

down by a chain wrapped around one back leg or they have their legs clamped in a vice like device. In Europe cattle are restrained in a Weinberg casting pen which inverts them onto their backs. The Weinberg pen is more stressful than the ASPCA pen (Dunn 1990 *Veterinary Record* 126: 522-525). The Facomia Company in France has developed an improved casting pen. I have observed it, and it is a big improvement compared to the Weinberg pen. It is likely that the Facomia pen is more stressful than a modified ASPCA pen. There is a need for more detailed research to determine the stressfulness of inverted restraint. All ASPCA pens should have both pressure and speed limiting devices which do not require operator judgement. Vertical travel of the belly lift should be restricted to 28 in (71 cm) to prevent excessive pressure from being applied to the animal's thoracic area. Existing pens can be easily modified.

When I operated the modified ASPCA pen I was able to restrain cattle very gently. Most animals stood quietly when I slowly eased them into position. An abusive operator can cause suffering in well designed equipment. It is the responsibility of the abattoir manager to control employee behaviour. A manager who is concerned about animal welfare will instantly sack employees who abuse animals.

I disagree with Professor Bekoff on the use of animals for food. The relationship between people and domestic animals should be symbiotic. We owe them decent living conditions and a kind death. Death in nature is usually very harsh and cruel. Nature is not kind. I will define the term 'relatively humane and seemingly humane' from my article as follows: If I visualize myself as an animal I would willingly walk into the modified ASPCA pens.

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Editorial comment

We hope, in due course to be able to review Rifkin's book *Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture*, as suggested by Professor Bekoff.

For the record, readers should be aware of the current law in the UK regarding religious slaughter. *The Slaughter of Animals (Humane Conditions) Regulation 1990* which required head-restraint for cattle being stunned by captive bolt also made new provisions for slaughter by the Jewish or by the Mohammedan methods. From 5 July 1992 cattle may be slaughtered in a slaughterhouse by a religious method only in an upright position in a restraining pen. In the Regulations a *restraining pen means a pen or compartment which is -*

- a. suitable for restraining cattle in an upright position while they are being slaughtered by the religious method;
- b. constructed so as to permit one animal at a time to be confined in it without discomfort and so as to prevent any substantial movement of the animal forwards, backwards or sideways once it has been placed in position for slaughter, and
- c. approved by the appropriate Minister.

The 1990 Regulations include a number of other requirements regarding the design and use of restraining pens. It should be noted that casting pens of the Weinburg, Dyne or North British Rotary type are no longer to be used.

The present position in the European Community is that the regulation of religious slaughter will remain a matter for national authorities.

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