

Should we use large scale animal farming?

Shane Rexford

Period 6

Dr. Crihfield

Word Count: 1997

Question: Should we use large scale animal farming?

Large scale animal farming should not be used because it no longer uses natural growth, dominates small companies, and it is not pathogen free, although it does offer some positives such as being efficient and provides reduced prices.

Large scale animal farming no longer uses natural growth. Natural growth is defined as being able to graze, eat, and live a life as the farmed animal would live in nature. Large scale animal farms now use many hormones to accelerate the growth of these animals at extreme rates. According to the Food Empowerment Project, which is guided by a capable and experienced team of volunteers with a wide range of skills and interests in social justice although the volunteers may be considered environmental extremists,

Approximately 83% of industrially farmed cattle are treated with antibiotics... Therapeutic treatments are given in a preventative manner to keep the animal from becoming ill due to the increased presence of bacteria in their unnatural living conditions. Therapeutic antibiotics also help to keep the animal's immune system artificially boosted as they experience unnatural levels of stress throughout their lives. Non-therapeutic treatments function in a similar manner to growth promoting hormones. (Cows Raised For Meat, 2015)

This is very important issue when evaluating whether we should use large scale animal farms because the use antibiotics that alters their immune system. These animals are grown at accelerated rates greater than what they would in natural growth as they would in nature. The Research and Market organization, which has proven research because of the research for they have done for big companies such as google, Microsoft, and yahoo although it has a big vested interest because they offer the research in exchange for money, states

The animal growth promoters and performance enhancers market is segmented into antibiotics/antimicrobials, probiotics and prebiotics, organic acids, feed enzymes, hormonal growth promoters, β -agonists, phytogenics, and others. These growth promoters are used in the animal feed to increase their growth and to enhance their performance. (Animal Growth, 2015)

This quote explains how these animals are growing at an accelerated rate meaning their bodies cannot keep up with this extreme growth resulting in sometimes the breaking of chicken's legs, causing death, because of the increase growth rate. Therefore, large scale animal farms should not be used because they no longer use natural growth.

Large scale animal farming dominated small companies. The meat industry is dominated by a few major companies such as Tyson and Monsanto. These large corporation dominate the meat industry making it almost impossible for small companies to compete in the industry, making this industry an oligopoly. The Real Truth Magazine, who is strictly neutral and its purpose is to help understand problems that's effects are reflected in the headlines although this being ran by a church leads to questionable expertise, states,

If it has livestock, it generally has several thousand animals confined in the same area. Because factory farms are so large, they achieve “economies of scale,” producing much more food at cheaper prices than smaller farms. These farms are owned by giant corporations and operate purely on the profit motive, maximizing profits for their shareholders. Unlike small family farms, they usually do not have close connections to the communities in which they operate. (Factory Farms, 2015)

These big businesses can produce food much cheaper than the small business, making it hard to compete. They also do not have the connection that the large scale companies have. This explains further that the small businesses cannot compete with big business and are dominated by them. Another example of this would be from FactoryFarmMap, with a main focused on keeping the food we consume safe from things that are harmful to us as well as making a sustainable food system as well as has connections in US government allowing them to have good insight on environmental policy although there is a large vested interest in the subject because of the industry being worth big money, would state,

The number of dairy, hog and beef cattle producers in the United States has declined sharply over the last 20 years as the meatpacking, processing and dairy industries have driven farmers to increase in scale. The tiny handful of companies that dominates each livestock sector exerts tremendous control over the prices that farmers receive... Most farmers barely break even. In 2012, more than half of farmers lost money on their farming operations. (What's wrong with Factory Farming, 2015)

This quote bring into play the fact that these small farmers barely break even or even lose money when attempting to compete in this business, as they have control of not only the ties but as well as the price of the meat. Large scale animal farming should not be used because of this domination over small companies.

Large scale animal farming is not pathogen free. A pathogen is defined as a disease. Large scale animal keeps animals in very small areas, some not much bigger than the size of the animal itself. Also with them staying in those areas and producing waste everyday it makes it

very unsanitary giving pathogens the opportunity to live. PBS, who has a high standard in reputation as it is a trusted source for many schools and as an informational guide making their information reliable because of extensive research although its expertise in large scale animal farming is not stated, would explain,

In one study published in the New England Journal of Medicine on February 6, 2002, researchers found links that strongly suggested that the people who developed Cipro-resistant bacteria had acquired them by eating pork that were contaminated with salmonella. The report concluded that salmonella resistant to the antibiotic flouroquine can be spread from swine to humans... (Antibiotic Debate Overview, 2015)

This gives good insight on how these pathogens affect us. These pigs had been infected with a pathogen and it was transferred into human infection by the process of eating this unsanitary meat. These are not uncommon as another example of this is from Worldwatch, which is an independent research organization that works on environmental, energy, and resource however they have a vested interest in transitioning the world to be sustainable in order to meet human needs, who states,

Dirty, crowded conditions on factory farms can propagate sickness and disease among the animals, including swine influenza, avian influenza, foot-and-mouth disease, and mad-cow disease. These diseases not only translate into enormous economic losses each year—the United Kingdom alone spent 18 to 25 billion dollars in a three-year period to combat foot-and-mouth disease—but they also lead to human infections. (Global Meat Production and Consumption Continues to Rise, 2011)

These pathogens can not only hurt the animals but can be transferred to us as well and may result in much funding needed to fix these problems if they occur. This is a major issue when discussing if we should use large scale animal farming. Large scale animal farms are not as pathogen free as people may think and we should not use them.

Large scale animal farming does have advantages such as it reduces prices. As the world population continues to expand more food is needed for consumers. Big businesses can make these animals grow extraordinarily fast allowing for quicker production. They also dominate the smaller businesses allowing them to control the price. The Guardian's team of US-based journalists is most recently renowned for its Pulitzer Prize-winning revelations, Pair awarded highest accolade in US journalism, winning Pulitzer prize for public service for stories on NSA surveillance, although being American journalists makes their expertise questionable because they writing from an outsider point of view, would state "NFU President, Peter Kendall, says that

the UK will need "more and bigger 'super farms' to keep food prices from rising too high and to maintain high animal welfare standards." (Are 'super farms' good for the environment, 2015) The quote explains how food is needed worldwide and that more of these large scale animal farms are needed to meet demands. This meat is produced so quickly that the price is lower so that it is available to more people. This is future proven by FarmForward is a nonprofit organization has extensive research in helping transform the way our nation eats and farms showing a good understanding of the subject although its expertise is not stated, which states,

Factory farms, also known as CAFOs or IFAP facilities can house more than 125,000 animals² under one roof and are designed to produce the highest possible output at the lowest possible cost to the operator. These farms and their associated industrial slaughterhouses produce "cheap" meat... (Ending Factory Farming, 2015)

Large scale animal farms help reduce the price of their meat because of their large amounts of meat output. They are able to control the price by producing so much of it to make it reduced for the consumer.

One of the biggest advantages of these farms is that it is very efficient. Large corporations can produce meat at an extraordinary rate making them have a high output. This is important when discussing this issue. Patrick Boyle is the CEO of the American Meat Institute making him an expert at the area although with a vested interest in remaining CEO of the company, would explain,

It has a lot to do with efficiencies -- doing what we do even better and more efficiently; ... squeezing costs out of the process... America in general is a tremendous food success story. ... We pay the lowest percentage of our per capita income on food than any country in the world. In the mid-1980s, it was about 12 percent. Today it's below 9 percent. And meat, which is a large part of our diet in this country -- meat and poultry -- is less than 2 percent of our disposable income... We have high quality, reliable, abundant, and low-cost food..." (Boyle, 2015)

This gives good background on that fact that this is growing industry as this is one part of our diet. Also that they always work to be more efficient and to be able to better provide for the consumer. This is shown again by Counting Animals which is a blog data that relates to the animal advocacy movement, this extensive research makes them an expert in the subject although bloggers seem to favor animal welfare, which states

The farm price and the wholesale price encapsulate within them a large part of the cost savings to the industry of factory farming... The period from 1980 to 1999 saw a steady

rise in factory farming; according to the USDA Census of Agriculture publications, between 1978 and 2002 the percentage of pigs sold by farms that sold more than a thousand pigs each year went from less than 35% to over 95% (Factory farming and the price of meat, 2013)

This is becoming a more practiced industry meaning they are perfecting what needs to be done to max out of their production. Also it is still growing and will continue to become more efficient and that this industry is very efficient right now.

In researching the harmful effects of factory meat, I have discovered that the meat industry is out for the cheapest and quickest way to send product out to consumers. The animals are filled with tons of chemicals and antibiotics to induce faster growing. This is no surprise for me because humans want things to be accessible and because of this demand factory farms want to get their product in stores as soon as possible. As a result of the quickness not all the meat is properly packaged and not as sanitary as it should be. While researching the topic of factory farming it really enlightened me on how the system works and why it is good and bad, in addition to this the research opened my mind to understand both sides of the argument. I feel as though further research should be made to dig deeper into the meat and the health risks involved. This research will help shine light on this important question and would make the answer more direct and clear factory meat is not safe for human consumption because factories are not as pathogen free as we think, natural growth of animals is no longer used, and undermine smaller companies although it does have some positives outlooks such as providing efficient and cheap food.

References

Factory farming and the price of meat. Retrieved November 30, 2015, from

<http://www.countinganimals.com/factory-farming-and-the-price-of-meat/>

Factory Farms – Are They Good for Consumers? Retrieved November 30, 2015, from

<http://realtruth.org/articles/070601-004-ff.html>

FarmForward. (2015, December 10). Ending Factory Farming. Retrieved from

<https://farmforward.com/ending-factory-farming/>

Food & Water Watch. (2015, December 10). What's Wrong With Factory Farms

www.factoryfarmmap.org used CloudFlare to restrict access. Retrieved from

<http://www.factoryfarmmap.org/problems/>

Food Empowerment Program. (2015, December 10). Cows Raised for “Meat” | Food

Empowerment Project. Retrieved from <http://www.foodispower.org/cows-raised-for-meat/>

PBS. (2015, December 10). Industrial Meat - Industrial Meat | Modern Meat | FRONTLINE |

PBS. Retrieved from

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/meat/industrial/consolidation.html>

PBS. (2015, December 10). Is Your Meat Safe? - Antibiotic Debate Overview | Modern Meat |

FRONTLINE | PBS. Retrieved from

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/meat/safe/overview.html>

Research and Markets. (2015, December 15). Animal Growth Promoters and Performance

Enhancers Market by Segment (Antibiotics, Growth Hormones, Feed Enzymes, Organic Acids, Probiotics and Prebiotics, α -Agonists, Phytogenics), by Animals (Porcine, Poultry, Aquaculture) - Global Forecasts to 2018. Retrieved from

http://www.researchandmarkets.com/research/j5jhsq/animal_growth_enhancers.aspx

The Guardian. (2015, December 15). Are 'super farms' good for the environment? Leo Hickman

| Environment | The Guardian. Retrieved from

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/blog/2012/jun/07/super-farms-environment-livestock-climate>

World Watch. Institution. (2011). Global Meat Production and Consumption Continue to Rise

Worldwatch Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.worldwatch.org/global-meat-production-and-consumption-continue-rise-1>