

James Cook, DVM, President
American Veterinary Medical Association
1931 N. Meacham Road, Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL 60173

Dear Dr. Cook,

As a veterinarian, I would like to express my concern that the AVMA has failed to take a stand against the egregious cruelty involved in foie gras production, despite the fact that members supported resolutions to do so. I am quite surprised that the AVMA would condone shoving a pipe down the birds' throats so that huge quantities of food can be pumped in, causing their livers to expand up to ten times their normal size. The birds experience tremendous injuries and high mortality rates during the process.

I congratulate the AVMA for recently revising its policy on housing for young veal calves, recommending that the calves have enough room "to turn around comfortably and to assume normal postures." This is a positive step away from the traditional narrow crates that confined the animals. Yet the AVMA did not take a specific stance against veal crates.

Likewise, I commend the AVMA for updating the policy on gestation crates (2-foot-wide metal enclosures where breeding female pigs are confined for most of their lives) and acknowledging that these intense confinement systems cause animal welfare problems. *However*, I am concerned that the AVMA is not advocating a shift away from gestation crates until other systems are "economically viable."

The Veterinarian's Oath clearly states that the veterinary medicine profession should aid "the relief of animal suffering." I am urging you to adopt sensible policies that promote animal welfare instead of economic priorities. The veterinary profession should take a stand against "factory farming" cruelty, rather than defending it.

Like all animals, farm animals feel pain, and they deserve to be protected from cruelty.

Thank you for your concern about animal welfare.

Sincerely,

Cc to: Farm Sanctuary · P.O. Box 150 · Watkins Glen NY 14891 · Fax: 607-583-2041