

Press release – 10th February 2011



European farming's dark side exposed in Brussels

Yesterday the European Parliament set the scene for a screening of the eye-opening documentary *Pig Business* to a packed audience of MEPs, EU Council and Commission officials and environmental, health and animal welfare NGOs, and the international press.

Three MEPs, **José Bové**, **Dan Jørgensen** and **Janusz Wojciechowski** sponsored the event as a run up to the pending debate on Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform to inform colleagues in the EU institutions about the true cost of factory farming.

After the event, Andrea Gavinelli, the EU Commission's Head of Animal Welfare, said, "The screening was a moment of transparency and reflection. It brought a clear message about what is really happening that people don't know."

The event followed a 'winter of discontent' for pig farmers facing low prices for pork, high feed costs, a health scandal caused by animal feed contaminated with dioxin, and the recent discovery that flies are capable of spreading antibiotic resistant bacteria from intensive farms to neighbouring urban areas.

Following the screening and presentations from a panel of experts, a heated discussion substantiated the film's findings that factory farms across Europe disregard legal animal welfare standards, threaten human health by over-reliance on antibiotics, and force traditional farmers out of business.

Janusz Wojciechowski, MEP, said, "With so many MEPs attending the screening and debate, it will be easier for us to achieve our aim to reform the CAP by stopping the financing of industrial farming, spending more on supporting traditional small and medium scale mixed crop and livestock farming, and introducing method of production labelling."

Ends

Further Quotes from the Event:

José Bové, MEP, said, “Following the deregulation of markets and open ports, come the big firms, like Cargill, Tyson and Smithfield and with them the concentration of production that is causing the elimination of small farmers.” He continued, “If the CAP supports an agriculture that destroys the environment and makes poor quality industrial products, I do not see why Europeans would agree to finance the CAP. Everyone knows that 75% of aid goes to 25% of farmers. This is unacceptable.”

Dan Jørgensen, MEP said, “Pig farming is the biggest threat to the Danish environment. But it is partly because of the success of EU legislation in Denmark, like the Water Framework, Animal Welfare and Bird Directive, that largescale Danish farmers have moved production to countries where EU legislation is not so well enforced. Multinational meat producers only care about how to make money.”

Jaroslaw Kalinowski, MEP said, “There are 300,000 pig farmers in Poland and 150 factory farms.”

Czeslaw Adam Siekierski, MEP, said, “Poland loses out to Germany and Denmark because of the huge supermarket chains, because Denmark has a lot of vertical integration.”

In reply to Kalinowski’s and Siekierski’s comments, Jørgensen said, “It’s funny and tragic to hear you say that Polish farmers lose out to Danish farmers. I spoke to the Danish Agriculture Minister who said that Danish farmers couldn’t compete with Poland.”

Mute Schimpf from Friends of the Earth said, “The average farm in Europe is 12 hectares. If we develop a vision for food and agriculture policy, let us think about the farmers in Europe and not about the lobbies and unions that just think about the bigger farms which should be competitive enough; they don’t need public support.”

Gerald Choplin, from European Coordination Via Campesina, which represents farmers from 70 countries, said, “In the EU there aren’t many farmers but there are too many pigs. Because of the very good attendance it was a very useful debate and very helpful for our work not only against big factory farms and for small scale farms, but the fact that there were many people from big business and from the Commission showed that they also felt obliged to hear the debate around a very different CAP.”

Tracy Worcester continues, “Food and agricultural goods should be exempted from World Trade Organisation (WTO) global trade rules so that all nations and regions have the right to protect themselves from low cost and low welfare imports, i.e. implement food sovereignty. Farmers could then be protected from the vagaries of the global economy and change their methods of production and produce food for local markets. Governments can then procure high welfare and sustainably produced meat from local farmers for public services like schools and hospitals. The giants should be taxed to remunerate society for the true costs of their production.”

Notes to Editors

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1. The Hidden Cost of Factory Farming Pig Business Time for Change Event

This event took place in the EU Parliament, Brussels, 9 February with 280 attendees including MEPs, EU Council and Commission officials, environment, health and animal welfare NGOs, and the international media.

Introduction: Tracy Worcester, Director and Producer of the documentary *Pig Business Screening of Pig Business*

Presentations and debate:

Economic and social costs: José Bové, MEP / René Louail, Farmer / Gerard Choplin, European Movement for Food Sovereignty and Another CAP

Environmental costs: Dan Jørgensen, MEP / Mute Schimpf, FOE Europe / Antje Koelling, IFOAM EU Group

Human and animal health: Janusz Wojciechowski, MEP / Peter Stevenson, Compassion in World Farming / Prof. dr. hab. Robert Karczmarczyk, Department of Epizootiology, Wrocław University of Environmental and Life sciences / Cóilín Nunan, Antibiotics adviser to the Soil Association

2. More about the Event

The Parliament.com

<http://www.theparliament.com/latest-news/article/newsarticle/meps-back-campaign-to-end-factory-pig-farming/>

Wired Magazine

<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2011/02/pig-farming-europe/>

3. *Pig Business*' Six Big Asks

To emphasise the opportunities for reform of the industrial farming model, MEPs were asked to undertake *Pig Business*' Six Big Asks:

1. **Recognise** that the profitability of factory farming depends on externalising its true costs onto the broader community.
2. **Ensure** the Common Agricultural Policy post 2013 moves European agriculture away from industrial livestock production to sustainable, humane and autonomous forms of animal husbandry.
3. **Ensure** better enforcement and strengthening of the existing EU Directive on the welfare of pigs.
4. **Introduce** mandatory method of production labelling.
5. **Introduce** a ban on routine prophylactic use of antibiotics.
6. **Ensure** local, national and EU public bodies only source locally or nationally produced high welfare pork.

A briefing document, *Six Big Asks Explained*, is available in the Press Resources section of the *Pig Business* website at: <http://www.pigbusiness.co.uk/press-resources/>.

4. Interviewees, Biographies and Contact Details

Pig Business

Tracy Worcester, Director and Producer of *Pig Business*

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Tracy actively supports efforts to shift ideas of 'development' away from the dictates of giant corporations and banks who put economic growth before the wellbeing of citizens and the planet. She believes that one vital way to return power to citizens and communities is by informed shopping and banking choices. To this end she has been networking, fundraising and producing films to promote a more local economy, particularly in relation to food. Her films include *Is Small Still Beautiful?* in India, *The Politics of Happiness* in Bhutan, BBC World 2005 and *Pig Business* Channel 4 Summer 2009.

Alastair Kenneil, Associate Producer of *Pig Business*

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Alastair Kenneil, once a hill farmer in Scotland, has directed, filmed or recorded sound on many documentaries about the effect of 'progress' on indigenous communities. He believes that industrial food production is failing us, and that the most viable future for food security lies in the hands of farmers.

MEPs

José Bové, MEP (Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, France)

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José is a French farmer and Syndicalist, member of the alter-globalization movement, and formerly spokesman for Via Campesina. He participated in the creation of the Confédération Paysanne (second farmers' union in France) in 1987, and became widely known through his fight against GMOs and industrial agriculture. He was one of the twelve official candidates in the 2007 French presidential election. On 7 June 2009, he was elected to the European Parliament as a member of Europe Écologie, a coalition of French environmentalist political parties. He is Vice-Chairman of the Agricultural and Rural Development Committee.

In *Pig Business* José Bové MEP says, "*If we put animal welfare, human health and the environment into the centre of this production system, these integrated, massive industrial factory farms will not be able to continue*".

Dan Jørgensen, MEP (Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Denmark)

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Dan Jørgensen has been a member of the European Parliament since 2004. From 2009 he has served as the head of delegation for the Danish socialist delegation to the European Parliament.

As the Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Environment and Climate Change in the European Parliament and the Vice-Chairman of the Intergroup for Animal Welfare, Dan has worked hard to improve the conditions for farm animals in Europe. For example, he initiated the pan-European fight against long animal transport (www.8hours.eu).

Aside from his parliamentary work, he has written several books on the issues of international and European environmental politics. Most recently he published the books 'Green Hope – Climate Change 2.0' (2010), 'Green Globalization – A Changing Environmental Political Agenda' (2007), and 'In between Mars and Venus – the EU in a Globalized World' (2008).

Dan holds an MSc. in Political Science from the University of Aarhus where he currently teaches a graduate course on environmental and climate change politics.

Janusz Wojciechowski, MEP (European Conservatives and Reformists, Poland, Vice Chairman of AGRI Committee, lawyer)

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Janusz Wojciechowski actively works for the EU citizens; for farmers, as he is familiar with their problems having grown up in the rural area of Lodzkie region. He is a supporter of the idea of non-industrial farming; in favour of European agriculture operating on a small scale farm model run in line with animal welfare and environmental protection standards. He is the author of two important reports for AGRI Committee in the EP on animal welfare issues:

New Animal Health Strategy for the European Union (2007-2013); Protection of animals at the time of killing

As a Member of Budgetary Control Committee and former President of Supreme Chamber of Control in Poland, Janusz is highly interested in any antifraud actions. He is also a campaigner for a GMO-free Europe.

Panellists

José Bové, MEP (as above)

René Louail, Farmer

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Rene Louail is a Breton farmers' Syndicalist (Central Brittany). He participated in the creation of support groups for distressed farmers in the mid and late 1980s, at both regional and national level. He was also co-leader of a group of "Label Rouge" producers from 1999 to 2003. He was the spokesman for the Confédération Paysanne (with Jose Bove and others) from 2000 to 2002 and Co-president of the European Farmers Coordination until the end of 2009. He then played an essential role in founding the European Coordination Via Campesina, until the end of 2009.

Second on the list of Europe Ecology Brittany of the Côtes-d'Armor in regional elections of March 2010, he was elected Regional Councillor of Brittany (until 2014) and is a member of the Committee on Economy. He regularly participates in the European Parliament as an agricultural European syndicalist.

Gerard Choplin, European Movement for Food Sovereignty and another CAP

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Gerard Choplin is an agronomist. Since 2008 he has been a member of the Brussels team of the European Coordination Via Campesina in charge of CAP, milk and other production issues. From 1988-2008 he was coordinator of CPE (European Farmers Coordination) in Brussels.

Dan Jørgensen, MEP (as above)

Mute Schimpf, FOE Europe

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Mute has worked in animal welfare for more than 14 years. She is a food campaigner at Friends of the Earth Europe and works on their Agricultural and GM campaign to support planet-friendly ways of food production and consumption and maintain Europe's fields free of GM crops. Prior to this post, she gained insights into the European Parliament, working with development agencies focused on biodiversity, agriculture and trade issues.

Antje Koelling, IFOAM EU Group

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Agronomist Antje Koelling has been policy coordinator for the IFOAM EU Group since 2009. She is responsible for coordinating the Group's work in relation to the Common Agriculture Policy, biodiversity, GMOs, and climate and environmental aspects of agriculture. Before working at the IFOAM EU Group, Antje worked for five years as a political advisor for a Member of the European Parliament in the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development.

The IFOAM EU Group is the European arm of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements. It brings together more than 300 organisations, associations and enterprises from all EU-27, EFTA and candidate countries. IFOAM's goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the principles of Organic Agriculture.

Janusz Wojciechowski, MEP (as above)

Peter Stevenson, Compassion in World Farming

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Educated at Trinity College Cambridge, Peter is a qualified lawyer. As Chief Policy Advisor of Compassion in World Farming, he leads Compassion's lobbying at the EU and the OIE. He played a leading role in winning the EU bans on veal crates, battery cages and sow stalls as well as a new status for animals in EU law as sentient beings. In addition, he has written comprehensive legal analyses of EU legislation on farm animals and also of the impact of the WTO rules on animal welfare. Peter has also

written many well received literature reviews and reports on the welfare of meat chickens and farmed fish, welfare at slaughter, welfare during transport and the economics of livestock production. In 2004, Peter was the joint recipient of the RSPCA Lord Erskine Award in recognition of a “very important contribution in the field of animal welfare”.

Cóilín Nunan, Soil Association

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Cóilín studied mathematics and physics at the Universities of Brussels and Cambridge, and is an antibiotics adviser to the Soil Association. He has co-authored a series of reports on antibiotic resistance and antibiotic residues that highlight the human-health impact of excessive antibiotic use in intensive livestock farming. This work aims to encourage a move to more responsible use of antibiotics in farming, through better regulation and improvements in production systems, which would also improve animal welfare. He has an interest in all aspects of sustainability, and is a trustee of Feasta, the Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability.

Prof. dr. hab. Robert Karczmarczyk

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5. Photographs and video footage

A video of the event will be available on Pig Business' YouTube channel from 11/02/11:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/PigBusinessFilm>

Press photographs of the event are available at:

<http://www.pigbusiness.co.uk/press-resources/>

7. Press Queries

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