusting and that animals do not deserve to be machines of production for human consumption. Animals will continue to be eaten but there are so many ways to improve their life and death in the process by removing inhumane treatment from factory farms and slaughterhouses. I also share Side A's values of compassion, equality, health and honesty. I have compassion for animals and believe they do not deserve to be treated inhumanely. I believe that animals have the same rights as humans to live a free life without necessary pain. I also believe that both animals and humans have the right to be healthy. This also includes honesty, because the government and USDA need to be honest with humans as to why their environment and health can be threatened by lack of factory farm and slaughterhouse regulation enforcement. These values are the main component as to why I am a vegetarian and have come to the conclusion that factory farms and their slaughterhouses are not well regulated.

The possible consequences for Side A and Side B did not influence my conclusion because I am not about to commit crimes to save animals, nor am I working for the USDA so I do not have to worry about my job being threatened. The normative principles of least harm, greatest good and paternalism were effective in making my decision. The principle of least harm automatically should be a priority for any living thing. Any person or animal would want to live without unnecessary harm. The Utilitarian theory of greatest good was also influential because the greatest good for all living species should be an ideal for the whole world. The social contract theory of paternalism was also effective because better regulation of factory farms and

slaughterhouses would minimize human suffering by decreasing the number of bacteria caused illnesses.

In conclusion, people need to be educated about the injustices that animals and humans experience as a result factory farm and slaughterhouses regulations not being enforced. Once the world is educated about the ways their health can be threatened then maybe more people will want to do something about it. This hopefully would cause a major uproar in society, much like the release of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* in 1905. Once people came to realize what they were eating, they were angered and changes were made. When people understand that they are ingesting hormones, antibiotics, bacteria, and inhaling other pollutants, I am positive that changes will be made. This uproar would cause the USDA to have to tighten their regulations, because boycotts of factory farm produced foods could occur. The growing popularity of natural foods grocery stores has already proved that there is a major growing interest in free-range, organic, hormone and antibiotic free, humanely raised animal products. In order to alleviate this social issue, people must take responsibility and let the government know that we care about how factory farms and slaughterhouses are affecting us and that the USDA should do take action. Humans will forever consume animals, but neither they, nor us should have to suffer because the USDA does not regulate factory farms and slaughterhouses to the fullest extent. Regulations need to be more strictly enforced.