



What's wrong with live bird sales at farmers' markets?

- ▶ *Extreme, illegal animal cruelty*
- ▶ *Public health violations*
- ▶ *"Factory farms" brought into the city*
- ▶ *Violations of city-issued permit*
- ▶ *Violations of USDA food stamp regulations*
- ▶ *And much more*

Live animal vendors violently handle live factory-farmed birds (chickens, partridges, quail, and pheasants) and stuff them into suffocating bags. The birds cry out in pain and fear. Unhatched chicks (called "balut" or "baby eggs") are also sold, to be boiled alive in their shells. The birds sit for many hours in crowded, filthy cages without water. Some are sick and/or injured. Customers carry them (often on BART or Muni in violation of rules, or in their car trunks) to their restaurants and homes to kill them when and how they wish – usually for food, sometimes for ritual sacrifice. Health laws are violated, exposing the public to feces and pathogens. Birds frequently escape and are sometimes later found starving, ill or injured, then become the responsibility of overburdened animal rescue organizations. An "animal-friendly" and health-conscious city like San Francisco should neither tolerate nor subsidize this.

Live poultry vendor Raymond Young has been cited for approximately 700 animal cruelty violations, according to a KRON 4 TV news report.



Animal Welfare Concerns

Causing these birds unnecessary pain or suffering is prohibited under section 597 of the California Penal Code and by the market's permit issued by the Board of Supervisors. Undercover investigations of one of the four

factory farms supplying live birds to the vendors (Gemperle Farms) revealed horrific cruelty and filth, prompting a grocery store chain to fire them as an egg supplier. Animal Care and Control has cited him for approximately 700 cruelty violations. However, the District Attorney's office refuses to prosecute (even though they acknowledge the cruelty), preventing Animal Care and Control from enforcing the laws, and market management and city officials currently refuse to enforce the permit. So we are asking *you* to help protect these animals.

Public Health Problems

Contrary to the public's image of responsible, local farmers at farmers' markets, these live birds appear to be former ("spent") layers and breeders, and are trucked in from huge, distant factory farms (which is why they are sometimes in poor health, and the chickens' beak tips are painfully cut off to reduce stress-induced pecking). Animals from factory farms (and live animal markets) have been found to harbor a variety of dangerous bacteria and viruses, and contribute to illnesses in humans including *Salmonella* food poisoning and viral outbreaks such as *H1N1* flu. These vendors have routinely violated state health laws and market management continues to allow customers to illegally bring their live animal purchases near food for sale. The presence of such animals in public areas such as markets, BART & Muni, restaurants, and housing for persons with HIV/AIDS is a serious public health risk.

Rescued hens Zenobia, Julia and Jolene enjoying life at United Poultry Concerns' sanctuary.

Animals get loose, exposing themselves and the public to further dangers – such as a chicken we documented at another farmers' market flying into a person's face, scratching his eye. ***For these reasons alone, the City of San Francisco should impose a ban on live animal markets.***



Live bird struggles inside bag.

Market Management and City Officials Allow Violations

Aware of the cruelty and health risks, none of the city's 15 other farmers' markets allow live animal sales. However, the Board of Supervisors permits the U.N. Plaza market's management organization to allow live animal sales, detailing animal welfare and public health rules in its permit. Unfortunately, market management and city officials currently refuse to enforce these rules without explanation.



Empty water cups, feces inside cages, and cages in disrepair all violate the market's permit.

Food Stamp Violations

Market management and city officials have long allowed live animal vendors to accept taxpayer-funded food stamp benefits in exchange for live animals – in violation of USDA regulations. Though vendors were instructed to stop in June 2010, as of

August 27, 2010 Raymond Young Poultry was still illegally accepting them, at least at the Richmond, CA farmers' market. The USDA is currently investigating.



What You Can Do

We ask that you visit the live bird vendors (the northeast corner of U.N. Plaza, by the water fountain, early in the day) and witness the cruelty and unsanitary conditions for yourself, then:

- **Contact the Supervisors of your district and District 6 (Chris Daly until 2011).** The Board of Supervisors controls the market's permit and its live poultry sales rules.

- **Talk to the market vendors about your concerns** (some are on the board of directors of the management company).

- **Boycott the market until it stops selling live animals**, and notify market manager Christine Adams (415-558-9455 or hocfarmersmarket@gmail.com) and your favorite vendors that you are doing so.

- **Contact the District Attorney's office**

(erica.derryck@sfgov.org and districtattorney@sfgov.org or 415-553-1751) and ask them to prosecute violations of animal cruelty laws – even for animals used as food.

- **Switch to a plant-based diet.** The single most effective thing you can easily do to protect your health, farmed animals, and our planet, is to stop your consumption of meat, eggs, and dairy! Visit www.chooseveg.com or search "Vegetarian Starter Kit" for more information on transitioning to a more compassionate and healthier lifestyle.

More Information Available Online

For more information, including photos and videos of these markets, please visit

www.LGBTcompassion.org/livemarkets



Market customer brings 4 live birds into a restaurant, violating health codes.

LGBTcompassion.org

and

United Poultry Concerns
upc-online.org



Contains post-consumer waste and recycled content.

