Has anyone betrayed more animals than the American Veterinary Medical Association?

Betrayed is a strong word. But look at the facts.

The AVMA veterinarian’s oath promises to “protect animal health and relieve animal suffering.” Yet, astoundingly, the AVMA endorses practices that intentionally make animals sick while supporting some of the cruelest conditions for raising farm animals to be found anywhere in the world. So cruel they are banned or being phased out in Europe. But they are common right here in the United States and the AVMA is keeping it that way.

Isn’t that a betrayal?

Ten billion farm animals are raised for food in the United States every year. Can you think of anyone else who has betrayed so many?

Here are some of AVMA’s worst betrayals.

**Sow Stalls: A Lifetime of Immobility**

In 2002, Florida voters outlawed the use of sow stalls in that state. Sow stalls are barren metal cages barely larger than the sow herself in which the pregnant animal spends most of her life. She can’t turn around or lie down comfortably, let alone exercise.

But when California legislators tried for a similar ban, it was quickly derailed because AVMA policy says it is fine to confine pigs in metal cages barely larger than the sow herself in which the pregnant animal spends most of her life. She can’t turn around or lie down comfortably, let alone exercise.

**Veal Calves: Intentionally Sick**

Veal crating is another U.S. practice that will soon be illegal in Europe, pale veal is prohibited in other countries. But when California legislators tried for a similar ban, it was quickly derailed because AVMA policy says it is fine to confine calves in a crate no larger than the calf himself in which the calf spends his whole life.

**Laying Hens: Starvation and Death by Wood Chipper**

AVMA again showed its anti-animal philosophy in California last year when, according to San Diego County authorities, Dr Gregg Cutler, a vet on AVMA’s Animal Welfare Committee, advised an egg farmer to get rid of twenty-five thousand live hens with a wood chipper after their laying slowed down. No surprise then that AVMA policy also allows egg producers to starve hens for up to 14 days in a procedure called “forced molting” that shocks the birds into a new cycle of egg-laying.1 Starving hens is outlawed in Europe, but not here.

**AVMA: Beholden to Industry, not Medicine**

Most vets are decent people who care about animals. That same concern to help animals, not hurt them, must be the guiding principle of the AVMA. Instead the organization panders to agribusiness giants. Giving the AVMA’s seal of approval to unscrupulous producers promotes rather than alleviates, disease and suffering. For billions of American farm animals, it is the ultimate betrayal.

**Your Voice Can Upgrade AVMA Policies**

The AVMA can change if you and your veterinarian get involved. Give your vet a copy of this ad (printable copies can be downloaded at: www.ari-online.org/cruelavma) and ask him or her to urge the AVMA to adopt ethical positions on animal welfare. And please protest to the AVMA yourself using the contact information below.

If you would like ARI or one of the other organizations below to send you and your vet additional information, please use the coupon or email info@ari-online.org. Remember, AVMA policies affect billions of animals. Your action can make their lives vastly better.

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1 For an explanation of how the starvation of hens forces them into a new laying cycle go to www.ari-online.org/molting or www.upc-online.org/molting

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**More information on the AVMA can be found at AVMAHurtsAnimals.com**

Photographs of sow and veal crates courtesy of www.farmsanctuary.org