



Sarah James  
Executive Producer  
Strictly Come Dancing

29 October 2024

Via e-mail: [sarah.james@bbc.co.uk](mailto:sarah.james@bbc.co.uk)

Dear Ms James:

Greetings from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). Like many Brits, we love the dazzling dances *Strictly Come Dancing* brings to our screens, but we must spotlight one major concern: the series' use of feathers. Real birds' feathers are a product of extreme cruelty to animals and have no place on your dance floor. They are gory, *not* glamorous.

A PETA US [investigation into ostrich farms and abattoirs](#) in South Africa exposed workers forcibly restraining ostriches as young as 1 year old and striking birds in the head. At slaughterhouses, ostriches are electrically shocked before their throats are slit and their feathers are torn from their still-warm bodies. They're then skinned and dismembered.

Industry use of other birds – like pheasants, parrots, and peacocks – is shrouded in secrecy, breeding black market activity. One investigation into peacock farms in China found birds confined to plastic bags, which were taped at their necks to protect their profitable feathers and denied them opportunities for natural movement and behaviour. Live plucking, which is common, causes birds immense pain and sometimes fatal injuries.

Feathers described as “marabou” almost always come from turkeys and chickens who have endured short lives on dark, filthy factory farms, where sick birds have barely enough room to stretch a wing. When you consider that [factory farming birds](#) to rob them of their plumes also increases the very real risk of a deadly bird flu pandemic, feathers are definitely something you don't want to touch with a *limbo* stick!

Just like fur, feathers are falling out of fashion. Stella McCartney recently launched a [feather-free fashion](#) pledge in collaboration with PETA, [Victoria's Secret](#) wowed global audiences with its first show featuring stunning designs made exclusively from faux feathers, and Berlin, Copenhagen, and Melbourne fashion weeks have all banned wild feathers from their shows.

We hope *Strictly Come Dancing* will follow their lead by *foxtrotting* away from feathers – fast.

Best wishes,

Yvonne Taylor  
Vice President of Corporate Projects  
PETA

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