

Chicago Lifts Ban on Foie Gras



You know, I can understand the outrage of people who think that eating foie gras is evil. The animals are most definitely mistreated in the production of the product... where a tube is forced down the throat of a goose, and they are forced their body weight in corn, every day, to the point that their livers are enlarged 10 times their normal size. I can completely understand how, after knowing that, you'd choose not to eat this particular delicacy from our friends in France.

But then I'd also expect you to avoid just about every other meat product on the market, including eggs (where the hens are crammed so tightly in the laying racks in the farm/factory, that they usually lose all of their feathers, and their bodies get bruises all over it) and beef (where steers are hardened off on corn, a food their bodies aren't made to digest, causing all sorts of infection and diseases that the farmers need to pump them with medicines and antibiotics). And if you did choose to avoid those foods, then I can understand it, completely.

It's when you decide that I have to avoid those foods, even if I eat them at my peril, that is the flaw in logic. The key for being self-righteous in your beliefs is that "self" is just as important as "right" in the phrase. Your beliefs are yours. Don't try to force them on the rest of us.

And it's easy to see why the animal activists would pick foie gras as their beach-head into food policy. It's an obscure

product that only the fringiest of the fringe even cares about. There's no huge market for the stuff, so Big Industry isn't going to apply pressure to politicians that are thinking about enacting legislation limiting the consumption of it. Today, foie gras. Tomorrow...?

And while I do have some complaints about the way big Agro-Industry has changed the face of farming in the last 30 years, I prefer to think that there's more power, long term, in the pocketbook than there is in the lawbook. The ban on foie gras is a perfect example. Any law passed can be overturned. But if enough people rob the industry of the money it needs, that will surely force change. The problem is getting enough people motivated to participate in a boycott.

Anyway, [here's a brief news article](#) describing how Chicago came to its senses and overturned the 2-year-old ban on the delicacy. (For the record, I have sampled foie gras as part of a tasting menu at a ritzy restaurant and, pretty much like veal, I didn't find it appealing enough to justify the guilt associated with purchasing it.)