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An eye-opening documentary surrounding the complexities of Australia's relationship with its beloved icon

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Viva!

SAVE THE KANGAROO

COVER PHOTO: RAY DREW

Viva!

SAVE THE KANGAROO



The Australian Government authorises the slaughter of millions of kangaroos every single year. It is the largest annual massacre of land-based wildlife on the planet.

Hunted at night in the vast outback, with powerful four-track vehicles and mesmerising search lights, the startled animals are shot, supposedly in the head, but many are in reality mis-shot and die a slow, agonising death.

Meat the facts...

- Due to the nature in which the animals are hunted many suffer horrendous injuries, escaping with blown off jaws, missing limbs or internal damage, only to die later.

- They are often termed a 'pest', yet research has shown that they rarely venture onto wheat fields and do not compete for grazing with sheep. Although accused of damaging the environment kangaroos instead assist by leaving small holes in the ground with their toenails that allow seeds, which fall into them, a greater chance of germination.



- Kangaroos are only inspected for disease after they have been killed. The unclean nature of killing on dirt (with bacteria, excrement and blood on the ground, as well as dirty transport trucks) means that many do not consider the meat safe to eat. Contamination is that much of a threat that the industry is advising its shooters to spray kangaroo carcasses with acetic acid in the field. However, Food Standards Australia New Zealand are not monitoring the extent of its use and have not prescribed a maximum limit.

- Independent testing of the meat has found dangerously high levels of salmonella and E.coli, allegedly due to numerous failures in basic hygiene within the industry. Although marketed as a so-called 'healthy alternative to red meats', kangaroo meat is in fact riddled with disease-inducing pathogens.

It's not just a bit of fun

Population estimates from 2017 put the number of kangaroos in Australia at just over 46.1 million; down by over 11 million since 2001. Worryingly a drop has been seen in all four species that are hunted. Yet still, over 6.9 million kangaroos are earmarked for slaughter in 2018. This figure takes no account of the hundreds of thousands of baby 'joey's', who are either left to die from starvation or are removed from their dead mother's pouches and clubbed to death with iron pipes.

