



2 March 2015

METRO Cash & Carry Ltd.
c/o Marina Stepinac, Member of the Board
Jankomir 31
10090 Zagreb
Croatia

Dear Mrs. Stepinac,

we have received information that you sell exotic and wild animal meat (bison, zebra, crocodile, bear and wild rabbit) in your stores. As an organization concerned with the protection of animals and their rights and also educating the public about veganism, food ethics and sustainable living, we are disgusted by the attitude of your company that it is acceptable to sell wild and exotic animal meat and request that you consider our justified response.

It is unacceptable that you are promoting and popularizing the consumption of meat from exotic species and wild animals. The food industry already exploits beyond measure and brutally treats billions of domestic animals. There is no need to add new species to the list of those that people already kill for food. Demand should not always be the criterion when assessing the acceptability of a business decision. According to that logic, you could also offer orangutan meat or dog meat, if there is a demand for it, which you will, we believe, recognize as an absurd idea.

There is no need to encourage hunting or the breeding of wild animals to obtain meat. The more widespread that the market for these kinds of meat products is, the easier it is for poachers to sell illegal meat because it is difficult to distinguish from legal meat. This can bring many species to the brink of extinction. The number of animals in the wild is in constant decline. In addition to that, such overhunting leads to negative selection of animal species.

Besides the very important issue of sustainability, hunting is cruel. A large percentage of animals that suffers injuries from firearms does not die quickly or painlessly. The surviving young without parents, if they have not become independent yet, await a slow and painful death from starvation or predation. Endangered species and even humans often 'accidentally' become casualties during a hunt. In addition to that, it is very important for all involved in the business with animals to become aware that they are living beings with needs, fully capable of feeling sadness and pain, just like you or any other living being, and that they have the right to life.

We also highlight that many studies designed, conducted and monitored to a very high standard have confirmed the absolute harmfulness of meat, dairy products and eggs to human health. Therefore, as an entrepreneur who cares about the health and well-being of your customers, you should encourage reducing the intake of animal products into the human body, and not the opposite.

Instead of products that are based on the killing of animals and the destruction of nature, why not target ecologically conscious consumers? It is unfair to ignore the needs of vegans and their positive contribution to the protection of nature and animals. We request that, in addition to the withdrawal of these contentious meat products from wild and exotic animal species, you consider increasing the offer of vegan products, such as vegetable cheese and soy meat, to the benefit of all citizens, animals and the environment.

Every year on industrial farms, over 60 billion animals are farmed and killed, which causes not only immense suffering of living beings and irreparable devastation of the environment but it also affects world hunger and human health. Therefore, the expansion of your meat offer even to include exotic species is highly reprehensible, shameful and shows complete indifference to humane values. We believe that it is not in your interest to represent your company in that way.

Croatia is a desirable tourist destination because of the high degree to which nature and authentic Croatian culture has been conserved. Tourists do not come to Croatia to eat zebra or crocodile meat. An increasing number of customers and tourists boycott stores and countries that are ruthless towards animals and that do not care about ecology and sustainable living. Taking into consideration all the cruelty and lack of ecological ethics that is behind the trade in meat from exotic species and wild animals, we believe that you will stop the continued import and sale of such meat at least.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Validzic
Animal Friends