

Workers caught using bodies of pigs and sheep as punching bags at major Victorian slaughterhouse



Ineffective and painful stunning causes suffering to sheep, pigs, goats and cows.

- Hidden cameras captured workers at Gathercole's Wangaratta slaughterhouse using the bodies of sheep and pigs as punching bags, hitting them as they hang suspended on the shackle line, or as they are pulled onto the kill table to have their throat slit.
- Footage also shows ineffective stunning of pigs, sheep, goats and cows who are shot or electrocuted multiple times as they struggle, before their throats are slit.
- Gathercole's is the 13th slaughterhouse exposed by Farm Transparency Project in the past year, as part of a campaign to reveal the reality of Australian animal slaughter.

Photos and footage: <https://www.farmtransparency.org/facilities/59c0f-gathercoles-wangaratta-abattoir>

New hidden camera footage captured between January and February this year has revealed workers at a major Victorian slaughterhouse hitting and punching stunned animals, and even using the bodies of sheep and pigs as punching bags as they hung suspended on the shackle line, slowly bleeding out. Some pigs were seen moving and gasping for air seconds before they were tipped into a tank of scalding water, while workers watched on, occasionally dancing and laughing with each other.

Sheep, pigs and goats are seen being stabbed with electric stunners multiple times as they try to escape, some even managing to leap onto the killing table as workers hold them down. Cameras also capture cows being shot in the head up to four times before they collapse.

The footage was captured by Farm Transparency Project at Gathercole's Wangaratta slaughterhouse in northeast Victoria. The group used covert cameras to secretly record workers as they killed pigs, goats, sheep and cows.

Farm Transparency Project's Executive Director, Chris Delforce, says that while deeply disturbing, the violence displayed by workers at Wangaratta was not uncommon.

"In the past year, we have investigated 13 Australian slaughterhouses and seen truly shocking levels of cruelty and brutality shown to animals, from week-old bobby calves to intelligent pigs. It's resoundingly clear to us that any industry that profits from the confinement and slaughter of animals will create a culture where brutality is normalised and compassion is discouraged."

"Workers using the bodies of animals as punching bags, kicking, throwing and mutilating their severed heads, and causing them immeasurable suffering during handling and stunning, is something that no Australian wants to see. Yet, this isn't the first time or the first facility where we've seen any of these behaviours."

"Every animal who is killed in a slaughterhouse experiences fear and pain. For every one, their life is taken from them years or sometimes decades before they would otherwise have died. There is no way to do this humanely. By exposing this footage we want to encourage a national conversation about whether any of this violence and brutality is actually necessary."