

**Pig protestor in court after civil disobedience against cruel farming practices**  
**New Zealand Open Rescue**  
**18/08/2010**

New Zealand Open Rescue activist John Darroch, will appear in Hamilton District Court at 10am tomorrow defending charges after chaining himself to a piggery in Roto-O-Rangi near Cambridge earlier this year. Darroch is charged with trespass and unlawfully being in a building.

Darroch chained himself to a 6-m tall silo on the Roto-O-Rangi piggery in protest against legalised cruelty within the New Zealand pork industry. Darroch was prepared to occupy the farm for up to two days and nights but was cut free by police after a day's occupation.

The action was timed with a government review of the Code of Welfare that regulates how pigs are farmed. A Colmar Brunton Survey carried out late last year showed that 77% of New Zealanders want a ban on sow stalls and farrowing crates, yet the Pork Board has consistently refused to change cruel farming practices.

Darroch says, "A Levin piggery owned by ex-Pork Board member Colin Kay was recently exposed for the third time by New Zealand Open Rescue. This is the same farm that shocked former pork industry frontman Mike King. We couldn't believe that despite the public outrage, conditions at this piggery were actually worse.

"We have since inspected other piggeries across the country, including a facility at Hawera, and we have found consistently horrific conditions".

New Zealand Open Rescue would like to follow up at the Roto-O-Rangi piggery and see if conditions there have changed, however the Pork Board is working to ensure that doesn't happen.

Darroch says, "A private investigation firm was used to track down the homes and workplaces of a number of our members and serve them trespass notices to prevent them from re-entering the Roto-O-Rangi piggery. Clearly the Pork Board prefers to have their farms hidden behind closed doors.

"Our legislation is failing these animals. What will it take to change this industry? How much more legalised cruelty do we need to expose before the Pork Board and the government finally act to clean up their mess?"

Recently the Tasmanian government announced a ban on sow stalls. Australia's largest pork producer, Riverlea, has banned the use of sow stalls and the Australian supermarket chain Coles will no longer sell pork from pigs raised in sow stalls. Open Rescue questions why the New Zealand pork industry is falling so far behind.

"The final draft Code of Welfare for Pigs will be before the Minister of Agriculture David Carter in October. We would like to see some concrete changes for pigs in the new Code but we are not hopeful. The Pork Board puts economics first and refuses to change despite public outrage.

"We will continue to expose the pork industry and carry out non-violent civil disobedience as long as our animal welfare legislation is nothing more than a regulatory facade" concludes Darroch.

Open Rescue will hold a highly visual protest outside the court today with activists dressed in pig costumes. John Darroch will be available for comment.

**ENDS**

John Darroch 021 1113210

**Notes:**

1. The protest outside Hamilton District Court will commence at 9am.
2. Hamilton District Court, 116 Anglesea Street, Hamilton.
3. Video footage and photographs of the latest piggery investigation at Hawera available on request.