# Cranswick faces £200 million fallout after undercover footage exposes severe piglet abuse



Cranswick has expressed its profound dismay following the release of shocking undercover footage that revealed severe breaches of animal welfare standards at one of its Lincolnshire farms. The disturbing images, which surfaced through an exposé conducted by Animal Justice Project, depict newborn piglets being violently swung by their legs and slammed onto concrete surfaces. Further evidence captured in the footage showed routine mutilations, botched killings, and a significant level of neglect at Northmoor Farm.

The fallout was immediate and severe, with Cranswick's share price plummeting by approximately £200 million as major UK supermarkets, including Tesco and Morrisons, promptly suspended their supply contracts with the farm. The company insisted that the practices shown in the video do not reflect its overall commitment to animal welfare and the operational standards it demands. Crucially, these incidents occurred shortly after Cranswick had acquired Elsham Linc, the firm responsible for the management of Northmoor Farm.

In the wake of this incident, Cranswick stated it had launched a comprehensive internal investigation. A spokesperson reiterated the company's emphasis on animal welfare, highlighting a long-standing commitment to improving standards through investments in new systems such as flexible farrowing for pigs and reduced stocking densities for chickens. Nevertheless, the company acknowledged the distressing nature of the footage, noting that it highlighted unacceptable handling practices within the farming operation. “The welfare of the animals we rear is of the utmost importance,” the representative asserted, as they outlined the immediate suspension of all staff involved and the initiation of disciplinary processes.

The legal ramifications of such practices are substantial. Barrister Ayesha Smart has filed a formal complaint with Trading Standards, citing violations of the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015, alongside breaches of consumer law. “The use of blunt force trauma to kill piglets is banned,” Smart stated, adding that the footage indicates a "routinely used" and unlawful practice that demands urgent attention.

Animal welfare concerns surrounding Cranswick are not isolated incidents; similar allegations have emerged from other facilities associated with the company. For instance, an undercover investigation at Bickmarsh Hall, a supplier to Cranswick, revealed pigs living in filthy conditions and suffering from injuries, leading to calls for improved industry standards. These findings prompted Red Tractor, the UK’s leading farm assurance scheme, to conduct inspections, which, despite concluding the farm met welfare standards, highlighted the need for enhanced compliance and scrutiny.

The recent footage and its repercussions underscore a troubling reality in the meat processing industry, where lapses in animal welfare standards can have widespread implications not only for the animals but also for the businesses involved. With public scrutiny on the rise, it remains to be seen how Cranswick and other companies in the sector will adapt and implement more rigorous welfare standards, both to restore consumer trust and to fulfil their ethical obligations.

As investigations continue and companies grapple with their moral and legal responsibilities, the incident serves as a stark reminder of the scrutiny facing the livestock industry and the urgent need for ongoing reform in animal care practices.

### Reference Map

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Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/cranswick-disappointed-at-shocking-animal-welfare-abuse-footage/704509.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/society-equity/uks-cranswick-tumbles-supermarkets-suspend-pork-supplies-lincolnshire-farm-2025-05-12/> - Cranswick's shares fell by approximately 9% after major UK supermarkets, including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, and Morrisons, suspended pork supplies from its North Moor Farm in Lincolnshire due to animal welfare concerns. The suspensions followed an exposé featuring footage of alleged animal abuse by farm workers. Cranswick responded by suspending the implicated team and launching an internal investigation, expressing deep disappointment over the welfare lapses and not setting a timeline for the investigation’s conclusion. The incident led to the biggest single-day percentage drop in Cranswick’s shares since March 2020.
3. <https://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2024-04-03/animal-rights-protesters-invade-pig-processing-factory> - Seven people were arrested after animal rights activists infiltrated a pig slaughterhouse operated by Cranswick Country Foods in Watton, Norfolk. The activists, led by Joey Carbstrong, exposed what they described as the 'horrifying truth inside an abattoir' by filming pigs being led into the chamber and slaughtered in various ways. The RSPCA launched an investigation into the facility, and the Humane Slaughter Association called for alternative, more humane methods to stun pigs, other than with carbon dioxide, to be found.
4. <https://sentientmedia.org/spy-cams-pork-mega-farm/> - An undercover investigation at Bickmarsh Hall, a pork mega-farm in Warwickshire, revealed pigs living in unclean conditions and suffering from injuries. The farm, a supplier to Cranswick Country Foods, markets pork to retailers including Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Asda, and Morrisons. The footage, captured over three months by Animal Justice Project, shows pigs in filthy pens, some unable to walk due to lameness. Red Tractor, the UK's certification scheme, conducted an unannounced inspection and found the farm in compliance with animal welfare standards but set specific requirements for future compliance.
5. <https://www.animaljusticeproject.com/post/video-scenes-of-pigs-in-filth-and-left-hours-to-die-on-farm-campaigners-say-reveal-a-rotten-industry> - Animal Justice Project released undercover footage from Bickmarsh Hall farm in Warwickshire, showing pigs living in filthy conditions and suffering from injuries. The farm, housing over 8,000 pigs, supplies pork to Cranswick Country Foods, which in turn supplies major supermarkets. The footage reveals pigs in squalid pens, some unable to walk due to lameness, and instances of cannibalism. The findings have been sent to Trading Standards and the Animal and Plant Health Agency, with calls for improved animal welfare standards in the industry.
6. <https://theecologist.org/2023/mar/18/farm-epitome-squalor> - Undercover footage from Bickmarsh Hall farm in Warwickshire, a supplier to Cranswick Country Foods, exposed pigs living in filthy, wet, bare concrete pens covered in their own urine and feces. The footage shows instances of rough handling, including hard kicking and slapping, and the use of an illegal electric goad. The farm, approved by Red Tractor, houses over 8,000 pigs in 46 sheds. Cranswick Country Foods stated that the unit was found to be operating to the required standard after an unannounced audit.
7. <https://theecologist.org/2024/dec/05/boar-mistreatment-revealed> - An undercover investigation by Animal Justice Project revealed mistreatment at a boar stud farm in Norfolk, which sells semen exclusively to Hermitage AI for distribution to pig farms across Britain, including those that supply Cranswick. The footage captures boars collapsing and enduring mistreatment, systemic neglect, and multiple breaches of welfare standards. Boars were subjected to regular verbal abuse, and staff struck boars over 300 times during the documented period, often using hard pipes, a pitchfork, and paddles.