

**My submission will attempt to illustrate that Bill C-205 is an attempt by the government to support an industry that attempts to hide atrocities committed against animals in Canada.**

**Food safety**

As a vegan of over 25 years, I absolutely believe that animals should not be deemed “food”. They are sentient beings who are unjustly used and abused by an archaic system that needs major reform.

We need the government to protect the health of their population. When you realize that 3 in 4 zoonotic diseases come from the use and abuse of animals, THAT should be the consideration. When you realize that a plant based diet mitigates many of the chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke and some cancers THAT should be the focus.

Good progress was made on Canada Food Guide. Let's enforce a complete transition to plant-based proteins. I would ask that the committee members and others within government explore the many vegan options currently available – this website is the perfect guide: [www.Challenge22.com](http://www.Challenge22.com)

**Farmer Safety**

This has been a major consideration of Bill C-205. Workers are contracting covid-19 in meat packing plants, and farmers - or better described as factory workers - work in extremely unsafe conditions - in barns that have minimal fire precautions, and in disgusting working conditions, where the air is thick with ammonia and where maggots, rats and feces are ever present. I've witnessed these conditions personally – first at Adare Pork in Ontario, where I reported the substandard conditions to the fire marshall, to the fire safety authority and to the then operating OSPCA – after witnessing a pregnant pig with a massive prolapse. At Porgreg Pork in Quebec we witnessed pools of urine and feces, caked on the cages and the floor. We witnessed

electrical panels thick with cobwebs and dust – combined with minimal fire precautions, an absolute disaster waiting to happen. These were also viewed by the government inspectors we reported the conditions to – their report is also attached, after being released and commented upon by a prominent Quebec veterinary doctor – copied to the end of my submission. Absolutely sickening conditions.

**Animal Protection Zones**

Bill C-205 will likely want to create so called animal protection zones, similar to Bill 156 in Ontario – I'm incredulous that slaughterhouses are included. Farms are included too, but they are little more than metal buildings that intensively confine thousands of animals in conditions the public would be horrified to see.

**Citizen Reporting**

Wouldn't it be better to let concerned citizens associated with organizations such as the Save Movement - <https://thesavemovement.org> - witness animals arriving at slaughterhouses, to have a citizen-led reporting process to inform the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)? I've personally reported abject conditions during the oppressive heat of summer where pigs were suffering, and also reported huge abscesses visible on pigs, as well as other injuries. In Ontario, Regan Russell, a peaceful citizen, died under the wheels of a slaughterhouse truck full of pigs. She was at the gates of Fearmans Slaughterhouse on June 19<sup>th</sup> 2020, two days after Bill 156 in Ontario was given Royal Approval.

**Unconstitutional**

Lawyers agree that ag gag Bill 156 in Ontario is unconstitutional. Animal Justice presented to the committee hearings on Bill 156, as did I and many other animal rights organizations. Animal Justice will be challenging the bill in court.

Similar ag-gag laws have been struck down in the USA. This ag gag bill will be challenged in court and will be struck down. I really do think this is a complete waste of public tax money.

**Standard Practices and the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC)**

We know that animal agriculture needs to hide many of their standard practices on animals from the public, who would be horrified to see female adult pigs in gestation crates so small that they literally cannot turn around. These standards are governed by the NFACC - <https://www.nfacc.ca> - an industry led body that do not seem to be interested when their guidelines are broken. I've personally phoned and spoken with a manager at the NFACC, and described the horrors I've witnessed at Porgreg and been told they weren't interested in any formal submission.

The NFACC has a dreadful history – for example:

**Gestation crates**

“The end of gestation crates in Canada was scheduled for 2024. Now, it's 2029. In 2014, the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) updated their industry guidelines for pig welfare and recommended that the pork industry end the use of gestation crates (or sow stalls) by 2024. This statement is taken from NFACC's website under the heading, What the science says: There are scientifically supported negative welfare aspects of stalls. First, they limit the sows' freedom of movement. Second, they limit the sows' ability to exhibit natural behaviors. These two conditions are now commonly accepted in the scientific community as essential elements of sound welfare practices. <https://factoryfarmcollective.ca/the-end-of-gestation-crates-in-canada-was-scheduled-for-2024-now-its-2029/> were to be abolished

**Substandard Conditions for Canadian “food” animals**

In Porgreg, I witnessed a huge room full of gestation cages which didn't even have any food troughs – the pigs had to lick their food off a concrete floor... in the same space they would urinate and defecate. They were caged in gestation crates so they literally couldn't turn around.

I'm so disappointed by the Canadian government, and the committee discussions thus far on Bill C-205 – especially where accusations are made against the Porgreg

activists, which have not yet been tested in the court of law. The government is thus enabling the deceit shown by those who profit in the animal agriculture system.

**Biosecurity**

Relevant here is the latest report by Animal Justice: New Report Questions Biosecurity as Justification for Ag Gag Laws...described here <https://animaljustice.ca/blog/new-report-questions-biosecurity-as-justification-for-ag-gag-laws> ...and available at <https://animaljustice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Disease-Outbreaks-Biosecurity-Failures-on-Canadian-Farms-May-202021.pdf>

Animal Justice recommends that government action to address biosecurity should focus on addressing the gaps and failures that have historically caused disease outbreaks. Ag gag laws that harshly punish whistleblowers and other citizens concerned about animal welfare are a distraction from the true biosecurity threats in the animal agriculture system.

**Government Inspection of Porgreg**

The following link is a damning report by the Quebec Government MAPAQ following an inspection at Porgreg, after I and other witnesses reported the conditions inside. [https://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/MinisterePortail/Acces\\_information/Demandes\\_acces/2021/DO\\_demande\\_acces\\_2021-05-07-001\\_MAPAQ.pdf](https://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/MinisterePortail/Acces_information/Demandes_acces/2021/DO_demande_acces_2021-05-07-001_MAPAQ.pdf)

This report was also made publicly (I used google translate as the original was in French)



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Occupation de la porcherie Porgreg, décembre 2019. Crédit photo: Shay Lee

## Rapport ministériel accablant pour la porcherie infiltrée par des activistes pour la protection animale

May 27, 2021 • 0 Likes • 0 Comments

An article published today (May 26, 2021) following a report by La Semaine Verte (Radio-Canada) makes revelations that will fuel the debate on the adoption of ag-gag laws, these gag laws which aim to muzzle (by criminalizing) whistleblowers who infiltrate (clandestinely or under cover of employment) into farms and slaughterhouses in order to document the animal mistreatment inherent in the agri-food industry:

<https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1795985/porcherie-porgreg-militants-antispecistes-rapport-accablant-mapaq>

Following the intrusion of animal protection activists in a pigsty near Saint-Hyacinthe (Quebec, Canada), the agro-food technopole of Quebec, in December 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food du Québec (MAPAQ) produced a damning, albeit underestimating, report of the horrors reported by anti-species activists who took part in the action:

[https://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/MinisterePortail/Acces\\_informatio n/Demandes\\_acces/2021/DO\\_demande\\_acces\\_2021-05-07-001\\_MAPAQ.pdf](https://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/MinisterePortail/Acces_informatio n/Demandes_acces/2021/DO_demande_acces_2021-05-07-001_MAPAQ.pdf)

Agriculture, Pêcheries  
et Alimentation

Québec



Sous-Ministériat à la santé animale et à  
l'inspection des aliments

RAPPORT D'INSPECTION

Date: 2019-12-16

Heure d'arrivée: 13:30

Numéro du rapport d'inspection: 3176087

Raison de la visite: visite de plainte (04)

Exploitant: LES PORGREG INC.

Établissement: Sans objet

Bannière: Sans objet

Responsable:

Adresse de l'établissement: 8795 CHEMIN RAPIDE-PLAT SUD, SAINT-HYACINTHE, J2R2A6

Numéro de dossier:

Numéro spécifique: Sans objet

Loi sur le bien-être et la sécurité de l'animal

ÉVALUATION DE LA SÉCURITÉ ET DU BIEN-ÊTRE DES ANIMAUX		
No	Règle(s)	Constation de non-conformité(s) et action(s) exécutée(s)
1	Donner les soins de santé exigés par l'état des animaux, y compris l'euthanasie s'il y a lieu.	Non-Conforme / Animal moribond / Porcins / Une truie dans un parc de 5 truies.
2	Offrir un espace suffisant pour que tous les animaux puissent se coucher simultanément à l'abri et au sec, selon les règles généralement reconnues.	Non-Conforme / Densité d'animaux trop élevée / Porcelets de la pouponnière à leur dernière semaine souillent leur parc. Non-Conforme / Densité d'animaux trop élevée / Des parcs de 20 porcs à l'engrais qui atteignent un certain poids souillent le parc en entier.
3	Ventiler adéquatement les bâtiments en tenant compte des conditions climatiques et des besoins de l'espèce animale	Non-Conforme / Ventilation inappropriée / Les gros porcelets de la pouponnière. Non-Conforme / Ventilation inappropriée / Les porcs à l'engrais d'un certain poids et à 20 par parc.
4	Contrôler de manière adéquate les insectes et les animaux nuisibles.	Non-Conforme / Infestation d'insectes ou d'animaux nuisibles / Présence de mouches dans les sections de mise-bas à partir de l'âge de 7 à 10 jours des porcelets.
5	Aménager une aire de repos propre et sèche susceptible d'accueillir tous les animaux en même temps.	Non-Conforme / Accumulation de fumier / Quelques parcs en engraissement de 20 porcs.

This intrusion triggered (or rather precipitated) a reaction from the agri-food industry, which jumped at the opportunity to push for the passage of a gag bill intended to prevent documenting existing animal abuse. behind its walls. The biggest argument put forward to



justify this bill is that the biosecurity and the "welfare" of farm animals must be preserved. Judging by what was seen in this pigsty, both by activists and by MAPAQ inspectors a few days later, biosecurity did not need activists to be threatened, nor did "well-being". animal.



The reactions from people in the industry are interesting. In a report released a few weeks ago (when the MAPAQ report was not available) on the Rad channel (of Radio-Canada), David Duval, the president of Quebec pig farmers, said in an interview (video from 7 min 20 s): "... me if someone had called me and told me ah we find that it is not correct what is being done on this farm -There, can you verify, I would never have said no, I would have immediately said yes, we take that seriously. Immediately we send a team, independent veterinarians, independent technicians so that they can validate ...".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcM5EOZxff8&list=PLdQzHRpOzSu3mwzKR3GzwTmBsPzQ3fJrm&index=3>

<https://www.facebook.com/jeanjacques.konaboun/posts/10159264886636060>

What Mr. Duval ignores is that to make this kind of report, it would still have been necessary to have knowledge of the unacceptable living conditions of animal beings in the pigsty, solid evidence. However, currently, the acquisition of such evidence is quite simply impossible without entering (clandestinely or under cover of a job) in the buildings to film, since the agri-food industry has very hermetic walls and will never disclose any information. itself, spontaneously, the animal abuse that occurs systemically there.

Then, when questioned in today's report, Mr. Duval said that "... we are in a society that has established bodies that govern breeding standards. If some activists believe that the regulations are not being respected, it is to these bodies that they should turn ...". Thus, not only does he suddenly absolve the agri-food industry of responsibility for the mistreatment of farm animal beings by placing it on the "bodies which govern breeding standards", but in addition he concedes in a hint that standards were not met at Porgreg, as indicated in the MAPAQ report.

It is interesting to see the reaction of one of the shareholders at Porgreg, Maxime Grégoire, when he was contacted as part of the La Semaine Verte report: he refused to comment by simply saying "... 'will not embark on this subject with you ...". It is easy to understand his silence.

The food industry has rushed at the opportunity represented by the Porgreg affair in order to pass as quickly as possible a preventive and repressive measure against the actions to expose the animal abuse it contains. However, in its rush to muzzle whistleblowers once and for all with a legal sledgehammer, has the industry simply failed? Following the unveiling of the MAPAQ report, which underestimates the observations of anti-species activists who infiltrated Porgreg's pigsty, it is legitimate to wonder if the intrusion into Porgreg was really the best example to take to pressure the adoption of an ag-gag law supposed to preserve the "biosecurity" and "well-being" of farm animal beings, and if this report does not just demonstrate the absolute even better need for whistleblowers. It's a safe bet that the Porgreg case is not the last to make this indisputable demo.





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Porgreg:



### **Summary**

Food safety, Farmer safety, bio-security are currently under threat in Canada... but not from whistleblowers. The industry seems to have carte blanche to govern itself with little opportunity for recourse against the abuses of animals that are routinely exposed.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

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