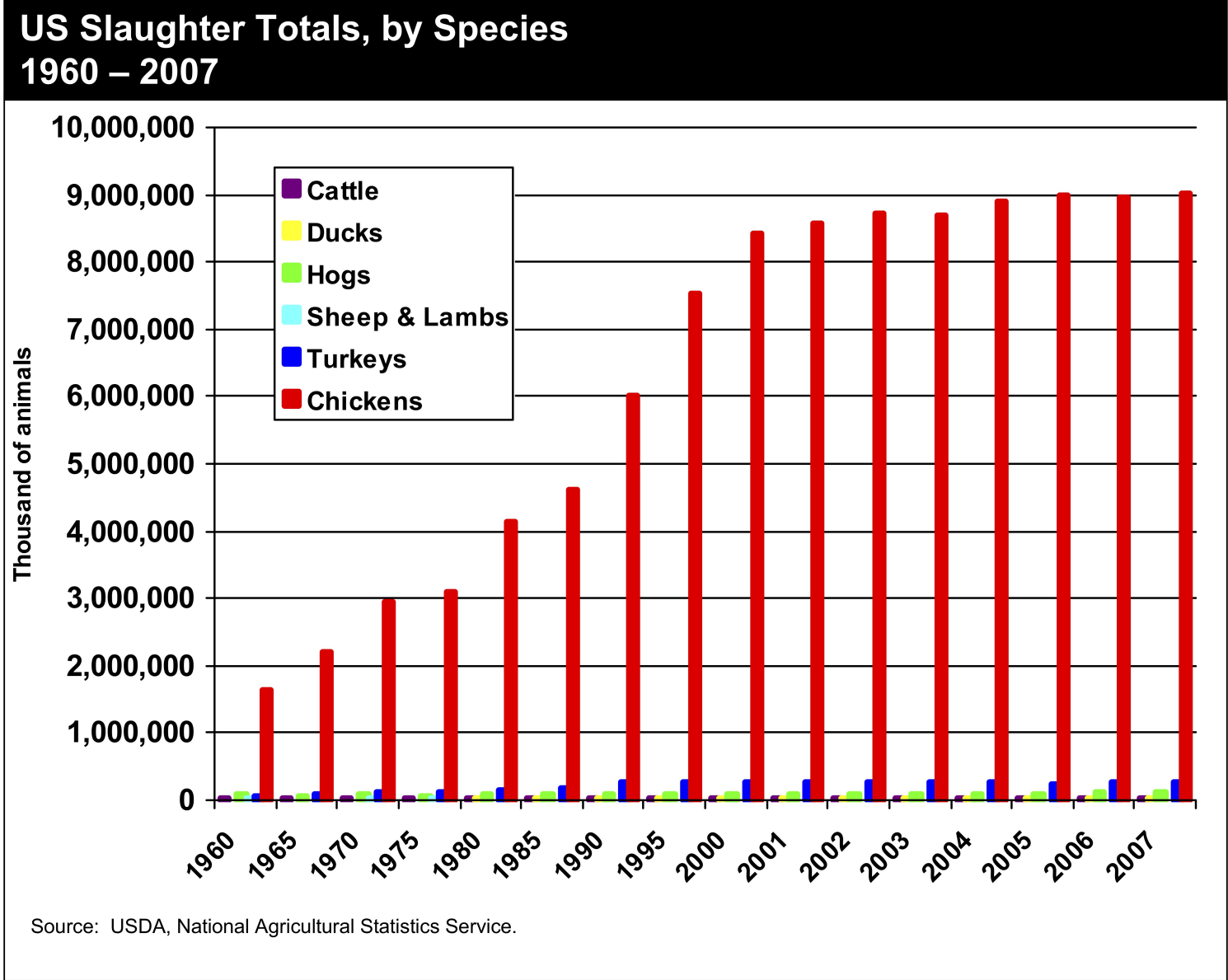


WEEK 4 INDUSTRIAL MEAT

ANIMAL PRODUCTION

U.S. SLAUGHTER TOTALS, BY SPECIES

- 1985 (4.9 billion land animals)
 - Chicken: 4,617,280,000
 - Turkeys: 175,181,000
 - Hogs: 84,938,000
 - Cattle: 36,593,000
- 2015 (9.2 billion land animals)
 - Chicken: 8,822,695,000
 - Turkeys: 232,398,000
 - Hogs: 115,425,000
 - Cattle: 28,752,000



March 20, 2008

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

- For more info:
 - [Humane Society of the United States](#)
 - [USDA Livestock Slaughter Annual Summary](#)
 - [National Chicken Council](#)

INDUSTRIAL POULTRY



CHICKEN FARMING

- Two kinds of (industrially) farmed poultry
 - meat (“broiler” chicken)
 - egg-laying (egg-laying hens or “layers”)

EGG FARMS

- Today's egg producing hens ("layers") can produce over 300 eggs per year; this is over twice the average of 150 eggs per year in 1947.
- Raised with relatively little space
- Often killed after peak egg production years (1-2 years)
- Between 200 & 250 million male chickens are killed each year in egg industry

BROILER FARMS

- Broiler chickens are selected and bred for large-scale, efficient meat production
- Breeding produces “welfare” problems
 - Sudden death syndrome (acute heart failure)
 - Skeletal disfunction & lameness
 - Respiratory diseases (ammonia inhalation)

BROILER “PROCESSING”

- Broiler chickens are stunned/paralyzed but not rendered unconscious before slaughter
- On average 825,000 chickens are boiled alive each year due to improper slaughter conditions

- For more info:
 - [Huffington Post](#) article on boiling chickens alive
 - [Huffington Post](#) article on problems with electric stunning method
 - [Washington Post](#) article on USDA plan to speed up processing lines
 - [USDA abandons proposal](#) that would speed up processing
 - [Huffington Post](#) article on “spent” layer hens

SCALE

The vastness of the poultry industry means that if there is anything wrong with the system, there is something terribly wrong in our world. (JSF, Eating Animals, 136)

LANGUAGE & EVASION

Language is never fully trustworthy, but when it comes to eating animals, words are as often used to misdirect and camouflage as they are to communicate. (JSF Eating Animals, p. 45)

- Why is the slaughter of animals called “processing”?

LABELS

- “Free range” is compatible with little to no moving space
- “Cage free” is compatible with terrible living conditions
- “Natural” doesn’t have any set meaning except concerning meat, poultry, and eggs, stating that a “natural” food is “a product containing no artificial ingredient or added color and is only minimally processed”
- “Organic” is regulated by USDA but applied somewhat inconsistently between agriculture & animals

- USDA National Organic Program
- Whole Foods on organic labeling
- NYTimes on 'organic' labeling
- USDA on organic aquaculture
 - NYTimes on organic fish
 - NPR on organic fish

WHAT COUNTS AS “HUMANE”?

- Food labels certify some foods as “humane” but what does that mean?

Most [labels] are issued by three nonprofit groups — the American Humane Association, Humane Farm Animal Care and A Greener World — that set their own standards for the practices needed to win certification. Food companies pay fees to use the labels; more than one billion of the more than nine billion animals raised for food each year in the United States are covered by a certification program. ... But the phrases on the labels have no set meaning; the federal government has no rules for the use of words like “humane.” The term “free-range” on a product, for example, does not necessarily mean that an animal had access to pasture. (NYTimes, “Animal Welfare Labels”)

WHAT COUNTS AS “CRUEL”?

- “Cruelty” works differently when dealing with a “farm animal” and as compared with a “companion animal”?

we protect “companion animals” like hamsters while largely ignoring what amounts to the torture of chickens and cows and pigs. In short, if I keep a pig as a pet, I can’t kick it. If I keep a pig I intend to sell for food, I can pretty much torture it. State laws known as “Common Farming Exemptions” allow industry — rather than lawmakers — to make any practice legal as long as it’s common. (Mark Bittman “[Some Animals Are More Equal Than Others](#)”)

WHY EAT SOME ANIMALS BUT NOT OTHERS?

like me, George fears pain, seeks pleasure, and craves not just food and play, but companionship. I don't need to know the details of her moods and preferences to know that she has them. Our psychologies are not the same or similar, but each of us has a perspective, a way of processing and experiencing the world that is intrinsic and unique. I wouldn't eat George, because she's mine. But why wouldn't I eat a dog I'd never met? Or more to the point, what justification might I have for sparing dogs but eating other animals? (JSF, Eating Animals)

- No “companion” animals
- No animals with “significant mental capacities”
- No “taboo” animals

ANIMAL OR THING?

- In the IFS animals are treated as *commodities* – i.e. as fungible or *interchangeable things*
- What makes an animal (including humans) different from a mere thing (e.g. a rock or a chair)?
- Why are at least some animals (e.g. humans) not fungible or interchangeable?

MORAL STATUS

Moral Status:

deserving of, or otherwise qualifying for, moral consideration

- Can we specify what it is about humans, as opposed to non-human animals, that grants moral status to humans but not other animals?

