**Industrial farming**

Over 150 billion animals are slaughtered each year. Per minute more than 570 cows and calves, 2.400 pigs and 90.200 chickens are killed by the meat, egg and dairy industries, but did you know that these animals have emotions and care about their families just like we do?

**Chickens**

Even chickens have memories and emotions and they also recognize each other. Mother chickens protect their chicks and know what’s a threat for them.

In factory farms the animals can’t do anything that’s natural for them. While male chicks just get shredded because egg industries have no use for them, the female chicks become like their mothers and get treated like machines.

The space a chicken in the egg industry has is comparable to a sheet of paper. They often live together with more than 4.000 other chickens which is a problem because they have a pecking order. Because of this pecking order, the stronger chickens peck the weaker ones which works well in a flock of no more than 90 chickens. If they are in a group of so many other chickens, they peck each other until they get injuries which can even lead to cannibalism. That’s why they get the tips of their beaks cut off. Without any painkiller, of course.

When they are one or two years old and don’t lay as much eggs anymore, they get slaughtered but a chickens natural life expectancy actually ranges from 15-20 years.

And then we have broilers. Living beings that get stuffed with food until they have problems with their hearts, lungs and bones. They suffer from deforming or breaking of their bones and often die of thirst because they are just too heavy to move.

**Cows**

Female cows in factory farms live in permanent cycle of being impregnated in order to produce as much milk as possible. They become mothers that will never be able to live together with their children because a few hours after their calves are born they are taken away from them and are likely to never see their mothers again. Some industries take the calves away from their mothers after only half an hour, causing both of them to cry for hours. The calves cry until their throats get irritated and collapse because of stress and lack of food.

Because male calves only have little value to the dairy farmer, they are sold for meat. The farmers cut or burn off their horns and it’s said that the meat gets more tender when they are castrated at a young age so they get their testicles ripped off or worse (for example constricting blood flow until the testicles die and fall off which means pain for several days). After 6-12 months of age, they are put on an unnatural diet until they gain 1.200 pounds which is the market weight.

In a natural setting, cows can get more than 20 years old but they get slaughtered after less than 5 years. While they get their throats cut, many animals are still alive.

Coming back to the female cows, the cruel methods used to make the cows produce as much milk as possible combined with injuries through the milking machines lead to a disease called mastitis which is a painful swelling of the glands of the udder.

**Pigs**

When female pigs on factory farms are old enough to give birth, they are artificially inseminated. After giving birth they have to stay in small cages where they can either stand up or lie down.

While the piglets normally stay with their mothers for several months, they can only stay with them for less than one month on factory farms. The mother pigs are used as a breeding machine until their bodies are exhausted after three or four years. Then they get shipped off to slaughter.

Pigs in factory farms have to live in their own feces and vomit and sometimes are even surrounded by the corpses of dead pigs. Even though they are given antibiotics, many of them suffer and also die from infections. The dead pigs often lie there for several days. Instead of giving them medication, sick animals get killed by many farmers to save money.

And that’s the story of hamburgers, eggs & bacon and thousands of other foods that you could also have as a vegan option.