

New Study: CAFO Barn Fires Kill Millions of Farm Animals

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The Animal Welfare Institute recently completed a study finding that some 2.8 million farm animals died in 326 barn fires in the US over a five year period from 2013 to 2017. This included both barns on concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and barns on more traditional family farms. This 24-page report may be downloaded for free at: https://awionline.org/sites/default/files/publication/digital_download/FA-AWI-Barn-Fire-Report-2018.pdf

I did a similar study covering 2011 and 2012 (<https://kansas.sierraclub.org/pig-confinement-technologyrisks-deadly-fires/>) and came up with 27 fires killing over 1/2 million animals, but I surveyed only CAFO fires. In both studies egg factories made up the vast majority of losses, up to 1 million birds in one case. However my study finding, that 28,000 hogs died over two years, is consistent with the 71,260 hogs that perished over five years at sites in the AWI study.

This cruel fate of some farm animals is only one of several fundamental flaws in intensive confinement technology championed by Big AG. The others are the heavy use of antibiotics to quell disease, concentration of huge amounts of waste in one place that torments neighbors, and the inherent cruelty of preventing animals from practicing natural behaviors.

