

SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTS

Short Written Texts (Media Releases)

'Welfare laws fail pigs miserably'. SAFE Media Release (July 2009).



MEDIA RELEASE

3 July 2009

WELFARE LAWS FAIL PIGS MISERABLY

An official MAF report reveals current pig welfare legislation is strongly at odds with the views of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Agriculture and the majority of the New Zealand public on pig welfare.

The MAF investigative report has cleared an intensive piggery, which was exposed on the *Sunday* programme last month, of any breach of the law.

Pig welfare campaigners say the 23-page report states the Levin pig farm, owned by a leading New Zealand pig farmer and former director of the New Zealand Pork Industry Board, provides "very high" animal care and husbandry standards and that no offences were observed.

MAF's findings come as no surprise to SAFE, the group behind the exposé of the farm.

"The report merely emphasises how much our animal welfare law is out of touch with the thinking of most New Zealanders," says SAFE campaign director Hans Kriek.

"The entire nation was shocked at the appalling conditions pigs are being farmed in. The exposé prompted Prime Minister John Key to say that he found the images of crated pigs "very, very disturbing." The Minister of Agriculture, David Carter, said he was 'equally disturbed by the images shown and found them unacceptable.'"

In the report the Minister's own officials have now told him that in fact these terrible conditions are perfectly legal.

"SAFE believes that the Minister has little choice but to change the law to ensure that practices he and the rest of the nation consider unacceptable are no longer allowed. The Minister must use the upcoming review of the pig code of welfare to introduce a ban on the use of pig crates. Anything short of that would be a national disgrace," says Mr Kriek.

In the meantime SAFE calls on consumers to play their part.

"The pigs shown in the *Sunday* programme are still inside those crates today. They will still be there tomorrow. It is likely sows will still be in pig crates for many years to come unless consumers boycott factory farmed pig products immediately," says Mr Kriek.