



Benefits for Farmers and Farm Workers

This ballot measure would lead to higher-quality jobs in agriculture and decreased unemployment in rural areas.

Better Jobs

On many corporate factory farms, hens, pigs, and calves are locked in cages so small they're rendered virtually immobile for their whole lives. Workers at these facilities often talk about the emotional toll it takes to witness and be a party to this constant cruelty. Proposition 12 would ensure that farm animals are given cage-free conditions and would also establish a retail standard so that meat and eggs sold in the state meet this modest requirement. Farmers and workers that have already made this switch attest to better working conditions.

A pork industry website notes:

"Stockpeople often find more enjoyment and job satisfaction when working with sows in groups [rather than crates]. They have opportunities for positive interaction with animals, and to observe individual differences. Watching sow behavior in a group pen can provide more information to evaluate sow health and well-being."

More Jobs and Higher Wages

While cage and cage-free facilities have fairly comparable production costs, cage-free farms often mean more employees and more skilled staff who are actually familiar with animal husbandry. Consumer Affairs says the increasing demand for cage-free products could very well be "a bonanza for rural America." Officials in Missouri, for example, estimate that the trend towards smaller, cage-free farms would "translate into thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in sales for Missouri."

Common Opponents

A primary opponent of the ballot campaign is Berman and Co., a PR firm that represents wealthy industries and campaigns against Mothers Against Drunk Driving (for its liquor industry clients), Center for Science in the Public Interest (for its food industry clients), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (for its tobacco industry clients).

Berman and Co.'s agribusiness clients oppose efforts to provide legal protection to prevent cruelty to farm animals and better working conditions for workers, which is why this firm works to prevent ballot measures like this one from passing.

Another opponent is Forrest Lucas, a Midwestern oil and agribusiness tycoon who is hostile to any protections for animals on factory farms or puppy mills. The co-owner of Lucas' oil company, his wife, posted racist comments on Facebook complaining that she's "sick and tired of minorities running our country." Lucas has even opposed and spent money against a successful ballot measure that simply upgraded penalties for those who torture pets.

Future of Agriculture

Consumers and voters are increasingly rejecting the factory farm system in favor of more responsible farms that pay workers a living wage and treat employees, animals, and the environment with basic decency. That's why polling shows 72% of California residents support Prop 12.

Passing this proposition will be a major step forward for consumers, workers, and animals alike.