

## Civil disobedience highlights factory farming cruelty

### New Zealand Open Rescue

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New Zealand Open Rescue member John Darroch has today began an occupation of a pig farm near Cambridge, locking himself to a silo on the farm. Darroch is taking this action to draw attention to the cruelty inherent in factory farming. Supporters with banners, placards and pig costumes are also outside the farm. Darroch is prepared to stay in his position occupying the factory farm for up to two days.

Darroch says, "Over the past month I have been in several pig farms in the Waikato. What I have seen is both shocking and sadly typical of factory farms in New Zealand.

"It was heartbreaking to see sows who had just given birth. They were completely unable to carry out any of their natural behaviors and could do no more than stare as we walked around. These mother pigs would never be able to build a nest for their young or nurse them as they wanted.

"Today's action is not aimed at this particular farm, which is acting lawfully. It is aimed at an industry which is inherently cruel, and a government which refuses to act."

New Zealand Open Rescue believes the new draft Code of Welfare for pigs is inadequate. Sows can still be confined in crates for their entire lives until 2013, limited to 20 weeks by 2013 and 10 weeks 2018. When not in crates pigs will still be unable to enjoy life outdoors - sows are typically confined in barren concrete group housing while their piglets are confined in concrete fattening pens.

"Even in the best case scenario proposed to be implemented in 2018 sows can still be confined in crates for 10 weeks per year. The rest of their life is likely to be in barren concrete group housing which isn't much better. NAWAC's previous history in ignoring public submissions gives me little faith that the situation will improve" says Darroch.

New Zealand Open Rescue wishes to put pressure on Minister of Agriculture David Carter to fix up the loopholes in the Animal Welfare Act which allow Codes of Welfare to be implemented that do not meet the basic principles of the Act.