

NATHAN & JENNIFER WINOGRAD

July 13, 2011

Minh Tsai
Hodo Soy Beanery
2923 Adeline Street
Oakland, CA 94608

Dear Mr. Tsai,

We write a blog on vegan eating and took a much anticipated trip to your factory today to see how tofu is made. We brought our kids, who have their own vegan blog, with our son's assignment being what he learned at the tofu factory. We were very much looking forward to it, and expected it to be educational; but more than that, we expected it to be fun for all of us. It turned out to be the opposite. The moment we walked in the door, we were alarmed to see sticky glue traps lining the walls of your facility.

According to In Defense of Animals, a test that evaluated glue traps found that trapped mice struggling to free themselves would pull out their own hair, exposing bare, raw areas of skin. The mice broke or even bit off their own legs, and the glue caused their eyes to become badly irritated and scarred. After three to five hours in the glue traps, the mice defecated and urinated heavily because of their severe stress and fear, and quickly became covered with their own excrement. Animals whose faces become stuck in the glue slowly suffocate, and all trapped animals are subject to starvation and dehydration. It takes anywhere from three to five days for the mouse to finally die. This is nothing less than torture.

We certainly understand health department and Cal-OSHA requirements. But there are other ways to meet those requirements without resorting to such extreme cruelty. You can "rodent proof" the facility. You can use "humane" traps.

As we watched your video, it was very evident you have great love for your craft. And as we listened to the guide explain how your products are vegan and all the dishes served for us to taste are vegan, it appeared that you knew who your market was and you wanted to be sensitive to their love of animals. I explained to the kids that I would write to you because I believed that when presented with the issue in all its stark truth, you appeared to be a man of integrity and good sense, and I hoped, and expected, you would do the right thing. I told them that it was my hope that if I explained to you the degree of cruelty associated with the use of glue traps, you would want no part of them.

Would you take them out for good? Would you find a less painful and more humane way of meeting your legal obligations to "public health"? Would you send a message that we can find a way to live more in harmony with the other creatures who share our planet? Please do let us know that you will. Thank you Mr. Tsai. We very much look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,