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Birmingham street art stunt highlights misleading labelling of meat and dairy products



Banksy style artwork in Birmingham paints a picture of foggy food labelling in UK

A street art stunt by leading farm animal welfare charity, Compassion in World Farming, has shined a light on the need for clear and honest labelling on meat and dairy products.

“This week, there has been widespread speculation about the true origins of a rumoured Banksy in Birmingham, which features a pig caged in an upturned shopping trolley,” said Natasha Smith, UK Campaign Manager at Compassion in World Farming.

Despite speculation, the artwork was not created by the renowned graffiti artist, but was actually part of Compassion’s Honest Labelling campaign.

“We commissioned this stunt to show how easy it is to make assumptions when things aren’t clearly labelled – whether a piece of art, or a pint of milk,” Natasha explained.

“From looking at many meat and dairy labels, it can be almost impossible to know the level of welfare that the animal has experienced – just as it was almost impossible for people to know whether the Birmingham street art was really a Banksy.”

There are currently no labelling laws in place to show how animals farmed for meat and dairy were reared. With more than 70% of the animals raised in the UK each year being factory farmed, shoppers are often misled and could be buying intensively farmed meat and dairy products without realising it.

Labels on intensively reared products frequently display misleading images of rolling landscapes and happy animals, suggesting animals have been farmed outdoors, when in reality the livestock are crammed into barren cages, kept indoors all their lives, or kept in such close confinement that they are unable to express their natural behaviours. Generic, meaningless phrases are brandished across many factory farmed food packets, such as ‘farm fresh’ and ‘all natural’, when in fact more appropriate slogans would be ‘raised in confinement’ or ‘grown quickly, without access to the outdoors’.

Natasha continued: *“Honest labelling empowers consumers, is fairer to farmers, beneficial for retailers and – most importantly – improves the lives of millions of animals each year.”*

Compassion is calling on the UK Government to introduce mandatory method of production labelling for all meat and dairy products. To support the Compassion’s Honest Labelling campaign please visit www.ciwf.org.uk/our-campaigns/honest-labelling

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For more information and images please email 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