

Mercy For Animals - Time Allocations (Approximate) And Achievements

Note: Legal, Corporate Outreach, Communications, and Investigations are taking a very similar approach in 2014 as they did in 2013. The time allocations and major accomplishments for those divisions are based on 2013 activities, and should roughly hold true for 2014. The Education Department has undergone significant changes in approach in 2014 so time allocation below reflects 2014 time allocation, and accomplishments are divided into 2013 accomplishments and 2014 projected accomplishments.

Legal Advocacy

Time Allocation

30% - Administrative legal affairs (HR, contracts, compliance, campaign review, etc.)

20% - Fighting Ag-Gag laws, supporting animal welfare legislation

40% - Investigations-related work (ensuring investigators can't be sued or prosecuted, investigating laws of each state investigations are carried out in, pressing for criminal charges against farm workers after investigations in order to garner ongoing media attention to footage, etc.)

10% - Offensive Legal Advocacy (filing or jointly filing cases or complaints, writing amicus briefs, etc.)

2013 Victories

-Helped defeat 11 proposed Ag-Gag bills, which will allow investigations to continue unfettered

-Helped introduce a new bill to ban force-feeding on foie gras farms in New York

-Garnered a great deal of media coverage around Ag-Gag and investigation-related criminal prosecutions, including an entire episode on the National Geographic Channel, front page New York Times article, and coverage on CNN, Nightline, Headline News, and hundreds of other outlets. This coverage helped generate public concern over ag-gag laws, and brought video of factory farm cruelty to millions of people.

-Generated cruelty convictions for farmers filmed in several undercover investigations, which drew increased media attention to the footage and the issue of cruelty to farm animals. This included the first-ever felony conviction for cruelty to factory farm poultry.

Investigations Department

Time Allocation

90% - Carrying out investigations (recruiting and training investigators, vetting facilities, acquiring footage, reviewing footage, compiling investigation footage, creating websites to share footage)

10% - Media work around investigations (communicating with media outlets, securing coverage, conducting interviews, carrying out press conferences)

2013 Victories

-Carried out investigations at four factory farms in the U.S., including the following:

-Pipestone Systems, a pork farm that supplies pork to Walmart and that is owned by National Pork Producer Council President Randy Spronk. In addition to garnering media coverage that showed the public the cruelty of factory farms, the investigation added pressure to Walmart to end the use of gestation crates in its supply chain and hurt the credibility of the NPPC, which has been trying to prevent an end to the use of gestation crates.

-Tyson Foods contract pig farm which supplies pork to Walmart. In addition to garnering widespread media coverage that showed the public the cruelty of factory farms, the investigation added pressure to Walmart to end the use of gestation crates in its supply chain. It also led Tyson Foods, two months later, to announce that it would no longer allow “thumping” of baby piglets as a euthanasia method (the slamming of baby piglets head first into the concrete). It also helped lead Tyson to announce that it was recommending its farms use anesthesia when castrating or tail docking pigs, and recommending that its farms end the use of gestation crates. All of these are major corporate victories, given that Tyson is the country’s second largest pork producer and processes 18 million pigs a year.

-Hudson Valley Foie Gras in New York, the country’s largest operating foie gras farm, which helped lead to the re-introduction of legislation to ban force feeding in New York State

-Wiese dairy farm in Wisconsin, which generated widespread national media attention to the cruelty done to animals on factory farms.

-The impact of MFA’s investigations was incredibly large. First, they directly brought video and pictures of the cruelty of factory farming to over ten million people through media coverage. As the landmark Kansas State University study found, such media coverage reduces demand for and consumption of all meat products among viewers. Second, the videos captured on these facilities received over 1,000,000 views on youtube alone, exposing more people to the cruelty of factory farming. Third, MFA’s investigations provide crucial cruelty footage and photos used by MFA and many other organizations in online ad campaigns, printed materials, websites, etc. to promote vegan eating. And fourth, as noted above, these investigations helped generate corporate animal welfare victories and add pressure to corporate and legislative animal welfare campaigns.

- MFA’s goal in 2014 is to increase the number of investigations carried out to 9 total.

Corporate Outreach

Time Allocation

60% - Engaging in dialogue, communication, and meetings with major companies to press for animal welfare changes in their purchasing policies

30% - Offensive pressure campaigns against companies to press for animal welfare policy changes

10% - Working with vegan product companies (Beyond Meat, Gardein, etc.) to create mutually beneficial partnerships that help their products reach more Americans.

2013 Victories

-Brought national attention to Walmart's use of gestation crates, holding protests in 150 cities, generated hundreds of news and television articles, running ads in Walmart's hometown, and garnering nearly 500,000 online petition signatures calling on Walmart to end its use of gestation crates. We believe that Walmart is close to make a policy shift (and it has announced that it is working toward an "industry wide model" that is better for animals), which would be seismic given that it's suppliers produce 25% of the pork sold in the United States.

-Generated over 100,000 petition signatures calling on Tyson to change their animal welfare policies, which led Tyson to make landmark animal welfare policy changes as noted in the "Investigations" section. This change will positively impact the lives of literally millions of the 18 million pigs Tyson processes each year, including sparing hundreds of thousands to over a million piglets from being "thumped" to death, sparing tens of thousands of mother pigs from the misery of gestation crate confinement, and reducing the pain of perhaps millions of piglets during castration and tail docking.

-In combination with MFA Canada, MFA worked to pressure the Canadian government via pork farm investigations and public education to end the use of gestation crates. This culminated in an announcement by the Canadian Retail Council that the country's eight largest grocery chains would end their use of Gestation crates, free tens to hundreds of thousands of mother pigs from a lifetime of gestation crate confinement.

Communications Department

Time Allocation

70% - Social Media management and content creation – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest, MFA Blog

20% - Content creation for other departments: Compassionate Living magazine, assisting with creation of vegan advocacy materials

10% - In 2013, carrying out pro-veg online advertising (in 2014 the Education Department has taken this over)

2013 Accomplishments

-Drew over 3 million people to pro-veg and pro-farm animal content on the MFA Blog, exposing them to materials to inspire them to go vegan and help them stay vegan

-Generated over 100,000 shares of pro-farm animal and pro-vegan content online, exposing millions of our followers friends and family members to cruelty videos, vegan recipes, and lots of other content that promotes vegan eating.

-All told, reached over 20,000,000 people on social media with pro-veg and pro-farm animal material.

-Dramatically increased MFA's following on social media, particularly Facebook, which positions us to put pro-veg and pro-farm animal content in front of many more people (via the above two methods) in 2014.

-Assisted with the creation of MFA's ChooseVeg.com veg eating website and MFA's stylish new Vegetarian Starter Guide, which reached approximately 1 million and 100,000 people respectively in 2013.

Education Department

Time Allocation (2014)

30% - Working with volunteers around the country to assist them to engage in grassroots outreach, primarily leafleting and Pay Per View outreach.

50% - Creating and promoting online pro-veg content: websites, emails, online guides, video pages, online ads, etc.

15% - Working toward increased media coverage of vegan/factory farm issues and producing pro-veg/pro-farm animal viral video content

5% - Miscellaneous other Education work (MFA Fellows program; social media response; etc.)

2013 Accomplishments

-In conjunction with Communications Department, launched stylish and practical new Vegetarian Starter Guide and ChooseVeg.com website

-Drew over 2 million people to our MeatVideo.com website and over 1 million to our ChooseVeg.com website, exposing all of these visitors to the whys and hows of vegan eating

- Conducted 600 grassroots outreach events around the country, distributing over 500,000 pieces of pro-veg literature, generating over 10,000 Pay Per View views (of whom 80% pledged to reduce their meat consumption), and tabling at dozens of events

- Fulfilled over 50,000 Vegetarian Starter Guide orders for individuals interested in going vegetarian, including visitors to ChooseVeg, MeatVideo, and sites run by other organizations

-Worked with the Humane Research Council to carry out surveys of young women to figure out how to better message our veg advocacy materials and better target them to ideal sub-groups within that demographic.

-Carried out vegetarian advertising campaigns on Facebook, Hulu, Google, MTV, and VH1, among other places, which brought video of factory farm cruelty and an encouragement to go veg to the screens of millions of young people.

-Held "Why Love One But Eat The Other" outreach events in 70 cities, generating over 100 news stories including coverage on dozens of television channels.

2014 Projected Accomplishments

-Creation of stylish, practical vegan advocacy resources for India, China, and Latin America, consisting of: gathering undercover investigative footage and compilation videos from those regions; ChooseVeg-style website; MeatVideo-style website; free email series on how to eat

vegetarian; and a downloadable Vegetarian Starter Guide. These resources will be used both by MFA and by other organizations such as VegFund, The Humane League, and international partners.

-Also offering free email series on how to eat vegetarian and free SMS series on how to eat vegetarian to American/Canadian public as well.

-Conducting large online ad campaigns that will generate over 8 million visits to our MeatVideo.com sites (both U.S. and international)

-Generating over 3 million visits to our ChooseVeg-style sites

-Increasing our leaflet distribution, including via introducing a Mexican version of our main veg advocacy leaflet to be distributed by partner organizations in Mexico.

-Creating a comprehensive ChooseVeg smartphone app.

- Creating a new, research-based cruelty footage compilation video to replace Farm To Fridge