

PETA and KFC

February 5, 2003

David Novak, Chair and CEO
Yum! Brands
1441 Gardiner Ln.
Louisville, KY 40213

3 pages via fax: 502-874-8567

Dear Mr. Novak,

I am writing to address additional misinformation that has been posted on KFC's Web site and action that needs to be taken to correct it immediately. On January 17, 2003—just one day after PETA's last letter addressing false and misleading statements posted by Yum! Brands (Yum) and KFC—KFC put on its Web site a misleading news release attacking PETA for using an outdated video and or comments made on MSNBC by Bruce Friedrich on January 7, 2003 (I'd point out that although the release is dated January 7, it was not posted until 10 days later, on the 17th). The release misrepresents both PETA's video and Mr. Friedrich's comments.

First, Mr. Richard Lobb, from the National Chicken Council (NCC), claims that the debeaking in our video represents an "outdated method." This is untrue, as anyone who reviews industry journals (or does a quick Web search) will know. In fact, as Mr. Lobb surely knows, electric debeakers remain standard in today's poultry industry and *there has been little change to the method of debeaking since it was developed 50 years ago*. These debeakers are widely available (e.g., from Lyon itself, at 619-216-3400, and many other companies) and are employed throughout the country and the world, and it is inconceivable that Mr. Lobb was not aware of this when he made his statement, which directly seeks to impugn PETA's credibility.

Furthermore, KFC's claim that it prohibits the debeaking of any chickens "sold in its restaurants" clearly implies that the company thinks that this is a practice to be avoided. It is inconsistent, then, to suggest, as KFC does in this release, that the method depicted in the video at KFCCruelty.com is outdated and that newer techniques for searing off the beaks of birds are now used. KFC is on the one hand trying to denounce the practice of debeaking and on the other it is trying to defend it. Clearly, KFC will say whatever it thinks will sound good to the public, but it will not do what it surely knows the public wants—take real



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steps to alleviate the grotesque suffering of the animals raised and killed for its restaurants. If KFC is concerned about its credibility, then it should implement comprehensive farmed animal welfare standards and stop lying to the media and public.

The release also misconstrues Mr. Friedrich's statement about when the footage was taken by falsely stating that his comments referred to the entire video. In fact, Mr. Friedrich's statements were made within the context of a discussion on gas killing as an alternative to the slaughter methods shown on the tape. He was not, as the KFC release falsely states, suggesting, during this or any other of the dozens of interviews that he has given on this campaign, that the entire video was shot within the last 18 months. It should be emphasized that while the video footage was shot at various times, each of the depictions it contains are current industry standard practices. Thus, taking Mr. Friedrich's statements out of context and representing them in a way that was not intended in order to gloss over and justify the cruel methods to which chickens raised for KFC are subjected is reprehensible.

A further disturbing aspect of this news release is its inclusion of another patently false statement by Mr. Lobb. The statement, which has also appeared in a NCC release, is that "PETA's objective is not to improve animal welfare ..." PETA has consistently demonstrated, both through its words and its actions, that it is, and always has been, committed to alleviating animal suffering, and this commitment has resulted in vast improvements for farmed animals. KFC, on the other hand, has offered only empty rhetoric, while continuing to be responsible for massive cruelty inflicted upon chickens. Rather than detailing PETA's efforts yet again, I am attaching a letter written to Mr. Lobb that addresses these dishonest comments.

Further false statements in KFC's release suggest that PETA will "say or do anything" to achieve a totally vegan society and that PETA's "campaigns must be seen in light of its willingness to bend or totally ignore the truth." This is simply not true. Everything that PETA states on KFCcruelty.com (and everywhere else) is absolutely true and completely verifiable. The information having to do with farmed animal welfare is based on the latest and best science, much of it published by the people on KFC's own farmed animal welfare advisory council.

On the other hand, KFC and Yum have consistently responded to PETA's exposure of their cruel practices not with reform, but with false and misleading statements, including some about the efforts of their own council, in what appears to be nothing but an effort to deflect attention from their own unethical practices. Over the past year, the American people have shown that they will not tolerate unscrupulous corporate leaders' duping them in an effort to cover up disreputable business practices. PETA will not tolerate it either.



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I would point out that your personal attacks against PETA are not only an improper reflection of the organization, but an irresponsible attempt to divert attention from the issue at hand, which is your failure to take meaningful action to alleviate the suffering of animals under your care. Inflicting suffering upon animals on a massive scale and making grossly false and misleading statements in order to hide the reality from the public is not only dishonest, but potentially unlawful. As was communicated in my last letter to you, if you do not take prompt steps to correct all your false statements, including removing all such statements from your Web site now and apologizing on the Web site for their inaccuracy, PETA will explore all legal remedies available to address the matter ourselves.

Sincerely,

Matthew Penzer
Legal Counsel

cc: Richard Lobb, National Chicken Council
Dr. Temple Grandin, Colorado State University
Dr. Ian Duncan, Dept. of Animal & Poultry Science, University of Guelph, Ontario
Dr. Joy Mench, Director of the Center for Animal Welfare, U. of Cal., Davis
Adele Douglass, Ex. Dir., Farm Animal Services, American Humane Association
Dr. Bruce Webster, The University of Georgia
Ellis Brunton, Senior VP of Science & Regulatory Affairs, Tyson Foods
Dr. Jim Ayres, Director of Research & Quality Assurance, Goldkist, Inc.
Dr. Joanne Plichta, Vice President, Quality Assurance
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