

Follow-Up Questions for Animal Equality, Part Two (2018)

Could you please verify your revenue, assets, and expenses for 2015? According to the form 990, the revenue is \$338,188, the assets are \$142,109, and the expenses are \$205,643.

Yes, that is correct for Animal Equality in the U.S. in 2015.

Can you provide estimated expenses and your fundraising goal for 2019, if you have it?

Our estimated expenses for 2019 will be \$6.8 million for all of our groups combined. Our global fundraising objective for 2019 is \$8.5 million, although we estimate that we have the capacity to utilize up to \$11 million.

You mentioned that the impact of your combined education, corporate outreach, and legislative initiatives have likely helped to reduce the suffering of over 40 million animals. How did you reach this number and what time span does this apply to?

One estimated impact from investigations was based on our media reach. For 2017, the international accumulated media potential reach was 1,893,275,142. We have used the following formula from the 2016 ACE evaluation.

$$\text{- # of animals spared} = (0.011)(\text{number of media views}) = 20,826,026$$

The rest of the estimated impact for 2017 comes from our corporate outreach activities. We estimate it at 12,382,580 animals spared per year, accumulated for all of the countries we are active in. This is a rather conservative estimate. According to Jaya Bhumitra, who is in charge of corporate outreach internationally:

“Many numbers of hens helped are missing, as they are difficult to procure from the companies. This is an ongoing challenge that affects not only Animal Equality, but all the organizations in the corporate outreach space. We have convened with other groups to determine numbers together; unfortunately, getting these numbers is even harder than winning policies.”

Numbers of hens are rough estimates and many are likely far lower than the actual figures. To date, we've accounted for approximately 15 million hens helped by our efforts, but a reasonable guess based on the size and purchasing of the companies whose numbers are missing, as well

as the sheer number of policies won, would put that figure between 25–40 million hens affected each year (or maybe more). As an example, the Kroger policy in the U.S. alone affected 20 million hens each year. Carrefour is a company on par with Kroger, and that is one of the companies for which we are lacking figures. Another example is Brazil—we've won 23 policies but can only account for a little over 2 million hens impacted, which is likely a gross underestimation. As most companies are incredibly opaque and often can't calculate their own purchasing, getting impact numbers—especially accurate numbers—remains a challenge.

Given that the corporate pledges are not legally binding, how can we be sure that they meaningfully support improvements in farmed animal welfare?

The policies are made public by the companies, and this public statement sends a message to producers about the need to eliminate the production of caged eggs. It also holds the companies accountable by animal welfare organizations and the general public. Consumers could sue a company if it engages in false advertising, and possibly consumer fraud, by stating that they only use cage-free eggs if they don't.

There are many more farmed fish than other species of farmed animals. Has Animal Equality considered allocating more of their resources towards farmed fish advocacy?

As part of Animal Equality's strategy plan, we focus primarily on caged hens, broiler chickens, and farmed fish. Animal Equality has already carried out several investigations on the suffering of fish (those investigations can be found [here](#) and [here](#)). These investigations have gathered media attention in several countries and have been included in major films and documentaries such as *Cowspiracy*, *Dominion*, and others.

Animal Equality's corporate outreach efforts are focused where they can have more impact. That is with caged hens in Brazil, Mexico, Spain, Italy, and India, and with broiler chickens in Europe and the United States. The organization is fully aligned with what most of the animal protection movement considers should be our priorities and will move towards working on farmed fish alongside the rest of the movement when the time is right.

How does the effectiveness of different programs vary in each country in which Animal Equality works? Can you describe your strategy for choosing which countries to work in and which programs to pursue there?

Animal Equality’s strategy plan defines what countries the organization will focus on as it expands. In our strategy plan, we state that “Animal Equality will expand to those countries where the greatest change for farmed animals can be accomplished, taking into account: 1) the number of farmed animals and their degree of suffering, 2) the animal welfare standards, and 3) the scope for meaningful, positive change.” Though the organization is currently focused on becoming stronger in the countries we are in, we look at the criteria mentioned above when thinking of expanding to new countries.

Animal Equality’s goals—and, in consequence, our programs—are also defined in our strategy plan. However, these vary depending on the context, culture, and political environment of the countries we’re in.

For example, Animal Equality’s [Love Veg website](#), which provides information on plant-based eating, has been presented in the [United States](#), [United Kingdom](#), [Germany](#), [India](#), and [Mexico](#), and adapted to those contexts.

Another example is Animal Equality’s corporate outreach strategy and goals. These are adapted to each context. In Latin America, Animal Equality is mostly focused on ending the use of cages for hens and combining these corporate outreach efforts with legal initiatives. In Europe, Animal Equality will continue to focus on caged hens in Italy and Spain and move into campaigns to improve the welfare of broiler chickens in the United Kingdom and Germany.

There are some who think that the scale of suffering in the wild is much greater than the scale of farmed animal suffering. What is Animal Equality doing to address wild animal suffering?

Animal Equality’s mission is to reduce as much suffering as possible—regardless of whether the harm animals endure is caused directly by humans or not. Since suffering prevails in nature and affects a vast number of animals who are victims of a variety of serious harms (diseases, parasites, hunger, thirst, predation, weather hazards, etc.) and since this problem is clearly neglected, Animal Equality considers this an important problem that we need to address.

Although the amount of suffering involved is a fundamental variable when analyzing a scenario and our current possibilities, we also take into consideration other variables—such as the societal, economic, and political context, available resources, adversaries, and knowledge on the topic and possible interventions. These factors will influence how effective we can be. Given our

very limited resources, we need to focus on a small number of issues in order to be the most effective at them. We think it's highly unlikely that a society that relies heavily on the consumption of animals and disregards the interests of farmed animals would appreciate the interests of animals in the wild (mainly fish, amphibians, and possibly insects) as the serious moral problem it is. We think that moving society away from the consumption of animal products and increasing the consideration and protections of animals raised for food is an important step to further extending that consideration and protection to other animals. All things considered, this is where Animal Equality can currently do the most good—though we are continuing to study the options to work more on this topic.

Animal Equality is currently drafting communication guidelines on this important topic so that our position will be clearly articulated. Despite not actively working on the issue because of the aforementioned reason, we acknowledge the issue and regularly publish videos of humans helping wild animals in need as a way to promote the following ideas to hundreds of thousands of our followers:

- Many wild animals suffer in nature.
- Nature is not an idyllic nor net-positive scenario.
- Humans can help wild animals in need.
- Helping animals in need is a good action and should be encouraged and praised.

Our president Sharon Nuñez and other leaders of the organization have publicly recognized the importance of this problem. We have expressed our concern about it and we have shared and defended our views in public forums such as the Symposium on Effective Animal Altruism at MIT and the International Animal Rights conference in Luxembourg. As part of the on-boarding process, we share our position on this topic with new employees. We will soon dedicate one of our required internal training sessions specifically to the problem of wild animal suffering, where we will have Oscar Horta as a guest speaker.

Some of Animal Equality's activities (particularly undercover investigations) have the potential to backfire, either by leading to legislation targeting activists or by negatively affecting public opinion of activists. Should donors support these kinds of activities?

We always take into consideration all possible risks and liabilities when conducting our protests, undercover investigations, or other any other work. We simply haven't seen any evidence that our work has had any negative effect on the public opinion of activists.

Our protests have never received negative coverage in the media. To the contrary, our protests have received overwhelmingly positive coverage in the media.

Our investigative work has received overwhelming support from the public, journalists, and politicians. We have collaborated with law enforcement authorities on several occasions to denounce animal abuse that we documented as a part of our investigations. As a result of our

investigative work, law enforcement has prosecuted the people who are responsible, and closed the facilities where the animal abuse took place.

We have collaborated with dozens of journalists and have frequently been asked to bring them with us into factory farms. We're approached by the media for materials, statements, and information regarding a wide range of animal protection topics. We have also collaborated with politicians in Germany, the U.K., Spain, Italy, Mexico, India, and the European Parliament, and have held exhibitions of our investigations at the European Parliament. We will soon hold the first-ever farmed animal exhibition in the Mexican Senate.

Furthermore, our undercover investigations have been an essential part of pro-animal legislation. It's important to note that this legislation has been drafted based on our investigative findings. Our investigations provided legislative bodies with evidence of the problem, helped garner public debate about the issue, and gathered support for the initiative.

A German court [has ruled](#) that it is alright for activists to sneak into factory farms to take photos and record videos if there is a good reason to believe that authorities are not doing the proper inspections.

Why does a significant portion of Animal Equality's outreach focus on dietary change, e.g. reducing meat consumption, rather than directly shifting public attitudes?

During our few first years as an organization, we dedicated thousands of hours focusing on the institution of animal exploitation and its ideological underpinnings—speciesism. We carried out hundreds of protests, some of them attracting over 500 activists and drawing even more onlookers. We also carried out non-violent direct actions and applied civil disobedience tactics against the meat industry. We carried out a dozen open rescues—our first one back in 2007. We chained ourselves to the entrance of a slaughterhouse, disrupted butcher shops and fisheries, and protested in front of restaurants. Meanwhile, we dedicated very few efforts to individual dietary change. The results of that approach were far from optimal and that is why Animal Equality currently has a multipronged approach: individual and institutional outreach.

Animal Equality addresses both the dietary changes required to move away from animal exploitation, as well as the institution of animal exploitation that we want to abolish. We seek changes at an individual level and at a system level. Our outreach efforts have a focus on dietary change, but we also dedicate significant efforts to influencing public opinion about animal exploitation and its industries. As part of our updated strategic thinking, we are beginning to focus additional efforts and resources on system-level changes rather than individual changes. Animal Equality believes that undercover investigations can be some of the most effective tactics that contribute to the “moral outrage” against the meat industry. Videos depicting factory farmers mutilating and/or beating innocent and defenseless animals to death can be some of the most influential materials, and it is no surprise that the meat industry tries to criminalize these exposés.

As such, Animal Equality has carried out over 70 undercover investigations in 13 countries over the past decade, exposing animal abuse in over 700 animal agricultural facilities. An example of how our investigative work affects not only particular companies, but also the meat industry as a whole, is that the Spanish meat industry association had to issue a press release trying to distance themselves from evidence published by Animal Equality following one of our undercover investigations. The industry understood that our investigative footage negatively affected their image and that it swayed public opinion against them.

Animal Equality's undercover investigations into factory farms and slaughterhouses have frequently been featured in local and national media in Spain, reaching millions of people and contributing to increased interest in the plight of animals. The Eurobarometer survey has shown that the number of people in Spain who consider animal welfare to be important or very important has risen from 71% to 94% in the past ten years. The number of people who want to know more about the treatment of animals raised for food has also increased from 61% to 71%.

Does Animal Equality worry that focusing on some of the most extreme confinement practices could lead to complacency with other forms of farmed animal suffering, or with meat consumption?

The study "[The Impact Of Farm Animal Housing Restrictions on Egg Prices, Consumer Welfare, and Production in California](#)" by Conner Mullally and Jayson L. Lusk concludes that the increase in production costs following the passage of Proposition 2 in California resulted in "both egg production and the number of egg-laying hens [being] about 35% lower than they would have been in the absence of the new regulations." Therefore, we know that it not only has reduced the suffering of the animals raised for that purpose by modifying the conditions, but that it has also reduced the number of animals who would otherwise have been bred.

After the European Union banned the confinement of hens in battery cages (replaced in Spain for so-called enriched cages), the production costs increased and resulted in 22% fewer hens, sparing intense suffering for millions of hens.

The study "[Impacts of Animal Well-Being and Welfare Media on Meat Demand](#)" by Glynn T. Tonsor and Nicole J. Olynk examined how media attention to animal welfare, including the ballot initiatives that ban some practices, affected meat demand. The study concludes that "long-run pork and poultry demand are hampered by increasing media attention."

Mercy For Animals [carried out a study](#) with 1,600 participants. They found that the people who read articles about corporate policy changes to eliminate battery cages or gestation crates were more likely to intend to reduce their consumption of animal products than participants who read the control articles.

Based on our current knowledge, we think that when consumers reject some forms of animal abuse, they are more inclined to continue expanding their consideration and attributing higher value to the interests of animals. We think that a society that opposes some forms of animal agriculture practices and sets minimum protections, or increases the existing protections, is a

society in which it is easier to increase the consideration towards animals—and further reduce animal suffering—than one in which the worst abuses are standard practice and allowed by the law.