

# DIRECT ACTION **DxE** EVERYWHERE

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## Investigation Finds Sick Turkey Chicks Among Litter Beetle and Larvae-Infested Corpses at Foster Farms

*Rescued Turkey Chick Had an Infection Called Omphalitis Caused by E. Coli*

[PHOTOS/VIDEO](#)

*Credit: Direct Action Everywhere (DxE)*



*A DxE investigator holds a dead turkey chick being eaten by beetle larvae inside a California Foster Farms turkey farm this year (Credit: Direct Action Everywhere)*

*NOVEMBER 10, BERKELEY, CA* - - In the midst of a nationwide turkey [shortage](#) caused by the avian influenza, [footage](#) has just been released showing the unsanitary conditions that help facilitate the spread of pandemics in modern poultry farms.

Investigators with the grassroots animal rights network [Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#) entered a Foster Farms turkey farm in California and documented dozens of dead turkey chicks littered across the floor of the barn, including chicks whose brains and eyes had been eaten out by insect larvae. There were also buckets of dead turkey chicks in the facility. Many chicks were collapsed on their backs and unable to right themselves, including one chick whose neck was bent so that her head was underneath her back. Investigators took this chick out of the farm to get veterinary care, but she continued to struggle to stand and passed away a few days after her rescue.

A [necropsy report](#) from UC Davis found that the rescued chick had a deadly yolk sac infection called omphalitis. The infection was caused by E. coli bacteria in the yolk sac, likely due to fecal contamination. E. coli infections cause approximately 265,000 illnesses and 100 deaths every year in the United States.

[Footage](#) from the farm shows large numbers of [litter beetles](#), also known as the lesser mealworm (*Alphitobius diaperinus*) which can be a vector for [avian influenza as well as E. coli, Newcastle disease, turkey coronavirus, and Marek's disease among others](#). It can also be a reservoir for [salmonella](#). This year, more than [50 million commercial and backyard birds](#) have been killed due to the avian influenza outbreak, which may soon become [the largest bird flu outbreak in history](#).

Foster Farms is the largest poultry producer in California. Earlier this month, the company [recalled](#) over 140,000 pounds of chicken patties due to plastic contamination.

“Consumers shouldn’t have to worry about plastic, E. coli from fecal contamination, or any of the concerning things routinely found in the flesh sold on grocery store shelves, and animals shouldn’t be subjected to filthy, dangerous conditions,” said DxE investigator Zoe Rosenberg. “I hope the current turkey shortage has lasting, and positive, impacts and we shift away from this violent industry altogether.”

Rosenberg, a student at UC Berkeley, openly shows her face in videos posted online where she investigates factory farms and rescues animals. The tactic, known as “open rescue,” has resulted in felony prosecutions for DxE activists. Rosenberg was arrested in 2021 for blockading the entrance to a Foster Farms slaughterhouse in Livingston following a [DxE investigation](#) that found birds routinely missed the electric bath meant to stun them before slaughter. This latest investigation comes on the heels of a historic court victory in which two Bay Area-based DxE activists were [acquitted](#) of felony charges for an investigation and rescue at Smithfield Foods, the world’s largest pork producer.

Paul Darwin Picklesimer, one of the acquitted activists, said, “I’m grateful to see more open rescues and investigations happening even as repression from the state and industry continues. The public has a right to know what’s happening in the animal exploitation industry and the animals have a right to be rescued.”

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*Investigators with [Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#) enter farms, slaughterhouses, and other facilities to document abuses, and to rescue sick and injured animals. DxE’s investigatory work has been featured in [The New York Times](#), [WIRED](#), and a [brutal mass pig killing exposé](#). DxE activists have been [subjected to FBI raids](#) and [felony prosecutions](#) for their investigative work. In 2022, DxE activists won the first [acquittal](#) in an open rescue case. DxE led the 2019 grassroots effort to [ban fur products in California](#) and the 2021 effort to transition Berkeley city purchases to [100% plant based foods](#). Visit DxE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and at [directactioneverywhere.com](#).*

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