

Effective Animal Activism  
**PROTOCOL FOR LEAFLETING STUDY**

[I. Title of Project](#)

[II. Background and Specific Aims](#)

[III. Materials](#)

[IV. Study design](#)

[V. Data analysis](#)

**I. Title of Project**

*A study investigating the effectiveness of flyer-ing in causing dietary change*

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SPONSORING ORGANIZATION: Effective Animal Activism

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**II. Background and Specific Aims**

Abbreviations used in this protocol:

Veg\*n = both vegan and vegetarian

VO = Vegan Outreach

HSUS = Humane Society of the United States

Effective Animal Activism is interested in examining the long term dietary impact of flyer-ing and evaluating its effectiveness as a possible intervention. The majority of veg\*nism flyer-ing that happens is in colleges and universities across the United States, thus this is also where the study will take place, attempting to closely mimic natural settings. Both a placebo animal rights flyer (not related to dietary change) and a more standard veg\*nism focused animal rights flyer will be distributed. Two months later dietary surveys of the populations will be taken to measure possible changes, and the placebo and experimental flyer results will be compared.

Primary Objective:

1. Determine if there is a significant effect on diet compared to a placebo two months later if an individual is handed a veg\*nism flyer

**III. Materials**

- Veg\*nism flyers (Vegan Outreach - [Compassionate Choices](#) and [Even If You Like Meat](#))
- Placebo flyers (HSUS - [Puppy mill flyer](#))
- [Instructions for leafleters](#)
- Instructions for surveyors
- Booklet of dietary questions (in progress)
- Pens, pencils, clipboards

#### **IV. Study design**

1. Schools were chosen based on where volunteers were found willing to hand out leaflets and survey. They were all in the US except one in Vancouver, Canada.
2. Volunteers arrive at schools and prepare.
  - The volunteers will alternate every hour handing out VO and HSUS flyers. They will start with HSUS flyers, then alternate every hour to avoid handing out different flyers to the same group passing by.
    - At some sites, conditions will not allow all leafleters to hand out HSUS flyers. At those sites, two leafleters will work together, one handing out VO flyers and the other handing out HSUS flyers. These leafleters will be instructed to avoid handing out both kinds of leaflets to the same group of students to the best of their ability.
  - Under no condition does the researcher tell the participant that they are involved in a research study.
  - Volunteers will record the dates, times, and locations at which they handed out flyers to allow surveyors to target the same conditions 2 months later.
3. Volunteers will give a flyer to each participant.
  - They will say, "Flyer to help animals" and hand the participants either the control or the experimental flyer. Volunteers must keep their language consistent regardless of the flyer being handed out.
4. Two months later volunteers will return with a general dietary survey and a box of treats.
  - Volunteers will go to same location as the leafleters on the same day of the week, and at the same time to get as many of the same participants as possible.
  - A treat will be offered for completion of a quick diet survey.
  - Participants will be given a survey booklet and a pen.
  - This survey will have no indications it is targeted at veg\*nism till the very end and will ask questions relating to all sorts of diets.
  - The flyers will be shown on the last page of the survey and participants will be asked if they received any of the pictured flyers.
5. The data will then be collected and sent to be analyzed.

#### **V. Data analysis**

- The placebo and experimental results will be compiled and compared side by side. The data from those who did not receive a flyer of any sort will be recorded and analyzed as a second, weaker control group.
- The priority data will be people who switched from meat eating to veg\*nism in the time frame in which the flyers were handed out when compared to the control.
- Attention will also be paid to reductions in consumption.
- Conversion to suffering avoided per dollar will happen after preliminary data analysis given the information already acquired about the cost of distributing flyers.

#### **NOTED ISSUES:**

1. The sample size may be too small to get 95% confidence intervals.
  - This is due to money and volunteer limitations.

2. Two months may be too short to measure long term vegetarian change.
  - Waiting longer than two months has added complications of school terms changing and thus it being harder to survey the same people.
  - An ideal study would measure results 2 months, 6 months, and a year after the flyer to gauge effectiveness.
  - This was not possible given budget and volunteer limitations.
3. Self-reporting is almost always flawed and some non-self-reported data is preferred.
  - It would be ideal to get a data source better than self reporting but there were no viable options present.
4. The schools were not randomized.
  - The biggest limiting factor for this study is manpower and budget. There was not a large enough budget to hire leafleters, so schools were chosen based on willing volunteers.
  - Given this is a naturalistic experiment, this will not negate the results, because the schools chosen for this study are among the schools that are most likely to be leafleted in a naturalistic setting.
  - Efforts were also made to have schools leafleted in all corners of the USA with decent results. The schools are fairly evenly distributed between the North, South, West, and East.