

# ASF's Reporting of Programs (2020)

*This document contains responses written by the charity. ACE has made no content changes other than the removal of confidential information.*

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## Program 1

**Program name:** Corporate Outreach

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**Date commenced:** 2008

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### **Description:**

Nature of the program: Reaching out to food businesses in order to work with them. We usually have a specific ask such as going cage-free, signing up to the ECC (main focus currently), increasing welfare standards for fishes in aquacultures (second current focus) or reducing the amount of animal products that are used (work we are currently preparing). We also use rankings to compare animal welfare standards of retailers and to compare the vegan selection of retailers, pizza delivery companies, and bakery chains. Mostly as a result of our rankings, we receive requests from companies to work with them in order to increase their animal welfare standards or in order to improve their vegan selection. Finally, we are expanding our work internationally.

Outcomes the program aims to achieve: We aim to achieve broiler commitments, cage-free commitments, aquaculture commitments, and better animal welfare standards/policies.

Interventions employed to achieve this outcome: Outreach by mail, email, phone, fax; carrots (praise, opportunity to present themselves as leaders in animal welfare); sticks (listing companies as not being up to par with their peers); rankings; providing background information; website, newsletter and free consulting geared towards the food industry.

### **How do you measure the outcomes of this program?**

- Counting, documenting, and annually tracking the commitments we receive.
- Weighing the commitments/implementation based on revenues; estimated or real amounts of animal products used; influence of the company within their sector and food industry overall.
- Tracking the development of welfare standards/policies of retailers.

- Tracking KPIs of our website and newsletter geared towards the food industry: subscribers (new, cancelled), open and click rates, time on site.

### **Do you collaborate with other organizations in this program?**

Yes. We are a very active member of the Open Wing Alliance (OWA) where we share knowledge and know-how, information, and input. Some OWA members also use our online tool for ranking the vegan range of retailers. We are also part of the OWA Advisory Committee. Within OWA, we mostly closely collaborate with THL, L214, Anima International, and Animal Equality.

We also work with some organizations that are not part of OWA such as CIWF, ProVeg, Veganuary, Fish Welfare Initiative, and some smaller German organizations. This work tends to be very specific:

- CIWF: Mahi Klosterhalfen is a board member and discusses strategy etc.
- ProVeg: vegan-friendliness rankings
- Veganuary: encouraging food businesses to sign up
- Fish Welfare Initiative: sharing thoughts and plans
- Smaller German organizations: doing some joint outreach geared towards retailers

### **What are your top 5 biggest outcomes for this program prior to 2019?**

1. Getting almost the entire German food industry to go cage-free (commitments already implemented). As a result, the share of cage egg production decreased from 87% to 10%. The German government also listed “low economic importance” as a reason to ban all remaining cage systems (colony cages) by 2025 (can be prolonged to 2028 due to economic hardship of individual producers).
2. Getting the German retail industry and producers to agree on banning beak searing (laying hens). This is also already implemented.
3. Getting all the top German retailers to join our aquaculture initiative and to sign a LOI stating that they’ll work on increasing fish welfare in aquaculture.
4. Getting all the relevant German retailers to publish animal welfare policies and to regularly upgrade their policy (often by working directly with us).
5. We expanded our work to Poland where we set up a daughter foundation that had 32 cage-free victories in 2018.

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## Program 2

**Program name:** Corporate Campaigns

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**Date commenced:** 2018 (with sporadic campaigning prior to that)

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**Description:**

Nature of this program: When a company doesn't make the commitments we ask for, we may decide to run a campaign against the company. We are expanding this work internationally.

Outcomes we aim to achieve: Getting the commitments we were looking for and creating domino effects in individual sectors (e.g. winning a campaign against a major caterer can lead to additional caterer commitments that don't require campaigns). A bonus is that a campaign sometimes leads to better relationships with the company we targeted (this depends on several factors - including how far we had to escalate the campaign). We have gotten the impression that companies take us even more seriously after experiencing a campaign.

Interventions employed to achieve the outcomes: The interventions include increased pressure in our negotiations, involving additional decision makers and stakeholders in order to increase pressure, online campaigning, and offline campaigning.

**How do you measure the outcomes of this program?**

- Counting, documenting, and annually tracking the commitments we receive.
- Weighing the commitments/implementation based on revenues; estimated or real amounts of animal products used; influence of the company within their sector and food industry overall.

**Do you collaborate with other organizations in this program?**

Yes, we run joint (mostly multinational) campaigns with other organisations. This can take two forms: We either coordinate the campaign or we join a campaign run by another group. In both cases, these are usually OWA-groups such as THL, L214, Animal Equality, Anima, and many others (the number of groups depends on which countries our target company works in and who has capacities to join).

**What are your top 5 biggest outcomes for this program prior to 2019?**

1. Transformed our department for offline consumer outreach into a campaigns department.
2. Won a broiler campaign against food manufacturing giant Dr. Oetker (European commitment, we were the only group campaigning).
3. Developed and won a cage-free campaign against Marriott (OWA effort with our campaign concept setting new standards). As a result, Hyatt followed suit.

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## Program 3

**Program name:** Legal work

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**Date commenced:** 2017 (some legal work done before)

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### **Description:**

Nature of this program: We file lawsuits with the goal of getting verdicts stating that common practices in factory farming are in violation of the German animal welfare law. Whether an organization has the right to sue depends on several factors including which federal state they are based in. ASF is based in Berlin which is only set to introduce suing rights for animal protection groups in the fall or winter of 2020. This is why we work with other groups who formally sue but let us run the entire process for them [somewhat confidential: officially we are cooperating]. Even though the lawsuits are started in a specific federal state and are based on a specific farm, the court rulings have national impact as animal welfare law is national.

Besides the lawsuits above, we run other lawsuits to clarify important questions such as: How far does the German Freedom of Information Act go when it comes to animal welfare issues? Under which circumstances are undercover investigations legal?

The nature of this work is that it can take five years or more to receive a final court ruling by the second or third instance. Hence, our record is relatively short. However, we are perfectly equipped to run this work as we have two legal experts as board members, of which one (Hans-Georg Kluge) is considered one of the top legal animal welfare law experts in Germany (one of two people to be the author of a legal commentary on the topic - the other author is on our Scientific Advisory Board).

Outcomes we aim to achieve: Court rulings stating that common factory farming practices are illegal under German law. Thereby prohibiting these practices (including overbreeding). There is a theoretical option that, after successful lawsuits, the government could worsen the animal welfare law (which it is currently trying to do to legalize gestation crates). However, animal welfare is part of the German constitution and a national objective, which makes it relatively easy to legally challenge such moves.

Interventions employed to achieve the outcomes: filing lawsuits, commissioning expert assessments

**How do you measure the outcomes of this program?**

By analyzing the court rulings we receive

**Do you collaborate with other organizations in this program?**

Yes, we collaborate with organizations that have the right to sue. Most notably, Animal Rights Watch (ARIWA) and Menschen für Tierrechte Baden-Württemberg. Nature of collaboration: see above.

**What are your top 5 biggest outcomes for this program prior to 2019?**

1. Our board member Hans-Georg Kluge defended investigators in an important, groundbreaking case: It was decided that investigations are generally legal in Germany, if the investigators have reason to believe that the animal welfare law is broken (which they can easily argue).
2. Funded a lawsuit against the Minister of Agriculture in NRW (German federal state that has a lot of factory farming) who kept her pigs under horrible conditions as an investigation showed. The Minister stepped back in the wake of the scandal. The new Minister of Ag is a lot more animal welfare friendly.
3. Co-funded a lawsuit that prohibited an investor to relaunch “pig production” in a giant factory farm of the former German Democratic Republic (the factory farmer is still trying to appeal this decision).

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Program 4

**Program name:** Capacity building

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**Date commenced:** 2012

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**Description:**

Nature of this program: Providing knowledge and quality management services based on data, research findings and insights for ASF and (new focus) the animal protection movement. The two focus areas are:

- farmed animals: veterinary knowledge, information on animal use and production, and developing asks for different target groups (could be expanded to other exploited animals)
- helping NGOs with their quality management

While we have been doing this work mostly internally, we are now in the process of spinning this/similar work off into a new organization that is set up to do capacity building for the entire movement.

Outcomes we aim to achieve: giving NGOs greater insight and better understanding of (i) animal protection issues and (ii) working conditions, internal standards and processes

Both is aimed at helping NGOs build more effective and efficient decision making processes and higher credibility with their target groups (food businesses, politicians, journalists, influencers, etc.).

Interventions employed to achieve the outcomes: researching and compiling animal welfare science literature, working with groups on specific organizational matters, evaluating programs.

**How do you measure the outcomes of this program?**

Via monitoring, surveys, data collection, audits.

**Do you collaborate with other organizations in this program?**

Yes. We have worked with several - mostly German - organisations in the past: Bundesverband Tierschutz, Bund gegen Missbrauch der Tiere, Menschen für Tierrechte, ProVieh, Vier Pfoten, Förderkreis Biozyklisch-Veganer Anbau. The new focus is to greatly increase services for other organisations.

**What are your top 5 biggest outcomes for this program prior to 2019?**

1. Conducting workshops for ASF and other NGOs on burnout prevention and stress
2. Developing welfare asks on topics such as “improving the welfare of chicks and laying hens with the goal to end beak dearing without creating new welfare problems” and “priorities for improving dairy cow welfare” - both had impact on actual developments

3. Evaluating ASF's "Even If You Like Meat" brochure in cooperation with a university which lead to improvements.
4. Developing a project management handbook which lead to more structured project management (especially for large projects). Also developing a "light version" for smaller projects.
5. Developing a fact-sheet on the topic of vegan-organic produce for retailers which lead to some talks with producers.

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### **How does your organization's work fit into the overall animal advocacy movement?**

We see ASF as a piece of the puzzle to end factory farming and we are working hard to be an important piece.

This means that we are focussing on programs that are relatively neglected by the movement in the countries we operate in. We are also focusing on programs where we think we can add value to the movement.

Examples are: Several German organizations are active in political lobbying. In most cases, we do not think we can add a lot of value, so political lobbying in Germany is not a priority for us. On the other hand, we were the first group in Germany to focus on corporate outreach and corporate campaigns. And to date besides Animal Equality Germany having a small team for this, nobody is very active in this area in Germany. The same goes for our legal work and for our capacity building work: noone is really focussing on that in Germany so there is a chance for us to add a lot of value without having to step on anybody's toes.

We also put a lot of emphasis on working with other groups as combining our forces can yield great results. We are coordinating co-operations as well as joining teams coordinated by other groups. We are also sharing knowledge, ideas, and lessons learned with other groups.

### **How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your organization's ability to carry out your programs?**

We feel that the answers we gave in the Coronavirus Update we have sent to ACE are still valid. Excerpts:

In light of Covid-19 we have paused all pressure campaigns and our offline consumer outreach activities. Our corporate outreach team re-focused their efforts on businesses that were not negatively impacted by the lockdown measures like retailers and delivery services. Regarding our messaging we have published two articles on the connection between humankind's hunger for animal products and pandemics. The first of these articles was accompanied by a press

release demanding that stakeholders in politics, science, and business consider factory farming as a risk factor for future pandemics and the promotion of plant based alternatives as a solution. We received a few follow up questions and interview requests from the media. We had them answered by one of the members of our scientific advisory board who also authored the article.

Additionally, we are now highlighting pandemic risks as well as the risk of the development of antibiotic resistance in our corporate outreach. This will play an even bigger role once we launch our meat reduction work.

Since our financial situation is relatively stable and (with some small adjustments) all staff members still had meaningful work to do, we did not have to layoff or furlough anyone. We even stuck to our plan to slightly increase wages (levels are still below large German NGOs) and to hire for positions we had already budgeted for. This will allow us to come out of this crisis stronger than we entered it.

Early in the crisis, animal welfare became less meaningful to politicians, the media, and the general public [addition: the same was true for food companies]. We are now seeing this effect reversing step by step.

Beyond the forced slowdown of some of our programs, we haven't curbed our expenses.

The overall picture is that COVID-19 put a foot on the brake for spending growth. While it is unfortunate that our work slowed down a little, this is not a big issue operationally. We do hope to return to our growth path soon.

**Have you taken any steps to improve programs that you deemed less successful (due to COVID-19 or otherwise)?**

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our programs. This includes tweaks such as fine-tuning our wording and tone (recently: a little more decisive) when communicating with companies, running a/b tests on our websites etc. This also includes bigger improvements such as working on our project templates, internal communication etc. for our campaigns (a relatively new program, so naturally more room for improvements).

The biggest program improvement we are currently working on is our fundraising. Our weakness is lead generation (has been for some time). Even though our fundraising is going well overall, we do need to make it more future-proof by generating more leads of which some percentage will turn into donors and/or active supporters over time. While we had challenges finding the right person for this work (the hiring market for fundraisers is extremely tough in Germany and we mutually agreed with one fundraiser we hired that she was not the right fit), we have now found two external consultants who are specialized in fundraising and lead generation. They are both of great help and we now expect to re-launch our lead generation activities in August 2020.

**Have you cut off any unsuccessful programs to make room for other ones (due to COVID-19 or otherwise)?**

We are in the process of spinning off our capacity building activities, but this is not due to them being unsuccessful. The reason is that having two groups with clear focus areas and different target groups makes a lot of sense to us. This also solves some internal issues such as reducing the degree of complexity of ASF. Please see the Program Tables for more information.