

**Press release: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

## **The shocking reality for thousands of sows confined in cages throughout Britain**

An undercover investigation released today (18<sup>th</sup> July) by leading farm animal welfare charity, Compassion in World Farming, has exposed the grim reality for thousands of sows across the UK, forced to give birth and rear their piglets in farrowing crates.

Footage obtained from two British pig farms in spring 2019 shows mother pigs confined in narrow metal crates within bleak sheds. These conditions are typical for pigs in factory farms throughout the UK.

Dragons' Den star Deborah Meaden, who narrates the investigation film, said: *"It is abysmal that animals are still being raised in such barbaric and outdated systems here in the UK. Higher-welfare, cage-free systems are viable, making the use of cruel cages in farming totally unnecessary. It's time to stop this cruelty. It's time to End the Cage Age."*

Sow stalls have been banned in the UK since 1999, however farrowing crates are widely used. Over half of UK sows (more than 250,000) are confined in these cruel cages for weeks at a time, forced to feed their piglets through bars. They are unable to perform the most basic of behaviours such as walking or turning around, let alone building a nest for their young or foraging for food.

*"Our investigation reveals the misery caused by caging farm animals,"* explained Natasha Smith, Campaigns Manager at Compassion in World Farming. *"This is the reality for thousands of intelligent, sensitive mother pigs.*

*"Many consumers are completely unaware that this cruelty goes on behind closed doors and are unwittingly supporting these inhumane systems when shopping for pork products.*

*"Britain prides itself on its high animal welfare standards, but the terrible conditions in which many pigs are born are a stain on the country's reputation. It's plain to see this treatment is wrong. So, why are farrowing crates still legal in Britain today, when many farmers have proven it is possible to adopt higher-welfare outdoor or indoor free-farrowing systems?"*

Compassion is calling on the Government to bring about an end to the cage age and to usher in a new era in farming of which Britain can be truly proud.

To support the Compassion's End the Cage Age campaign please visit  
[www.ciwf.org.uk/endcages](http://www.ciwf.org.uk/endcages)

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Investigation images and footage can be downloaded [here](#).

For more information please email [mediateam@ciwf.org.uk](mailto:mediateam@ciwf.org.uk) or call 01483 541 886

**Notes to editors:**

1. Compassion in World Farming was founded in 1967 by a British dairy farmer who became horrified at the development of intensive factory farming. Today Compassion is the leading farm animal welfare organisation dedicated to ending factory farming and achieving humane and sustainable food. With headquarters in the UK, we have offices across Europe, in the US, China and South Africa.
2. To find out more about Compassion in World Farming visit: [www.ciwf.org](http://www.ciwf.org)
3. *“The scenes laid before me were extremely harrowing, leaving indelible images of misery in my mind. Looking through the barn window at row upon row of cages, was like watching a horror film. Cages are barbaric and prevent these intelligent creatures carrying out their natural behaviours - to me this is the very essence of cruelty. Many of the pigs and piglets had wounds on their bodies, faces, and legs, from being confined in these harsh, cramped conditions. The suffering inflicted upon these animals was immense and undeniable.”* Said one of Compassion in World Farming's investigators.