

Compassionate Action for Animals

Annual Report 2010



It seems like the word “vegan” was everywhere in 2010. Bill Clinton went mostly vegan, Chloe Coscarelli won the *Cupcake Wars* with her vegan cupcakes, and multiple books about veganism hit the New York Times’ best-seller list. Meanwhile, we saw shocking videos of abuse hit the mainstream media. Public concern about animals is growing, and people are waking up to the reality of factory farming. In 2010, Compassionate Action for Animals helped foster that concern in many ways. We held our third annual *Their Lives, Our Voices* conference, bringing together animal advocates from across the country. Our summer food giveaway program gave food and leaflets to more than 12,000 people. Bridges of Respect, our humane education program, reached out to more than 2,000 students, teaching them about how humans use and abuse animals.

Our community-building efforts have also been going strong. We held dozens of events, including potlucks, dine-outs, Vegan After Dark events, cooking classes, and more. It’s been a joy to see so many people getting together, enjoying good food, and having a good time. At our Thanksgiving Potluck, more than 100 people showed up to share food and celebrate a cruelty-free Thanksgiving.

We look forward to doing all this and more in 2011. While veganism may be going mainstream, there are still countless animals in need of our help. We know that the efforts of animal advocates like all of us are crucial in order to bring respect and justice to animals.

I was very impressed by how you’re spending the dollars you have to work with. It sounds so responsibly run, efficiently and with so much passion... I’m very grateful for the work you do for the animals, for us as humans, for the planet... – Becky Waller, donor

Literature Distribution

The CAA literature distribution program asks businesses to display literature about animal advocacy in their establishments. Primarily, this is a Vegetarian Starter Kit containing information about how farm animals are treated, along with information on how to move towards a cruelty-free lifestyle. The photographs in the kit provide a stark visual display of where animal foods come from.

Amanda Lewis, one of our literature distribution volunteers, says:

The most inspiring aspect of Literature Distribution was the conversations I had with people as I visited businesses. People had genuine interest in the message that I was working to convey. Many individuals that I spoke with had misconceptions about vegetarianism and factory farming that I was able to address. It was incredibly rewarding to talk with people and feel that they were taking the information to heart. One man, in particular, was a self-confessed "meat lover." After convincing him that meatless meals can be delicious and filling, he agreed to try one of my favorite tofu recipes for dinner. It felt terrific to be able to share my passions for animal welfare and convince someone to try something new. If I was able to inspire even one person to make a lasting lifestyle change as a result of my efforts with literature distribution, I believe that my time was well spent.



Food Giveaways

"Wow. That actually tastes really good." At first, a college student who had skipped breakfast was annoyed to hear that the free chicken nuggets being distributed on campus were not actually chicken, but a vegan substitute. "There's no way that tastes like a chicken nugget," he said, begrudgingly taking a bite. After one satisfying taste, the surprised student decided to try some other veg foods and even left with a pamphlet about factory farming and vegetarian diets.

We have found that the best way to people's hearts is quite often through their stomachs. Many are delighted to discover that going veg doesn't have to mean giving up some of their favorite foods.

Thanks to a generous donation from one of our biggest supporters, CAA was able to expand our Food Giveaway program in 2010. In addition to the Annual Vegan Food Showcase on the University of Minnesota campus, we distributed samples of delicious vegan food at several Twin Cities area festivals and events. One of the biggest successes of 2010 was CAA's food giveaway booth at Grand Old Day, the largest one-day festival in the Midwest. Throughout the event, volunteers distributed an estimated 27,000 food samples to attendees, many of whom had never even tried a veggie burger before! At the same time, activists were able to engage festival-goers in conversation about factory farming and distribute thousands of pieces of literature.

Food Giveaways work because they allow us to approach the public in a fun and friendly manner. Rather than presenting veg diets as restrictive and boring, we showcase a wide variety of delicious animal-friendly foods. Nothing makes someone more likely to accept a leaflet than having just tried some delicious vegan food.



Dine-outs and Vegan After Dark

Part of CAA's community-building program is creating social events for people interested in animal advocacy and vegetarianism. These events are a chance for people to meet others with similar values, and are also just a lot of fun. Our community-building work provides resources, advice, support, and inspiration for people who care about animals.

Our dine-out and Vegan After Dark programs are part of our community-building efforts. We held 21 dine-outs and Vegan After Dark events in 2010. Our dine-out program provides a place for folks to meet over dinner at a local vegan-friendly restaurant for great food and conversation. Our Vegan After Dark events focus on nightlife activities at local bars and restaurants.

Here's some of the feedback we've gotten from these events:

"It was my first time meeting everyone, but it was a fun, friendly night with good food and good times."

"What an unusually thoughtful and interesting group of folks. The vegan pizza was great, too."

"Great company, great food. What more could you ask for on a Wednesday evening?"

"Great fries, great service and beer, and a wonderful time socializing with cool people!"

Spring Speaker

This spring, Compassionate Action for Animals brought cookbook author and animal advocate Colleen Patrick-Goudreau to the University of Minnesota to speak on behalf of animals. Colleen's speech, entitled "From Excuse-itarian to Vegetarian," captivated the audience, tackling such excuses as "I tried eating vegetarian, but I just craved meat" and "being vegan is too expensive" with wit, grace, and insight. We reached many veg-curious and sympathetic people from the University and surrounding community.

After the speech, CAA held a free catered reception where guests could mingle and reflect on the presentation while enjoying some delicious vegan food. The reception featured cheesecake from Muddy Paws and a variety of cookies and cakes from the Wedge. Many people stayed for the reception, allowing long-time vegans a chance to talk with those who wanted to learn more. During the reception, Colleen Patrick-Goudreau signed copies of her book and answered individual questions or concerns people had.

With the help of a small group of dedicated volunteers and Colleen Patrick-Goudreau, we encouraged attendees to think about the issues of factory farming and animal cruelty.



Thea Frederickson offers free food after the event.

Cooking Classes

Compassionate Action for Animals held four cooking classes in 2010. These classes provide fun and inexpensive instruction on cooking a variety of vegan foods. Class topics have included raw foods, Halloween party foods, and a Thanksgiving meal.

We make the classes accessible to as many people as possible by putting up fliers at local co-ops and coffee shops and posting on online forums, as well as advertising on our own

email lists. The classes are held near the U of M campus at Van Cleve Community Center, which is easy to find and has free parking. The cost of each class is \$10 or less—much less than others offered in the area—and includes recipe cards and generous samples.

By getting more people interested and educated about vegan food, and by showing them that it's easy to make and tastes great, we help people transition to a plant-based diet.

VegGuide.Org

Compassionate Action for Animals' VegGuide.org website, a resource for veg-friendly restaurants and shopping, continues to grow by leaps and bounds. The site surpassed 12,000 entries in December 2010 and is hands-down the definitive source for finding veg-friendly food in North America, Australia, and many parts of Europe (particularly Italy, England, and Denmark). The site has more than 8,000 users, more than 9,000 reviews, and more than 14,000 ratings.

Our VegGuide Facebook fan page also has seen massive growth. We see the marketing potential of Facebook and create daily content that attracts new users and gets existing fans of VegGuide to contribute more to the site. From November 2010 to February 2011, our Facebook fans grew by 50%, and that growth rate is holding steady.

By making vegetarian and vegan food and shopping more accessible, VegGuide helps people adopt and stick with a cruelty-free lifestyle. In the past, we've heard from many people that shopping and eating out as a vegetarian was a hassle, but with VegGuide that problem no longer exists. Now the problem is finding an opportunity to try all the great options listed on the site!



Bridges of Respect

Bridges of Respect provides free humane education presentations in classrooms around the Twin Cities. In 2010, we gave 77 presentations to middle school, high school, and college students, reaching more than 2,300 students. Our presentations cover a variety of issues, including the use of animals in science and entertainment, environmental ethics, the great apes, and animal rights as a modern social justice movement.

We most often give presentations about food issues in health and food-related classes. This gives us a great opportunity to help students learn about where their food comes from and how their food choices impact farmed animals. Learning about animal agriculture and veganism can come as an awakening to many students.

After our presentations, we provide students with vegan food samples, including vegan jerky, soy milk, and almond milk. At three of our "Our Food Our World" presentations last year, we had the chance to provide warm food samples to 90 sophomore and juniors at Johnson Senior High. The classroom had a full kitchen, so we were able to bake some vegan chicken nuggets for each presentation. Every student sampled a few nuggets. Many of the students had something positive to say about the samples and the presentation. Our favorite was a student who said, "I could eat these instead of chicken forever." Our thoughts exactly.

Leafleting

Handing out leaflets is a quick, cheap, and effective way to raise awareness about the cruelties of factory farming. When selecting events, we try to target young adults, since they're so open to questioning the status quo and changing their lifestyle. Leafleting is a great way to reach new people who haven't heard our message of compassion and respect for animals.

In 2010, more than 15 volunteers handed out more than 10,000 leaflets at concerts, colleges, and local events. Our past experience tells us that dozens of people will move towards a more animal-friendly lifestyle because of this work.

Volunteers and Staff

Our volunteers and staff pour their time, energy, and hearts into advocating for animals.

With more than 100 volunteers serving the organization, the bulk of our work continues to be done by people who are dedicated to our mission of helping animals. We are proud to draw from the strongest sources our movement has: volunteer energy as well as a strong moral argument that animals deserve fair treatment.

Volunteers lead the planning and implementation of every major event and project; volunteers help execute events; and volunteers help out with all of our administration, fund-raising, and communication work. Our board of directors, which is composed entirely of volunteers, determines our strategy for animal advocacy and also plays a crucial role in fund-raising and organizational coordination.

Ben Kutscheid served as our full-time Director of Volunteer Programs for the first seven months of 2010. Ben's passion for vegan food, as well as his gregarious nature, served CAA well. He has continued to serve CAA as a volunteer, including teaching cooking classes and organizing our 2011 Vegan Chili Cook-off.

Danielle Smith started last August as our new Director of Volunteer Programs, replacing Ben. Danielle founded an animal advocacy organization while in school at St. Cloud State University, where she completed her Master's degree in Social Responsibility. Danielle brings a refreshing open-mindedness and dedication to improve her skills and grow the movement.

Unny Nambudiripad continued his position as half-time Development Coordinator, overseeing CAA's fund-raising

and organizational development. Unny's relentless energy in advocating for animals, his passion for nonprofit excellence, and his networking ability all help CAA advocate for animals.

Potlucks

Potlucks are a fun way to bring people together to share vegan food and recipes. By helping Twin Cities residents connect with other vegan food enthusiasts, we spread the word on how to cook great vegan food at home. This, in turn, helps people incorporate more plant-based foods into their diet. By building social connections, the potlucks also help to foster a supportive pro-animal culture in the Twin Cities.

We held four potlucks in 2010: Valentine's, Spring, Veg Month, and Thanksgiving. The Thanksgiving potluck is our biggest of the year. More than 120 people attended this event at the Matthews Recreation Center in Minneapolis on November 20. Besides sharing delicious vegan food, we held a raffle, which included a gift basket with vegan "cheese," *Do It Green!* magazines, a year's subscription to the *Vegetarian Journal*, and much more.

Most of those in attendance brought a dish to share, and we had an enormous variety of dishes from which to choose, from traditional Tofurky and Field Roast to several stuffings, hearty soups and hot dishes, and—of course—many decadent desserts.



We hosted our third Their Lives, Our Voices (TLOV) conference in June, gathering animal advocates together for a weekend of networking and learning about the latest news in the animal protection movement. We featured numerous speakers and workshops on a variety of topics.

We heard a definite trend emerge from this year's speakers: Communication is key. Many of the speakers emphasized the need for clear, effective, and influential communication. Nick Cooney talked about how we can use psychological research to best shape our message. Vic Sjodin offered a variety of tips for effective leafleting. And Zoe Weil gave a talk titled "Positive Communication for Animals."

In 2010, TLOV also featured our youngest speaker ever. Alex Berkson, a local fourth grader, spoke to a full auditorium about his experience presenting veganism to his peers. It was inspiring to see such a young person stand up so confidently for his beliefs.

The ultimate message we can all take away from TLOV 2010 is the importance of being good ambassadors for animals. We each need to present a positive view of veganism, breaking down negative stereotypes of the "angry animal rights activist."

Jon Camp, Vegan Outreach's Directory of Outreach, said: "Having been entrenched in the animal advocacy movement for over a decade and having attended dozens of conferences, I can often get a bit jaded in thinking that I have heard pretty much all there is to be heard from animal advocates. Yet each time I attend TLOV, I find myself looking at the program and saying, 'This is a talk that interests me.' And I go to the talk, and I learn something new. The organizers at CAA have their fingers acutely on the pulse of what is relevant, groundbreaking, and truly helpful to animals. If you haven't yet attended TLOV, I wholeheartedly recommend that you do so."

Veg Month 2011

In 2010, we hosted our first-ever Veg Month, extending our

Veg Week into a month-long series of events. Our focus was on educating the public about factory farming and engaging the community with fun events centered around plant-based foods. We challenged participants to reconsider the roles of animals in their lives and introduced them to new vegan foods by asking them to take our Pledge to be Veg. Pledge participants committed to being vegetarian or vegan for anywhere from one week to one month.

At our eighth annual Vegan Food Showcase on September 29, we distributed vegan food samples to about 1,000 people and had 120 people take the Pledge to be Veg. As always, students were enthusiastic about the free food and open to receiving booklets and taking the Pledge.

Our kick-off event was our World of Veg tasting event. More than 50 attendees sampled a variety of vegan food provided by our volunteers. The atmosphere was festive, and attendees had a great time.

Later in the month, Isa Chandra Moskowitz, one of the most popular vegan chefs in the country, came to speak at the University of Minnesota. Isa did a cooking demonstration and spoke on veganism and cooking. At the reception afterwards, Isa signed books, and attendees tried delicious vegan food.

We also held several other events, including a panel on Judaism and vegetarianism, Vegan After Dark events, dine-outs, and a closing party. These events provided an opportunity for many people, especially the pledgers, to learn more about factory farming, animal cruelty, and veganism.



Attendees get Isa Chandra Moskowitz cookbooks

Financial Report

Income

Category	Amount
Individual Donations	\$64,200
Grants	\$16,800
Programs	\$13,700
Total	\$94,700

Expenses

Category	Amount
Administration (mostly office)	\$11,100
Fund-raising	\$17,900
Merchandise	\$500
Program breakdown	
- Summer food giveaway program	\$24,600
- Their Lives, Our Voices 2010	\$16,100
- Veg Month 2010	\$8,200
- Spring speaker	\$2,900
- Other outreach/education	\$13,600
Total	\$94,900

Ending balance for 2010: \$33,700

CAA Thanks Our Donors

Compassionate Action for Animals would like to publicly thank our top donors for their support of our work. These listings are based on two years of donation history, from January 2009 through December 2010.

Animal Guardians (\$1,000+ cumulative)

Dave Chizek
Brad Johnson
Lisa Kimball
Matt Mackall
Godan and Savithry Nambudiripad

Dave Rolsky
Joan and Jared Rolsky
Suzanne Sorensen
Valerie Stoehr
Anonymous (2)

Animal Protectors (\$500-999 cumulative)

Jan Taksa
John Thompson
Valerie Tiberius
Becky Waller

Animal Allies (\$200-499 cumulative)

Pia Ackerman
Carla Blumberg
Marly Cornell and Ernie Feil
Kedar Deshpande
Sharad Deshpande
Jan Gonder
Martha Gorak
Justin Leaf
Guptan and Seema Nambudiripad
Gregory Oschwald
Steven Palacios
Kathryn Quam
Harish Sethu and Denise Tremblay
Patrick Tullo
Lisa Vague
Claudia Wondra
Anonymous (4)



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To inspire respect for animals and promote vegetarianism through outreach, education, and community building.