



中国羽绒工业协会

CHINA FEATHER AND DOWN INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION

A Protest For Untruthful Reporting in *Outside* Magazine

To *Outside* Magazine:

Recently, we have read that, Ms. Meaghen Brown, the assistant editor of *Outside* magazine, wrote an article titled “*Does Your Down Puffy Have a Brutal Backstory? -- New animal-welfare standards for down insulation aim to clean up a grisly business.*” This article was published on the website for *Outside* magazine on January 12th, 2015 and printed in the February edition of *Outside* magazine. We fully understand the original intent of Ms. Brown’s article, but several pieces of false information distort the true state of what is presented in her article. The judgment of her article, which has strong, negative emotional coloring inflicts a great harm to the image of China and even the global feather and down industry. We present the real facts and our opinion as below.

1. The False Information of Ms. Brown’s Article

(1) The 2nd Sentence of the 1st Paragraph:

“The feathers, sourced mainly from the soft undercoats of geese, were likely “live plucked”—a bloody process that critics say leaves the birds traumatized after they’re released to lay more eggs.”

(2) The 2nd and 3rd Sentences of the 2nd Paragraph:

“The global down industry includes everything from Chinese factory operations to subsistence farms in Hungary, all of which raise the animals for meat and live-pluck them to boost profits. Those farmers then sell the feathers (mostly from geese, but some from ducks) to a handful of suppliers, who in turn mix it all together and sell it to outdoor companies.”

2. The Real Facts

The feather and down raw material which serves as the filling material for down products, is mainly feather and down sourced from duck and goose. Feather and down are a byproduct of the food industry for duck and goose meat. Because of the large Chinese population and unique dietary habits, over 70% of the global down production comes from China.

(1) The Proportion of Duck Down and of Goose Down:

Of the total down production in China, duck down accounts for 90%, and 10% for goose down. The majority of Chinese people enjoy eating duck meat, and the growth period of duck is quite short, just about 40 days. Therefore, raising and slaughter can be done every day without seasonal interference. Conversely, the growth period of goose is quite long, about 5-6 months. Hatching can be done only once during spring. Fewer people enjoy eating goose meat. Therefore, the production of duck is much larger than that of goose.

(2) The Origin and Current Status of Live Plucking

a. Because of the short growth period, advanced large scale farming, and higher production rate, the price of duck down is much lower than that of goose down. As such, there is no live plucking during the process of duck breeding and slaughter.

b. Live plucking which is only suitable for rare and particular goose species, originated from old customs in eastern European countries. It aimed to help the goose moult during its moulting season. In 20th century, live plucking was introduced to China. However, because it goes against animal welfare and has high production cost, live plucking has never been commonly adopted by goose breeding farmers. Since 2009, aside from concerns raised by and supervision from animal protection organizations, China Feather and Down Industrial Association (CFDIA) proposed for “the refusal of live poultry products” within the industry. As a result, live plucking no longer has its foothold in the China down industry. Moreover, due to the increased labor cost and a higher death rate caused by live plucking no one is willing to do any business related to live plucking.

3. Our Position on This Issue and Requirements

CFDIA advocates the protection of animal welfare, opposes animal abuse, and leads the China feather and down industry to fulfill its social responsibilities. Hundreds of enterprises have made solemn promises since 2009 when we appealed them to sign the Non Live Plucked Products Guarantee and consciously resist the purchase, process or sale of live plucked products. We will also not permit any organization or individual to spread scary stories, misguide, or defame the down industry.

The article written by Ms. Meaghen Brown has distorted the facts and spread untruthful information stating that live plucking is common and has been widely adopted.

We strongly condemn and protest her irresponsible report! We require that *Outside* magazine explain Ms. Meaghen Brown’s article, take matter-of-fact action, and report the real facts in an objective and fair way. *Outside* magazine must also take corrective actions to eliminate the negative impact caused by her article as follows:

1. Apologize to China down industry through *Outside* magazine, *Outside* website, and other media.

2. Stop defaming the down industry, and report the current status of the down industry to the public objectively and fairly.

We reserve the right to pursue legal action if *Outside* magazine insists in propagating a wrongful opinion that continues to harm the China feather and down industry.

Waiting for your reply.



China Feather and Down Industrial Association
Yao Xiaoman, Chairwoman
February 13th, 2015