

2020 RH Annual Meeting Question

RH claims that it complies with the Responsible Down Standard, but this does nothing to prevent the suffering of birds, because it's nearly impossible to track feathers back to their original supplier and determine how they were obtained. PETA's exposé of goose farms in China revealed that workers tore out feathers by the fistful as the birds shrieked in pain, while other footage shows birds plucked so violently that they sustained gaping wounds, which workers crudely sewed up with a needle and thread and no painkillers. Sometimes, birds are also used for foie gras, in which case they're force-fed with tubes rammed down their throats until their livers swell up to as much as 10 times their normal size.

But even when the birds aren't live-plucked or force-fed, they're often subjected to severely crowded, filthy conditions on factory farms and denied everything that's natural and important to them. At the slaughterhouse, they may be improperly stunned before their throats are cut and they're run through the scalding-hot water of the defeathering tank while still conscious.

Consumers seek comfortable, stylish decor that's ethically produced, easy to maintain, allergen-free, and machine-washable and -dryable. RH already sells products made out of down alternatives that fit the bill and are perfectly suitable replacements for the ones made out of down.

Our question is this: Since RH knows that cruelty to animals is involved in the production of down items, will it take the vital first step toward eliminating its use of down entirely by offering decorative pillow inserts made exclusively of one of the many wonderful alternatives to down?