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Investigation Reveals Ongoing Animal Cruelty at San Francisco Live Markets; VIDEO

A new investigation into live markets in the Bay Area reveals continued animal abuse, despite previous demands for the San Francisco Department of Animal Care and Control (SFACC) to take action.

December 5, 2025—San Francisco, CA—Today, Animal Outlook, a leading national animal protection organization, released disturbing findings from its latest investigation into San Francisco Bay Area Live Animal Markets, documenting numerous instances of apparent violations of California animal cruelty laws.

The investigation, conducted in September 2024, captured footage of multiple concerning practices, including:

- Frogs being beheaded without prior stunning
- A turtle struck with a mallet, their legs moving in response to being cut apart
- Fish being bludgeoned multiple times and butchered
- Animals kept in cramped conditions likely to cause injury
- Live frogs and fish being placed in plastic bags
- Crabs confined in a cardboard box
- A turtle unsuccessfully attempting to escape from a carton
- Live fish falling onto the street during unloading from a truck

These practices appear to violate multiple California laws, including (1) California's general cruelty law, California Penal Code [§ 597](#); and (2) California's live market law, California Penal Code [§ 597.3](#), as well as San Francisco Municipal Code provisions regarding animal care.

"Despite our ongoing work with the San Francisco Department of Animal Care and Control (SFACC) since 2022, enforcement remains inadequate," says Ben Williamson, Executive Director of Animal Outlook. "Only one citation has been issued in response to Animal Outlook's reporting of dozens of violations, and documented abuse continues unabated."

Animal Outlook is calling for immediate action from SFACC, including:

- Consistent enforcement of existing animal cruelty laws
- Regular inspections of live animal markets
- Use of video evidence to issue citations and pursue charges

- Implementation of clear protocols for responding to reported violations

The full investigation summary and footage are available at <https://animaloutlook.org/investigations/live-market-update/>

ABOUT ANIMAL OUTLOOK

[Animal Outlook](https://animaloutlook.org/) is a national nonprofit 501(c)(3) animal advocacy organization. It is strategically challenging animal agribusiness through undercover investigations, legal advocacy, corporate and food system reform, and disseminating information about the many harms of animal agriculture, empowering everyone to choose vegan. <https://animaloutlook.org/>

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