



SHOULD LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION BE INDUSTRIALIZED?

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Should Livestock Production be Industrialized?

Livestock production should beyond a doubt not be industrialized because it increases disease transmission, the excessive waste from the large concentrations of livestock is handled in such a way that will pollute our environment, and the treatment of animals in industrial production is inhumane. Nonetheless, some experts might argue that livestock production should be industrialized because it produces cheaper meat than traditional farming and produces more meat than traditional farming. Industrial Livestock Production is a synonym of factory farm which is defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015) as, a farm on which large numbers of livestock are raised indoors in conditions intended to maximize production at minimal. Also by Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015), inhumane is defined as, not kind or gentle to people or animals. Merriam-Webster Dictionary is a language information providing company which has been around for 150 years and is produced by a collection of people, yet, the credentials of those individuals is absent (About Us, 2015).

To start, livestock production should not be industrialized because industrial livestock production increases disease transmission. According to Pro-Poor Livestock Policy Initiative (2007),

HPAI H5N1 for instance has been reported to have caused outbreaks in large-scale industrial poultry units with supposedly high biosecurity standards in South Korea (a 300,000 bird unit), Russia (two 200,000 bird units) and Nigeria (a 50,000 bird unit) in 2006, and in the UK (a 160,000 turkey unit) in 2007 (Otte, Roland-Holst, Pfeiffer, Soares-Magalhaes, Rushton, Graham, & Silbergeld, 2007).

HPAI H5N1 is a subtype of highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (“bird flu”) which causes illness and sometimes even death in humans and animal species. This quote shows that even in industrial livestock facilities with high biosecurity (a clean facility), these outbreaks of fatal viruses still occur. A further example of this is,

Once IAVs have entered industrial production facilities they can be transferred between operations by contaminated shipping containers and trucks. Given that a gram of infected faeces can contain as many as ten billion infectious virus particles, a small amount of contaminated faecal material or litter adhering to boots, clothing or equipment may be sufficient to transmit virus from an infected to a susceptible flock (Otte, Roland-Holst, Pfeiffer, Soares-Magalhaes, Rushton, Graham, & Silbergeld, 2007).

Both of the above quotes are from the source Pro-Poor Livestock Policy Initiative which is a project that was launched by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, while they conduct research to provide evidence-based livestock sector and related policies that reduce poverty while managing environmental and public health risks, they are financially tied to the government of the United Kingdom (PPLPI - About the Project, 2012). This quote establishes that even a gram of contaminated material can easily spread from an infected flock to an uninfected flock, and because industrial livestock facilities house numerous animals in confined spaces, it becomes extremely easy for a virus or disease to spread amongst the whole facility. This could cause the entire facility to become contaminated and lead to consumer contamination. This disease transmittance caused by industrial livestock production is unsafe for consumers.

Additionally, livestock production should not be industrialized because the excessive waste from the large concentrations of livestock is handled in such a way that will pollute our environment. For instance,

Runoff of chicken and hog waste from factory farms in Maryland and North Carolina is believed to have contributed to outbreaks of *Pfiesteria piscicida*, killing millions of fish and causing skin irritation, short-term memory loss and other cognitive problems in local people (Facts about Pollution from Livestock Farms, 2013).

While The Natural Resources Defense Council is a non-profit, well-known environmental action group who develops solutions to pressing global issues, and is accredited by The New York Times, they don't have access to the same data as a government backed environmental organization and have to obtain data themselves (About Us, 2015). This quote shows that the

waste from chicken and hog industrial livestock productions have leaked into the water source of the local town and caused problems for the local people. The handling of the waste of these industrial livestock facilities is detrimental to the environment and therefore the people. Another example is provided by the Humane Society International which says,

In their 2006 visit to Perote Valley, the Mexican Congress Commission on the Environment and Natural Resources also observed that ‘[a]reas for disposal of waste and pig manure [were] not far enough from water sources’ at visited pig factory farms. In fact, various studies carried out by CONAGUA have shown contamination of Perote Valley aquifers from fecal bacteria (Pig Factory Farming in Mexico, 2012).

The Humane Society International is a world renowned, charitable organization that serves a critical and expanding role in global efforts to reduce animal suffering and seeks out innovative and scientifically sound approaches to animal welfare, nevertheless, is an activist organization and has emotional ties to animals (About Us: Humane Society International, 2015). This quote further establishes that the industrial livestock facilities are too close to water sources and contaminate those water sources with fecal bacteria. This leads to public health problems and could greatly hurt the industrial livestock productions as they would be responsible for the damage to the public water source and the medical attention needed by affected individuals. This is most certainly not how the waste of such large industrial livestock companies should be handled. Thus, it is evident that livestock should not be industrialized.

Furthermore, livestock should not be industrialized because the treatment of animals in industrial production is inhumane. For example, as stated in Undercover Investigations by Mercy for Animals (2015),

Multiple undercover investigations by Mercy For Animals into Tyson Foods—the largest [industrial] poultry producer in the world—have exposed horrific cruelty to animals, including birds bred to grow so fast they become crippled under their own weight, workers violently punching, beating, and stabbing animals, and birds having their heads ripped off while they are still alive and conscious.

Mercy for Animals is a nonprofit, charitable organization who educates people worldwide of the cruelty of factory farms while globally fighting for policy changes and are dedicated to preventing cruelty to farmed animals, nonetheless, are an activist organization and possess an emotional tie to animals (About Mercy for Animals, 2015). This quote establishes that industrial livestock companies, even the largest in the world, treat their animals inhumanly. These practices cannot and should not be tolerated especially on such an outsized amount of animals that industrial livestock productions house. Moreover, Mark Jones (2012) states,

China is fast becoming one of world's largest consumers and producers of foie gras [factory farming]. The production of foie gras involves force feeding ducks and geese enormous quantities of grain usually using a rigid metal tube forced down their throat, so that their liver becomes excessively fatty and expands to an unnatural size.

Mark Jones is currently the United Kingdom Executive Director of the Humane Society International and has previously worked for Care for the Wild International and Animals Asia Foundation, he studied at the Institute of Zoology in London, yet, he is a veterinarian and has an emotional tie to the protection of animals (Mark Jones, 2015). This quote further shows that industrial livestock production treats animals inhumanly using practices such as foie gras that harm the animals and put them through excessive stress which can lead to physical and mental problems for the animals. Livestock production should not be industrialized because the treatment of animals in these facilities is inhumane.

Conversely, some experts believe livestock production should be industrialized because industrial livestock production produces cheaper meat than traditional farming. For instance, “without increased factory farming since 1980, the wholesale price of pork in 1999 would have been about 61 cents higher.” (Sethu, 2013) Harish Sethu is a professor at Drexel University, has previously worked for at IBM Corporation and obtained his Ph. D. at Lehigh University as well as studied at the Indian Institute of Technology, however, he teaches and studies in the computer

science field while researching animal advocacy out of interest (Bio of Harish Sethu, 2015). This quote shows that industrial livestock production reduced the wholesale price of pork. This reduction in price helps to ensure the poor can afford to eat meat by producing meat through an industrial model which allows for a cheaper sale price. A further example of this is given by Monica Eng (2010),

These concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, produce mass quantities of food at a low cost. And although meat consumption has risen slightly over the past 40 years, its impact on the pocketbook is less than half of what it was in 1970, falling from 4.1 percent to 1.6 percent in 2008.

Monica Eng is presently a reporter for the Chicago Tribune and has been for over 15 years, she is a prolific, international journalist focusing on the subject of food, nevertheless, she is financially tied to Chicago Tribune (Monica Eng, 2015). This quote further establishes that industrial livestock production has decreased the price of meat while continuing to produce mass amounts of meat. This helps the general public greatly as meat is made affordable by the industrial model. Industrial livestock production does provide meat at a cheaper price than traditional farms.

Likewise, livestock production should be industrialized because industrial livestock production produces more meat than traditional farming. For example,

But change it must, he adds. Around nine billion people are expected to be alive by 2050 and will need to be fed - despite a limited supply of land and water. One possible option to deal with food shortage, Thornton says, could be manufactured meat (Industrialized Livestock Production to Increase, Despite Social Implications, 2010).

Philip Thornton graduated with a BSc degree in Agriculture and a PhD in Farm Management, he is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Institute of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences, on the Board of Directors of the International Consortium for Agricultural Systems Applications, a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of GECAPS, and is a global research traveler focusing on agriculture and food security. Nonetheless, he has an emotional tie to the

environment (Philip Thorton, 2013). This quote establishes that the large population expected to be alive in the near future will have to be fed and suggests manufactured meat. This implies that industrial manufactured meat produces more meat than traditional farming as it is expected to feed around nine billion people, a number traditional farming will not be capable of delivering to. Moreover, David Leyonhjelm (2013) states,

The report points out that there are no technically or economically viable alternatives to large scale, intensive production for the bulk of the livestock-derived food required in the cities, where virtually all the population growth will occur.

This source, David Leyonhjelm, works as a veterinarian, has degrees in business and law, and is currently a Liberal Senator for New South Wales, Australia, however, he owns an agribusiness consulting company in Sydney and is the director of a company that provides intelligence services to the agriculture industry (About Senator David Leyonhjelm, 2014). This quote further establishes that there are no alternatives to industrialized production of livestock as this is the only method capable of feeding large cities of people. Industrialized livestock production accomplishes producing more meat than traditional farms.

At the start of this research, I had no personal preference relating to whether or not factory farms were implemented on a wide scale. I had never heard of the industrial approach to farming and believed most farms looked like the traditional red barn and acres of roaming cattle. After I had read extensively about the horrors of the modern factory farm, I developed an entirely different viewpoint on the matter. Although I can understand the drastic difference that a small price reduction can make on the struggling lower class, the harm that the current model does to millions of animals per year cannot be overlooked. I considered the economic benefits and how they may impact how I view the subject, but overall the trauma and abuse sustained by the animals that are slaughtered is too overpowering to my assessment of factory farming. Thus

being said, there is a drastic need for the development of a system that can retain the price reduction while also providing a comfortable experience for the animals. Supplementary research is greatly needed, especially to assist the search for a new, superior method for efficient farming.

Livestock should beyond a doubt not be industrialized as industrialized livestock increases disease transmission, the excessive waste from the large concentrations of livestock is handled in such a way that will pollute our environment, and the treatment of animals in industrial production is inhumane. Contrariwise, some experts believe livestock production should be industrialized because it produces cheaper meat than traditional farming and produces more meat than traditional farming.

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