



Dear 54th New Zealand Parliament, *Don't Let Farrowing Crates Become Forever*

Our organisations are appalled by the Government's decision to amend the Animal Welfare Act 1999 to allow farrowing crates indefinitely, just weeks before the ban on crates was due to take effect on 18 December 2025. Standards allowing crates have already been deemed unlawful and invalid by the High Court.

This move ignores strong public opposition, animal welfare science, the advice of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, and the High Court ruling. Since early 2023, animal welfare organisations have not been invited to consultation on the Code of Welfare for Pigs and associated regulations, which risks undermining public trust in the Government and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Minister Hoggard is proposing an amendment to the Animal Welfare Act itself, to be made at least partially under urgency. This is a highly unusual process, seemingly designed to avoid judicial oversight. Despite claims of public consultation, what was consulted on in 2022 was entirely different to what Minister Hoggard proposed on 1st October 2025. It is unacceptable to see decisions of this scale being made without transparency and public input.

Several countries have already banned farrowing crates including Sweden, Switzerland and Norway, and industry-led pledges not to build any new crates exist in the UK, Denmark and Finland. While other countries are moving away from these cruel systems, New Zealand is sliding backwards.

Sows are highly motivated to build nests for farrowing and piglet care which they are prevented from doing in a farrowing crate. All crates, including temporary crating, restrict almost all sows' normal behaviours, including mother-young bonding and the ability to turn around. Crates contribute to health issues, such as pressure sores and lameness, and negatively affect piglet welfare, with higher rates of stillbirths and poorer maternal care.

A ban on farrowing crates would have positioned New Zealand as a world leader in animal welfare. Allowing the indefinite use of farrowing crates is a significant step backward compared to what has previously been put to the public.

We urge the Government to reinstate its 2015 commitment to phasing out practices non-compliant with the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and to support farmers to transition to higher-welfare systems, instead of entrenching outdated and unlawful practices, that enshrine animal suffering.

