

Pride of Britain [noun].

1. TV awards show. 2. Hopeful, uplifting, inspirational and joyful.



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PRIDE OF BRITAIN

AWARDS 2025 **Mirror** P&O CRUISES



Day-old chicks are shredded alive in grinder

FLUFFY yellow live day-old chicks are thrown into industrial grinders - surplus to requirement - new undercover footage shows.

The scenes – rarely seen – were obtained by the French animal welfare group L214 and show the slaughter on a mass scale – millions of chicks culled simply because they cannot lay eggs and are not suitable for meat production. Worryingly, this cruelty could also be exported to the UK.

Once they reach the end of a conveyor belt, the footage appears to show chicks being shredded alive in a grinder. Others appear to endure additional cruelty from an operator who crushes them with a broom and throws them into the grinder like balls.

L214 has filed a complaint for serious ill-treatment of animals, which is currently under review.

Every year in the UK, 40-45 million day-old male chicks are killed – usually by gassing. This wasteful and controversial process is called hatch and dispatch and a campaign to switch to new technology is being lobbied for in Parliament to avoid these chicks having a brief life and a pointless death.

Jenny Canham from the Vegetarian Society, which is leading the campaign to ban culling in the UK, said: “Regarded as waste by the industry, these chicks experience only a brief and bewildering life before being discarded – a practice that is both cruel and unnatural, and fundamentally incompatible with the ‘Five Freedoms’ that underpin animal welfare.”

The footage appears to show chicks being subjected to maceration, a method involving a mechanical apparatus that instantly kills the chicks using either rapidly rotating blades or a roller type device. L214 has filed a legal complaint

with the public prosecutor of the Niort judicial court against the hatchery. The owners condemned the footage calling it “shocking and absolutely contrary to our company’s values”.

Chick grinding has been banned in France since January 2023 and replaced by in-ovo sexing – which allows producers to determine the sex of a chick as early as day nine of incubation. But this only applies in the egg-laying industry and does not apply to the meat industry or where eggs are used for processed foods, with some items on sale in the UK.

Currently, “cull-free” eggs are not available in the UK apart from a handful of small-scale farm shops. A poll found 74% of Brits support ending the cull with this system – and would pay more. The Government’s Animal Welfare Committee analysis estimated it would equate to just 1p per egg.

More than 30 cross-party MPs have written to the Government asking it to ban “the unnecessary and inhumane killing of male chicks”.

Jenny added: “The UK now has a vital opportunity to end routine male chick culling through the forthcoming animal welfare strategy. This practice remains one of the most extreme forms of animal suffering still carried out on a mass scale and allowed under UK law. If we fail to ban male chick culling and transition to in-ovo sexing technology, can we truly continue to call ourselves leaders in animal welfare?”

DEFRA said: “We are carefully considering the issue of routine male chick culling.” The British Egg Industry Council said: “While maceration may be legal in other countries, the British egg industry does not support its use and any mistreatment of chicks is unacceptable.”

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