

Poll Finds Widespread Opposition to Cruel Veal Production in NJ; Four of Five NJ Citizens Consider Veal Industry Practices "Unacceptable"

April 23, 2002 - A Zogby International poll completed in April, 2002 found that four out of five likely voters in New Jersey are opposed to methods used in the production of veal. Eighty-five percent say it is unacceptable to tether calves in crates for their entire lives, and eighty percent say it is unacceptable to feed calves a deficient diet.

To produce veal, baby calves are taken from their mothers and tethered by the neck in crates that are just two-feet-wide. They can not walk, turn around, or even lie down comfortably, and this is how they spend their entire lives. The calves are fed an all liquid diet, which is deficient in iron and fiber in order to produce anemia and the pale-colored meat sold as veal. According to Gene Bauston, President of Farm Sanctuary, "The production of crated, anemic veal is inherently cruel, and it should be banned in the United States as it has been in other countries."

Inhumane methods used to produce veal have been banned across Europe, and New Jersey will be the first to prohibit cruel veal production in the United States if legislation introduced by Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg passes. The Weinberg bill (A 1948) requires veal calves to have at least enough space to turn around, and a diet that provides the animals' basic nutritional needs. It is supported by humane organizations, businesses, and farmers, and it is supported by four out of five New Jersey citizens, according to Zogby's poll.

Widespread aversion to inhumane veal production in the United States has led to a precipitous drop in veal consumption — from three pounds per person in the 1970's to less than one pound per person today. In New Jersey, over 30 restaurants have pledged not to serve crated, anemic veal, and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture has received roughly 30,000 letters urging that it prohibit cruel farming practices.