CONFRONTING CRUELTY

MFA FOOTAGE AIRS COUNTRYWIDE AND CANADA'S PARLIAMENT REACTS

A BETTER BRAZIL

MFA SUPPORTERS FORGE NEW PATH FOR FARMED ANIMALS

Nathan Runkle
NEW BOOK TELLS STORY OF MERCY FOR ANIMALS

WIN THE ULTIMATE Vegan Prize Package!
I’ve spent the better part of the past year transforming a lifetime of memories into the story of our movement.

Stories like the time I pried through mangled cage wire to rescue hens trapped after a tornado ripped through their sheds.

And stories about the people who lifted me up and dug in to help when MFA was just a few activists trying to give animals a voice in rural Ohio.

I carry with me the stories of brave individuals who put their lives and freedom on the line to undertake perhaps the most courageous and impactful work for farmed animals—going undercover to document their heartbreaking abuse.

The culmination of these stories and many more is my first book, fittingly titled Mercy For Animals.

I hope the book inspires people everywhere by showing them that they can transform the world. MFA doesn’t exist because of me. It exists because so many people took actions—both big and small—that helped build the organization into what it is today. It was never easy, but our supporters never gave up.

The persistence of our supporters is why after three years of campaigning and six MFA investigations into Walmart pork suppliers, the mega corporation agreed to ban gestation crates, battery cages, and veal crates from its supply chains and also eliminate some of the worst factory farming practices. In Mercy For Animals, I share a behind-the-scenes look at how we convinced Walmart, McDonald’s, Perdue, and hundreds of other companies to implement far-reaching animal protection policies that combined will touch the lives of over a billion animals every year.

The story of Mercy For Animals is one of love, compassion, and unwavering commitment to securing justice for the forgotten and most abused. It’s the story of ordinary people doing extraordinary things—changing the world as we know it in the process.

In courts, at the ballot box, on the streets, and in people’s hearts, we are winning.

We’ve come so far, and reflecting on the history of MFA for my book has filled me with incredible gratitude. Thank you for caring about farmed animals, and thank you for believing in our mission.

We’re in this together, and I can’t wait to write the story of our next 18 years.

Nathan Runkle
President
@nathanrunkle
Mission Possible

Plant-based meats are in a league of their own when it comes to sustainability. Impossible Foods reports that its famed veggie burger that “bleeds” emits 87 percent less greenhouse gas and uses 75 percent less water and 95 percent less land than a beef burger.

Planet in Peril

More than 200 scientists are calling on the World Health Organization to tackle factory farming, calling it a major threat. Op-ed authors for The New York Times agree, arguing for an end to factory farm subsidies, a ban on growth-promoting antibiotics, and the adoption of nutritional guidelines that warn about the dangers of meat. Eating animals is “killing us,” they declared.

Charges Dismissed

The Guardian reports that a court dismissed charges against Canadian animal activist Anita Krajnc in a case that made headlines around the world. Krajnc faced 10 years in prison for giving water to pigs suffering in a transport truck on a sweltering day. Sadly, an activist offering her water bottle is the most compassion these slaughter-bound pigs would ever know.

Thanks, Obama!

While the U.S. backs out of climate change initiatives, powerful voices are speaking out for the planet. Former president Obama called out meat for its link to global warming at a food innovation conference, and in a Reddit AMA, Bill Nye (aka the Science Guy) called plant-based diets “the future.”

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Shayna Rowbotham

Behind every MFA win, you’ll find our fearless volunteers. Their grit compels major corporations to come to the table with us, and their hard work spreads a pro-veg message to millions of people each year. As global volunteer manager, Shayna Rowbotham mobilizes these activists and ensures they have the resources needed to make the largest impact for animals.

Q: What’s the best part of your job at MFA?

Hands down, the best part is the opportunity to work with our dedicated volunteers. Every day I have the pleasure of speaking with both new and seasoned animal advocates. Connecting with like-minded people around the world is one of the most incredible experiences. Our volunteers continually inspire me with their passionate and tireless efforts.

Q: Why did you go vegan?

I had always been a self-proclaimed animal lover, but in high school I started wondering why we love some animals and eat others. I learned about the immense animal suffering at factory farms, and when I recognized the disconnect between my desire to help animals and the food on my plate, I went vegetarian.

Fast-forward a few years, I found myself working in the fashion industry by day and leafleting for MFA by night. Soon I recognized another disconnect, this time between my values and my career. I went vegan and started working for MFA.

Q: How do volunteers impact MFA’s work?

MFA volunteers are the backbone of much of our success. One of MFA’s primary goals is to educate people on the plight of farmed animals and what we can do to help. Without a doubt, it’s thanks in great part to our volunteers that we’ve been able to do this work so successfully. Our team takes to the streets to hand out booklets and teach others about MFA’s work, shows undercover footage at Paid-Per-View events, and so much more. Our volunteers are some of our strongest comrades.

Q: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

If I’m not cozied up inside reading, I’m probably walking along the East River, relaxing on my rooftop, boating, or hanging out with my best friend, Marchesa (the spunkiest Chihuahua ever). Of course, every summer I plan trips to local farm sanctuaries!

Vanesa Analia Andrada

Argentine volunteer Vanesa Analia Andrada helps MFA create resources specific to Latin America. From gathering traditional recipes to finding local veg-friendly restaurants, Vanesa’s impact is extensive.

Kaylyn Rhoads

The thriving veg community of Columbus, Ohio, owes a lot to powerhouse MFA volunteer Kaylyn Rhoads. Her warm smile and dynamic personality have inspired countless others to get active in her community and beyond.
GIRL SCOUTS POWER!

Girl Scouts Lea and Ayla proved you’re never too young to make an impact. With a red wagon filled with vegan Thin Mint cookies, these budding entrepreneurs set up shop on a bustling Chicago street to sell their sweets.

The girls donated 10 percent of sales to MFA to “help fight factory farm abusers.” And many customers chose to donate extra when they learned about the girls’ mission.

STEellar STATS

MFA’s tireless volunteers are pounding the pavement at festivals and parades this summer.

So far this year volunteers have distributed HALF A MILLION PRO-VEG LITERATURE PIECES across six countries and marched in SEVEN PRIDE PARADES across the U.S. and Canada.

ACTION IN ASIA

MFA’s influence in Asia is growing! More than 250,000 followers connect to our Mandarin-language Facebook, WeChat, and Weibo accounts to receive news, inspiration, and vegetarian articles and recipes. MFA staff and volunteers also participated in Shanghai’s first vegetarian festival.

What’s next? The team will add more staff in the region and expand outreach throughout China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

Volunteers can sign up at ASIA.MERCYFORANIMALS.ORG

ONLINE, MORE THAN 128,000 PEOPLE have received one-on-one support from MFA veg support specialists, who share recipes, nutritional information, plant-based eating tips, and much more!
EXPERIMENT.
Get creative with the plethora of products at the grocery store—everything from plant-based cheeses to grains and vegetables you never considered buying. You will likely not love everything you try, but the more options you have, the less chance you’ll get bored and slide into old habits. The same goes for recipes: Use the slew of plant-based blogs and cookbooks out there!

MAKE FRIENDS.
I grew up in rural Ohio. When I went vegetarian in middle school, I felt rather alone, as you can imagine. Thankfully, today there are so many incredible ways to meet like-minded people who will support you.

Whether you find friends through local meetup groups, veg-friendly restaurants, or veg fests across the country, making a positive change is much easier when you have understanding allies.

KEEP YOUR PANTRY STOCKED WITH STAPLES.
Be proactive in your approach to eating plant-based. Have certain items on hand. I recommend stocking up on canned beans, pasta sauce, and a variety of grains, nuts, and frozen vegetables. Be prepared and plan some of your meals ahead of time. All this said, relax and enjoy! You will see there is plenty to eat without consuming animals.

Anya Todd is a registered, licensed dietitian specializing in vegan nutrition. Anya has finally curbed her need to own every vegan cookbook. She resides in Cleveland, Ohio, which is becoming more veg-friendly by the day.

Visit AnyaTodd.com to learn more about Anya Todd and living a compassionate, healthy lifestyle!
Asian Noodle Salad (serves 4)
with Edamame & Sweet Ginger Dressing

Sweet Ginger Dressing:

1/4 cup sunflower oil
3 tablespoons unseasoned rice vinegar
3 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons sesame oil
2 tablespoons miso paste
1 tablespoon agave nectar
1 1/2 teaspoons grated ginger

Asian Noodle Salad:

1 cup frozen shelled edamame
1/2 teaspoon sesame oil
1/2 pound chow mein or rice noodles
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 tablespoon + 1/2 teaspoon gluten-free tamari or soy sauce
10 cups lacinato kale, finely chopped
1 cup shredded carrot
1 cup shredded purple cabbage
1 red pepper, julienned
1 cup bean sprouts
1/3 cup green onion, finely chopped
1/4 cup sesame seeds


Cook edamame over medium-high heat in 1/2 teaspoon sesame oil and 1/2 teaspoon soy or tamari sauce until toasted but still somewhat bright green (4–5 minutes).

Remove edamame from pan. Add cooked noodles. Toss with vegetable oil and remaining soy or tamari sauce. Fry 2–3 minutes. Mix kale with carrot, cabbage, and onion. Toss in 2–3 tablespoons dressing.

Garnish with noodles, edamame, red pepper, bean sprouts, and sesame seeds.

Vegan Banoffee Pie

Crust Ingredients:

2 cups rolled oats (not instant)
1 cup walnuts
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 cup cold, cubed vegan butter
1 can full-fat coconut milk
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 tablespoon tapioca flour
1/4 teaspoon sea salt

Preheat oven to 350°F. Run oats through food processor until fine. Add walnuts, sugar, and salt. Process butter cubes two at a time until mixture holds when pinched.

Press crust evenly into a 9-inch fluted pie pan with removable bottom. Place in freezer 15 minutes. Prick crust with a fork.

Bake until edges just pull away from pan. Place on wire rack to cool.

Whisk toffee ingredients in a saucepan over medium heat for 13–15 minutes until thicker and sticking to sides of pan. Set aside. Toss sliced bananas with lemon juice in a bowl. Remove crust from pan. Layer bananas evenly and pour toffee on top. Refrigerate overnight.

Spread thick coconut whip layer on pie. Garnish with chocolate.

Extra Ingredients:

4 ripe bananas, sliced
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
1 tub So Delicious Coco Whip, thawed in fridge
2 tablespoons chopped dark chocolate

Preheat oven to 350°F. Run oats through food processor until fine. Add walnuts, sugar, and salt. Process butter cubes two at a time until mixture holds when pinched.

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hot for food is a gourmet vegan food blog and YouTube channel created by Lauren Toyota.
TORMENT AND TORTURE

WORKERS MIMIC SEXUAL ACTS WITH CHICKENS AND RIP OFF THEIR LIMBS
The bombshell release of MFA’s exposé broke on Canada’s CTV National News. Stories by the Toronto Sun, CBC News, and The Globe and Mail, among scores of other major news outlets, spread the footage to millions of people.

Since the video aired, five workers and one supervisor have been fired. Based on the footage and a legal complaint from MFA, the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals launched an investigation and recommended prosecution of the workers under Canada’s federal criminal code and British Columbia’s provincial animal cruelty legislation. If convicted, each worker could face up to five years in prison, fines of up to $75,000, and a lifetime ban on ownership or custody of animals.

News of the exposé also reached Canada’s Parliament.

“For factory farms in our country, where millions of animals go through these facilities every year, we don’t require video surveillance and I think that’s something provincial governments should be looking at,” said Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, a member of Parliament.

Krista Hiddema, MFA’s vice president in Canada, met with several members of Parliament to discuss how the government could take action to protect farmed animals.

MFA is calling on Loblaws—a major supermarket chain that sells chicken from Lilydale—to create systemic change by requiring third-party audits, live-streamed video surveillance, and a zero tolerance policy to deter violence against animals at its supplier farms. Shackling, shocking, and slitting the throats of conscious animals must be replaced by less cruel slaughter systems. And at the least, birds should not be deprived of clean, enriched environments with enough space to do what comes naturally to them.

Without heroic whistleblowers, abuses like Lilydale’s would never be uncovered. Show them you’ve got their backs. Add your name to MFA’s petition urging Loblaws to ensure animals aren’t brutally tortured in its supply chain.

Sign the petition:

CHICKENTORTURE.CA
New book by MFA founder Nathan Runkle brings readers into the trenches of the organization’s work to protect farmed animals.
Mercy For Animals was born in an unlikely place: a rural town in the heart of America’s farmland. But the compassion of a handful of people in that Ohio farming community ignited a movement.

Fifteen-year-old Nathan Runkle wasn’t even old enough to drive, but that didn’t stop him from taking on the area’s deep agricultural ties. With a headlamp and camera, he walked into major Ohio egg factory farms and started recording.

Intense stories from these early days are told in Mercy For Animals, the first book from MFA president and founder Nathan Runkle. The book offers readers a behind-the-scenes look at how MFA grew from a teenager’s vision to one of the most powerful international forces for protecting farmed animals.

Nathan shared a few anecdotes from the book and what he hopes you’ll take away from it.

**Q:** Tell us why you wrote Mercy For Animals.

I wanted to inspire people to act on behalf of animals. The book is part autobiography, part hard-hitting exposé, and part action guide. I tell my unorthodox story of going from a would-be fifth-generation farmer to founding an animal rights organization. I discuss the organization and its mission, and I detail our trials and tribulations as well as our world-changing successes. Readers also meet many of my personal heroes—from the brave undercover investigators who risk their lives to expose the truth to forward-thinking entrepreneurs who are reimagining our food system.

**Q:** In your book, you share personal experiences that influenced your decision to become an activist for animals. Could you tell us about one?

Sometimes big lessons come in small forms. In the book, I tell the story of Caesar, a beautiful Siamese rat, whom I rescued from a laboratory breeder when I was just six years old. Caesar became my best friend. He was playful, smart, and social and would come running when I called his name. But when I’d bring friends over to meet Caesar, many would shriek at the sight of him. “Eww! His tail!” they would say. They judged Caesar based on what he was, not who he was. I began to realize that the prejudices we have about animals are really about us, not them.

It’s because of Caesar that I started to challenge the arbitrary lines our society draws between animals considered “pets” and “pests,” “friends” and “food.”

**Q:** How did MFA start?

It started in 1999 because of one baby piglet. A local pig farmer, Steve Jenkins, taught a class in the agricultural program at my high school. One morning Jenkins attempted to kill a half dozen piglets to use in a dissection project. When he arrived at the school, however, one of the piglets was still alive—standing on top of the others, screaming in distress. A student in the class, who worked on the Jenkins farm, walked over, grabbed the piglet by her hind legs, and slammed her head into the ground—twice. Her skull was fractured, and she was bleeding. But she was still alive. Another student, horrified by this abuse, took the piglet to Molly Fearing, a first-year teacher.

**GIVEAWAY!**

Preorder your copy of Mercy For Animals, and sign up for a chance to win amazing vegan prize packages!

MercyForAnimals.org/giveaway
known for being a vegetarian who cared about animals. Molly immediately took the piglet to a veterinarian to have her euthanized. She then initiated animal cruelty charges against Jenkins. The case went to trial but was dismissed because slamming piglets this way is considered standard practice within the pork industry. In fact, in most states, if an act is deemed “standard agricultural practice,” no matter how cruel, it’s exempt from prosecution. This case convinced me that my community needed an organization that would speak up on behalf of farmed animals. MFA grew out of that incident and my commitment to addressing the injustice of systemic animal abuse.

Q: How did you feel when reflecting on MFA’s history for the book?

Writing the book was a profound experience, as I reflected on not only MFA’s 18 years, but elements of my own life. In fact, I was left with deep feelings of gratitude and pride. I’m so grateful to everyone who has supported me and the organization over the years.

Simply put, MFA would not exist and would not have grown and achieved so many landmark successes if it weren’t for kindhearted people who dug deep and made donations. They believed in me, the organization, and our mission at a time when few did.

I’m also grateful to all the volunteers who have helped support and elevate the organization and to the brave, selfless few who leave behind life as they know it to become undercover investigators. These incredible human beings put themselves directly in harm’s way and face the consequences—both physical and emotional.

Q: What do you want readers to take away from the book?

That one person—you—can make a difference. I’m not gifted with any superpowers, and neither are the other individuals I profile in the book. I discuss specific things we each can do to improve the world for animals, but I also encourage readers to find their voice and to use their unique experiences, resources, talents, and relationships to carve out their own form of meaningful advocacy.

I also talk about how giving back is not only the right thing to do but a way to increase our personal happiness. Being an advocate for compassion and love, which is what being an animal advocate truly is, is such a powerful way of living our values and creating a life driven by purpose.

Q: What does the future look like for farmed animals and MFA?

The future is bright. I have no doubt that we are in the middle of a dramatic societal shift in our relationship with animals. For too long, there has been an undeclared war against animals. Never before have we subjected so many animals to such extreme, prolonged cruelty. But an awakening is happening. More and more, people are beginning to understand that humans exist with animals, not apart from them; that when we look into an animal’s eyes, we can see someone staring back at us—someone with a mind, a personality, and an emotional life. The future will see increased protection for farmed animals as laws begin to recognize their rights and we stop viewing other animals as mere property. The use of animals for food will be eradicated as we continue to shift toward a humane economy driven by innovation in plant-based meat, milk, and egg alternatives. We will also see the commercialization of “clean meat,” real meat grown from animal cells in bioreactors.

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It’s basically meat without murder. These products will not only spare billions of animals but require far less water and energy, produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and be free of hormones, antibiotics, and harmful pathogens. I discuss many of these developments in the book.

Q: What gives you hope?

You. If you’re reading this interview, you care about animals and the state of our world. I see hope all around us. While I’ve seen the darker side of humanity as I’ve worked for nearly two decades to end the worst forms of animal abuse, I’ve also seen the brighter side. I see how selfless, kind, generous, and loving people can be.

How we treat animals says a lot about who we are as people and the kind of world we want to live in. At the end of the day, being an advocate for animals is an expression of love. I hope the book allows me to share that with the world.

BOOK PREVIEW

Memphis Meats is one company leading the clean meat revolution. At the helm is Uma Valeti. Uma had already saved lives as a cardiologist, but his career took a turn when he realized the potential of clean meat to help billions more and avert a climate-induced disaster.

Miyoko’s Kitchen grinds cashews into a heavy cream and then cultures, ages, smokes, and flavors to create artisan plant-based cheeses that surpass dairy. For decades vegan chef Miyoko Schinner has pioneered this market to make it easy for people to ditch dairy.

Mercy For Animals explores exciting changes in food technology and the people behind them. A sustainable, healthy, and compassionate food system without animals is well within reach.

PREORDER NOW!

Mercy For Animals will be released September 12. It will be available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and most places books are sold. All proceeds Nathan receives from book sales will be donated to Mercy For Animals.

PRAISE FOR MERCY FOR ANIMALS

“Mercy For Animals not only exposes the almost unbelievable cruelty suffered by the billions of animals raised in factory farms but explains what can—and must—be done to change things. Please read it and recommend it to all your friends.”

—Jane Goodall, PhD, DBE
Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute and U.N. Messenger of Peace

“When the history of the world is written, Mercy For Animals will be remembered as the group that ended factory farming. This book is a rousing call to action!”

—Russell Simmons
Music Mogul and Author

“I’ve supported Mercy For Animals for many years, but Nathan’s book gave me an even deeper appreciation for the lifesaving work they do. This is an inspiring book by a beautiful man about a profoundly important topic. Read it. Your heart will thank you.”

—John Robbins
Author and President of the Food Revolution Network

“Anytime you think that one person can’t make a difference in this world, pick up this book and read Nathan’s story! He will prove you wrong and inspire you to make this world a better place!”

—Emily Deschanel
Actress and Producer

“Nathan Runkle tells gripping true stories of how courage combined with smarts can change the world. Mercy For Animals is an antidote for those who feel powerless and unable to make a difference.”

—Peter Singer
Author and Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University

“Mercy For Animals is a superb and compelling book from start to finish! I was riveted and inspired by Nathan’s true life story and how a small grassroots organization became a leading international powerhouse!”

—Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson
Best-selling Author
A BETTER BRAZIL

MFA SUPPORTERS IN BRAZIL FORGE A NEW PATH FOR FARmed ANIMALS
MANY MAJOR BRAZILIAN CITIES ARE MAKING STRIDES TO START THEIR WEEKS OFF RIGHT—BY LEAVING MEAT, DAIRY, AND EGGS OFF THE MENU.

Each year public schools across Cuiabá, São Gonçalo, and Várzea Grande will replace over 6 million meat-based meals with plant-based fare and spare 110,000 animals a lifetime of suffering.

Driving this institutions-wide change is MFA’s newly launched Conscious Eating Brazil program.

Armed with eye-opening info on all the benefits of eating more plant-based meals, MFA staff in Brazil met with local officials and landed approval for the program. MFA volunteer chefs and nutritionists trained food workers on preparation of diverse veg recipes and coached them on the merits of a vegan diet.

Cuiabá mayor Emanuel Pinheiro was quick to offer his support, stating that people capable of living a more balanced life would certainly be able to build a better city.

Brazil’s Rio de Janeiro could soon be next to usher in changes. MFA staff worked with residents to launch Families for Conscious Eating in Rio, a campaign to bring together and mobilize residents of the popular city who care about building a healthy, sustainable food system.

Thanks to the boundless enthusiasm and passion of Brazilians, MFA’s message has spread far and wide—from Cuiabá to Rio and Recife. In just the past year, more than 5,000 compassionate supporters signed up as MFA volunteers to help end animal cruelty and promote kind food choices.

Supported by a national coordinator, volunteers organized more than 320 events to raise awareness and distributed more than 160,000 pro-vegetarian leaflets in over 20 cities.

Over half a million people in the country have pledged to go vegetarian and downloaded MFA’s Vegetarian Starter Guide.

This grassroots groundswell of support for farmed animals has corporations feeling the heat. MFA staff are already making significant headway to free hens from painful wire cages.

Major international chains, including McDonald’s, Carl’s Jr., Olive Garden, Domino’s Pizza, Subway, Pizza Hut, and Burger King, agreed to ban cages from their supply chains in Brazil after pressure from MFA.

Brazilian companies see the writing on the wall too. More than 30 companies have committed to phasing out cruel cages for hens. Combined they will spare millions of hens each year from the misery of cage confinement.

A powerful protest at Walmart’s headquarters in São Paulo stirred national media coverage and sent a booming message to businesses: If you resist change, you’ll hear from MFA supporters.
Imagine a 112-mile day with over 15,000 feet of elevation gain and another day with an 8.6-mile climb with 21 hairpin turns and an average gradient of 8 percent. These are the days Jackson Long, Ian Moore, and Gruffudd Pugh-Jones will remember most from their cycling adventure across Europe.

Fueled by plant-based food and a desire to help farmed animals, the trio will use the trip to raise money for Mercy For Animals and awareness about the health benefits of a vegan diet.

Jackson, Ian, and Gruffudd will share updates through Instagram, Facebook, and the Thought For Food video blog and podcast. They aim to show the world that there are no limits for veg endurance athletes—and by documenting their journey on social media, they will!

Support the group’s fundraising efforts for MFA:
MercyForAnimals.org/CyclingForAnimals

“"I think MFA does an incredible job at sharing information with a wide audience and leveraging social media to catalyze positive change. Saving animals requires many forms of activism, and I’m excited about the way MFA approaches education."

JACKSON LONG

Whether you’re a cyclist or runner—or just love celebrating special occasions—you can rally your friends and family to be heroes for animals.

Set up your own fundraiser to benefit Mercy For Animals. It’s easy! With a few simple steps, your online fundraising page will be live. From birthdays and weddings to dance-a-thons and races, creative fundraising opportunities abound!

START YOUR FUNDRAISER TODAY AT MERCYFORANIMALS.ORG/FUNDRAISE
OR CONTACT US AT 323-822-5124 / DONATIONS@MERCYFORANIMALS.ORG
With thoughtful planning, each of us can impact the world long after we’re gone.

This is why Tom and Joan Lyon live simply and have plans in place to support effective charities—now and after they have passed.

“Something I’ve had to accept is that a lot of the changes for animals I’m working on won’t happen in my lifetime,” says Tom. “But that’s the way it always goes. If you look at the greatest changes forged in society, there were always people working on them who didn’t live to see the final outcome.”

Planned giving—through annuities, trusts, wills, life insurance policies, and other means—creates a legacy of compassion.

Tom and Joan are two of animals’ biggest heroes. They wear their MFA T-shirts with pride and always look for opportunities to talk about extending kindness to farmed animals. Tom says they have embraced MFA for many reasons, but three stand out.

First, they want to help as many animals as possible, and MFA focuses on the billions of animals killed for food each year worldwide.

Second, they aim for effectiveness, and MFA’s undercover investigations spark far-reaching transformation of laws, corporate policies, and consumer choices.

Finally, they value courage. Will an organization stand up to the largest and most powerful industries and refuse to back down? To Tom and Joan, MFA fits the bill.

It’s because of Tom, Joan, and countless other superstar supporters that MFA has maximized our impact around the world.
Changing Climate Spells Tragedy for Farmed Animals
This summer an extreme heat wave swept through California and took the lives of thousands of cows. To factory farmers, these lives represented numbers on a balance sheet. In news stories about the tragedy, farm owners highlighted profit losses.

“These last couple of days have been torturous on a lot of cattle,” Hank Van Exel told CBS 13 Sacramento before bemoaning the effects on his milk production.

“Losing animals to weather? That’s just farming,” he said.

California’s heat wave wasn’t an isolated tragedy. Earlier this year a drought in the Great Plains sparked a wildfire that ravaged parts of Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. With no chance of escape, thousands of pigs and cows died.

A reporter for The New York Times described animals in the fire’s aftermath: “They staggered around like broken toys, unable to see or breathe, their black fur and dark eyes burned, plastic identification tags melted to their ears. Young calves lay dying.”

Wildfires in the western U.S. have become more frequent as the season lasts longer, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists. Likewise, storms are becoming more frequent and severe, and they claim many vulnerable lives. Last year millions of chickens, pigs, and other farmed animals drowned when Hurricane Matthew hit North Carolina.

Last December in Texas more than 35,000 cows froze to death during a blizzard. They had no shelter from below-freezing temperatures and 80 mph wind gusts. Cows who tried to hide behind windbreaks were buried in 14-foot snow drifts. Others froze in open fields. Calves starved to death when farmers avoiding the storm failed to feed them. Yet The New York Times reported that farmers had more than a week’s notice of the impending storm.

If a dog were left outside during a blizzard and froze to death, the dog’s guardian could face animal cruelty charges. But no laws mandate evacuation or care of farmed animals during natural disasters.

No living being should be treated like this.

As climate change worsens—driving superstorms, droughts, and unpredictable weather—farmed animals will suffer more.

Unless we transform our food system—and leave animals out of it—these intelligent, sensitive beings will continue to languish and die in severe weather.

To the farmers who still work in the animal agriculture industry and watch animals burn in fires or drown in floods:

PLANT-BASED ALTERNATIVES TO ANIMAL PRODUCTS ARE INCREASINGLY POPULAR, AND THE ADVENT OF CLEAN MEAT, DAIRY, AND EGGS WILL SOON RENDER ANIMAL FARMING OBSOLETE.

EMBRACE THE FUTURE OF FOOD. START FARMING PLANTS, OR STOP FARMING.
“I’ve lost 39 pounds and a lifetime of emotional baggage.”

Colleen says her life has “totally changed” since a vegetarian support specialist provided her with resources on how to go veg.

“Besides the freedom from losing weight, I feel a different connection with others,” writes Colleen. “My relationships are deeper and more caring because of my bond with the planet and all life-forms.”

With a few keystrokes, anyone with an internet connection can find countless plant-based recipes, nutrition studies, and tips for moving meat off the table. But there’s something unique and empowering about a one-on-one conversation with someone who’s been in your shoes.

Every day MFA’s vegetarian support specialists equip consumers from around the world with personalized resources to help them explore and maintain a plant-based diet. The conversations happen on ChooseVeg.com’s live chat feature or over email.

Vegetarian support specialists ease concerns, offer advice for social challenges, and connect people to veg communities.

Here are just a few of the lives you’ve helped change by supporting MFA’s work.

MFA’s vegetarian support specialists invite conversation and connection.
“I have stopped eating meat.”

Chiropractor and physical therapist Jesús now gives his patients plant-based meal ideas and nutritional information from MFA’s Vegetarian Starter Guide. Since Jesús connected with a vegetarian support specialist, his whole family has been moving away from meat.

“It’s like a rebirth, another opportunity to live healthier.”

Pablo works as a forestry engineer in Nicaragua. Before speaking with a vegetarian support specialist, Pablo ate meat every day, and his health suffered. Then he learned about the devastating effects of factory farming on animals and the health benefits of plant-based eating. It didn’t take him long to change his diet—and then he changed his workplace.

“In the forest department’s kitchen, I recommended we all cut back our meat consumption,” Pablo writes. “It’s been over a year with this new diet, and the health of our workers has improved. Even at home, with their families, they’ve made changes.”

“I can’t believe I didn’t make this choice earlier!”

Across the world in Australia, Christina connected with a vegetarian support specialist, read MFA’s Vegetarian Starter Guide, and cut out all meat from her diet. “I cannot stress how happy and excited I feel right now!” writes Christina. “It’s officially been two months since I stopped eating meat! I cook for my family a lot, so I get to choose what we eat, and I always go for the vegan option.”

Have a question for our vegetarian support specialists?

Email us at ChooseVeg@MercyForAnimals.org or chat with us at ChooseVeg.com
Innovation, education, and persistence will one day end factory farming. This is possible and within reach, but to maintain momentum toward this goal, we need to prevent burnout.

For some, this may mean getting away from a screen and out into nature. Others will head to a gym or yoga studio. Here are a few ways MFA staff members recharge.

**COURTNEY DOBBIN**  
*Project coordinator, Canada*

At 11 years old, Courtney put on a pair of boxing gloves and began throwing punches. Growing up, Courtney trained with former pro boxer Wayne Dobbin. But she called her hero by a different name: Dad.

“Boxing is a sport, but also a form of self-defense. I grew up in Toronto and boxing played a key role in helping me develop confidence in myself and my surroundings,” said Courtney. “It has given me a thick skin and a strong mind. It’s in my blood—and the spirit of the sport emanates day to day as I fight alongside Mercy For Animals for what is right.”

**ERIN KWIAKTOWSKI**  
*Vegetarian support specialist, U.S. *

As a jammer on the Chicago Outfit roller derby team, Erin needs agility and the ability to take a hit. Her teammates affectionately call her “Tofu,” but Erin’s love of plant-based foods may be keeping her in the game.

“My vegan diet has definitely given me an advantage,” Erin said. “The skate skills and team strategies are highly technical, but your fitness and nutrition need to be on point as well.”

Build your own healthy meal plan to support an active lifestyle:  
ChooseVeg.com
NATHAN RUNKLE  
founder and president, U.S.

JAKE MORTON  
vice president of operations, U.S.

For the past two years, Jake and Nathan have joined over 3,000 fellow cyclists in an annual 545-mile ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles to raise funds for the fight to end HIV/AIDS. Honoring its theme of love, for this year’s ride about 20 percent of all cyclists chose to forgo meat, dairy, and eggs. Jake and Nathan always ride on an all-veg team to promote the benefits of a healthy plant-based diet. "Intersectionality is vital to who we are at MFA," Jake said. "Team VegOut wants to inspire our allies to consider expanding social justice and compassion to include animals. Building bridges across movements is a critical step in advancing animal rights."

MARIO HURTADO  
graphic designer, Mexico

When Mario needs to decompress, he grabs his skateboard and heads to a local park. It’s taken years of practice to "actually get good at it," but he finds that the rewards—like landing a tough move—make it all worthwhile. "It helps me unplug from work, reconnect with myself, and then go back and help more animals," added Mario.

MFA STAFF MEMBERS
Talita Trygsland, Susan Weingartner, Vandhana Bala, Mark Devries, Kelcey Meadows-Lucas, Nick Cooney, and Alice Coleman

A handful of MFA staff turned off their cell phones for a meditation retreat earlier this year in Petaluma, California. Animal advocates from a variety of organizations participated in the retreat. For people who see some of the darkest cruelty inflicted on animals, the retreat offered time for self-care and reflection. Being kind to ourselves, and each other, will allow us to help more animals.

"BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS MOVEMENTS IS A CRITICAL STEP IN ADVANCING ANIMAL RIGHTS."

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THERE ARE BILLIONS OF REASONS TO BECOME A MEMBER OF MERCY FOR ANIMALS.

MEET REASON #642

For over a decade MFA has been at the forefront of campaigns to prevent cruelty to farmed animals and promote compassionate food choices and policies.

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY AND GIVE A VOICE TO THE VOICELESS. JOINMFA.COM

Mercy For Animals not only exposes the almost unbelievable cruelty suffered by the billions of animals raised in factory farms but explains what can—and must—be done to change things. Please read it and recommend it to all your friends.

—Jane Goodall, PhD, DBE; Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute; and U.N. Messenger of Peace

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