



*How can anybody be surprised about the spread of **AVIAN BIRD 'FLU'** when animals are kept cramped in unnatural conditions like this!!*

Picture and report: Wendy Valentine

Not a 'Bootiful' Site!

You will, of course know, from the extensive news coverage, about the recent H5N1 'flu outbreak. Immediately the story broke, we were inundated by the media requesting previous investigation footage showing the general conditions on Bernard Matthews' farms, for broadcast nationwide. On 'day one' I thought it a coincidence that Bernard Matthews had farms in Hungary where the dangerous H5N1 virus had also been recently identified and reporters I spoke to about this were soon on the case investigating a possible link! One TV report described conditions on turkey farms as 'sterile'. The speaker had obviously never been inside a poultry shed where the birds (in the case of turkeys) live for up to five months in their own excrement. *The supply of bedding is often spasmodic and the sheds only cleaned out after the birds have been slaughtered!* Our Winter Newsletter carried an in-depth report showing how irresponsible practices by the poultry industry could cause devastation to bird and human life alike. For years we have filmed 'dead bins' on major

poultry producers' farms, heaving with maggots and flies and on three occasions informed **all** local residents (with video evidence) about the environmental threat on their doorsteps. **It was a bio-security lapse regarding this method of disposal that Bernard Matthews was much criticised for and yet only two weeks after the outbreak on his farm at Holton in Suffolk, we were able to film a trailer with dead turkeys left uncovered on another of his sites at Haveringland in Norfolk. The footage shows the skip, with one bird partly eaten, left open to the elements, making it easily accessible to rats, wild birds and flies.** Over the years we have reported dozens of serious farm animal welfare and bio-security offences **where the authorities have failed to prosecute. It seems that DEFRA is now considering taking action against Bernard Matthews for bio-security breaches but it seems that farmers are only brought to justice after a major incident.** In 2000 we reported appalling conditions on the

Waugh's farm in Cumbria.

The authorities ignored our reports then and it was **only** after the first case of Foot and Mouth broke out there just six weeks later that they prosecuted the farmer for cruelty to animals!! If notice had been taken, just think what could have been prevented.

Information

If you would like to read our Winter Newsletter **Avian Flu Article** along with a **Scientific Report** from Japan showing how flies (who can easily travel two miles) can transmit the H5N1 virus, please let us know. Also *free on request* on DVD or Video, is our short film '**Come Fly with Me**', filmed last October, showing routine 'dead bird' disposal practices carried out by major poultry producers.



www.hillside.org.uk

Caught in the Act . . . AGAIN!!



Following our investigation which exposed two Bernard Matthews' staff beating turkeys (for which they were prosecuted) our investigator has filmed further cruelty by a worker on another major producer's farm. While filming the rough handling of ducks being caught for slaughter at a farm

rearing birds for Manor Farm Ducklings (MFD), we captured on film a duck being viciously punched by one of the catchers. We immediately gave our evidence to the RSPCA who investigated the incident. The worker, who had apparently worked for MFD for five years, admitted the act saying 'he was killing the duck as it had a broken leg'. It's certainly not a recognised method of humanely euthanasing an animal that we've ever heard of! *He was merely cautioned and allowed to continue with his employment!* We don't believe the explanation. Is it more than a coincidence that MFD have been given a Freedom Food accreditation by the RSPCA who wouldn't want the ensuing bad publicity for a producer that they publicly support?

A still from footage shows the catcher raising his fist (left) before striking the bird



Working for a company that has Freedom Food certification for part of its operation, the catcher would most certainly sometimes be handling birds that are being reared under that scheme!

These are just two of Hillside's investigations which were shown on ITV's 'Tonight with Trevor McDonald' in March. We will give an in-depth report of the broadcast in our next Newsletter. If you would like a free copy of this programme, please order overleaf.



Traditional Norfolk Poultry's website shows the above image and boasts: 'All our flocks are raised on small family farms, committed to the Traditional Norfolk Poultry ethos of the growing systems we use. Naturally, Traditional Norfolk Poultry farms operate the very highest standards of welfare.'

The Crème de la Crème of Poultry Producers?

Again our filmed evidence shows a very different picture. Here you can see how turkeys on one of TNP's farms exist. Soaked in excrement, shivering with cold these turkeys are being reared on another farm which had been given RSPCA Freedom Food accreditation. Some birds were left with horrific injuries for days, and dead ones were just left to decay amongst the living. Here, only last December, we were again able to film an open bin full of decaying carcasses, some partly eaten, lying in a sea of maggots!



Hillside filmed these conditions on a farm rearing turkeys for Traditional Norfolk Poultry



Open Days

Visitors are welcome to meet our rescued animals 1-5pm **EVERY SUNDAY** from Easter until the end of October **Bank Holiday Mondays & Monday afternoons during June, July & August also Easter Fri, Sat & Mon**

Please find this **MONEY BOX** enclosed to replace the one you may already have which might need emptying. We would be very pleased to receive your money box donations as **every penny collected helps to feed and care for our rescued animals.**

Thank you.



Always welcome - old towels and sheets to use with our animals.

Please help us to help them



Animal Investigation Appeal

We are making an appeal today to ask you to support our Farm Animal Investigations. Thanks to your past support we have had much success in bringing to the public's attention the cruelty and animal suffering involved in today's intensive factory farming systems. Not only have we gained the confidence of television documentary producers who have regularly shown our evidence to their viewers, we also distribute thousands of free DVDs and videos (available overleaf) so that people can see for themselves just what is going on behind the closed doors of the farming industry. If you would like to contribute please make your donation overleaf. **Thank you.**

