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Thursday 10 December, 2015

News release

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The leather industry exposé aired earlier today was shocking, but far from an isolated case; such exploitation and cruelty is commonplace throughout every animal industry, says The Vegan Society.

Undercover footage from a leather farm in Bangladesh shows scenes of cows suffering immensely, falling over from exhaustion with open wounds and broken bones. Many of the workers are children, exposed to toxic and dangerous chemicals while slaughtering live cows whose skins make shoes, wallets, belts and jackets sold all over the world.

“This kind of exploitation is rife in every industry in which animals are used: clothing like wool and fur, the dairy industry, meat, fishing, some cosmetics, animals in entertainment. It's the same systematic and institutionalised cruelty across the board," said Jasmijn de Boo, CEO of The Vegan Society.

“We are frequently given undercover videos, but have chosen to raise the profile of this particular footage to further expose leather, the realities of which continue to be overlooked.

“There is a misconception that leather is a by-product. Far from it. Leather is a highly lucrative business in its own right, commercialised to maximise profits at the expense of cows and workers – often children, as we can see in the film, exposed to treacherous conditions.

“We shouldn't blame Bangladesh. It is through worldwide demand for leather products as cheap as possible that we end up with the clear oppression of both animals and people. Consumer demand has essentially outsourced the leather industry to Bangladesh, conveniently out of sight.

“Improvements in animal welfare are not enough. Regardless of how good or bad the welfare of the animals is perceived, they are denied even their most basic needs.

“The only way to put an end to this is for everyone to stop buying leather and other animal products. And with so many quality synthetic alternatives to leather available, it's never been easier," de Boo added.

You can read more about compassion in fashion at www.vegansociety.com/resources/lifestyle/fashion

You can try going vegan in 30 days with The Vegan Society's 30 Day Vegan Pledge (www.vegansociety.com/pledge) to receive daily emails of advice, info, support and delicious recipes.

JASMIJN DE BOO IS AVAILABLE TO INTERVIEW AT SHORT NOTICE. PLEASE CONTACT THE VEGAN SOCIETY MEDIA MANAGER JIMMY PIERCE ON 07931819508.

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Scan Me:

Company Contact:

The Vegan Society

T. 01215231738
E. media@vegansociety.com
W. https://www.vegansociety.com

Additional Contact(s):
Out of hours: 07593 129599

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