MERCY FOR ANIMALS

Theory of Change and 10-Year Strategy

(2025–2035)

2025–2035 Strategy

This will be a transformational decade for farmed animals. You can be part of it.

Every year, **more than 80 billion land animals are slaughtered** for food while billions more languish in factory farms. When we include aquatic animals, the number of victims rises to trillions per year—an unimaginable scale of suffering.

Confined in crates and crowded cages, unable to do anything natural to them, and routinely subjected to painful mutilations, **these animals endure immense agony**.

Mother pigs, as intelligent as three-year-old children, are kept in cramped, solitary metal crates. Isolated and barely able to move, **these sensitive beings are denied essential natural behaviors**; instead of making cozy nests and cuddling or playing with other pigs, they live in fear, with no comfort or relief.

Chickens, who mourn the deaths of close flockmates, use calls to communicate ideas, and even count, are viewed as mere commodities. Crammed into barren, overcrowded sheds, they can barely stretch their wings or walk. Stripped of any semblance of a normal life, they await death in filthy litter, dim artificial light, and ammonia that burns their eyes, lungs, and skin.

Cows, gentle and nurturing mothers who bond deeply with their calves, experience endless heartbreak as every newborn calf is taken from them.

These sentient beings—**who, like us, feel fear, pain, and loss**—live in conditions that prioritize profit over their well-being. Their suffering is not a distant or isolated tragedy but a daily reality. **We cannot stand by as the factory-farming system continues to thrive.**

Our broken food systems are one of the greatest causes of suffering. They also significantly contribute to global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and a range of social injustices.

> It's time for us to take a stand, to demand that we end the cruelty and continue building a world that honors the inherent worth of all living beings. ***Join us.***

The World We Fight For

Mercy For Animals believes that a world where all animals are respected, protected, and free is within our reach.

To realize this bold vision, we have developed a theory of change—a roadmap that guides our strategy by clarifying the chain of actions that will bring about the lasting change we are fighting for. It maps the outcomes of our activities to our short- and long-term goals and the fulfillment of these goals to completing our mission: **to end industrial animal agriculture**.

> Our theory of change is the foundation of our ambitious 10-year strategy (2025–2035), which aims to dramatically reduce large-scale animal suffering, build mass support for food-system change, and make plant-based eating not only easy and accessible but essential to solving the world's climate crisis.

Our Theory of Change

Changing the lives of farmed animals is an immense challenge. The cruelty imposed on billions of them every day is kept quiet and out of sight. Eating is culturally deep-rooted and often institutional. And the stories we hear about our food and farming system are told by the powerful industries that profit from it.

The path to a better future for animals is long, **so we must act now**, and we must ensure that our next steps lead to the change we envision. **Our theory of change outlines our long-term vision and mission and maps them to the steps needed to achieve them.**

Our Ambition

We picture a 50-year milestone in our fight to end the brutality and other grave injustices of factory farming. Success, through a global lens into 2075, looks like this:

- The number of animals in factory farms has dropped dramatically and is on track to zero.
- The remaining factory-farmed animals experience dramatically reduced suffering.
- Plant-based foods are much more cost-effective to produce and consume than factory-farmed products.
- Laws, policies, and regulatory frameworks support the abolition of factory farming.
- Mass demand for animal products no longer exists.

Achieving this milestone scenario will prime the landscape for the steps that finally turn factory farming into a dust heap of history.

Focus Areas

To reach our 50-year milestone, we have identified and clearly defined three key work areas:

1. **Reduce Large-Scale Suffering**
   We continue to collaborate with—and pressure—major food companies and policymakers to end the greatest suffering for the greatest number of animals by ending some of the cruelest factory-farming practices. Ten years from now, we will have impacted the lives of hundreds of millions of animals worldwide.

2. **Build Mass Support and Shift Narratives**
   People are at the heart of change, and building opposition to factory farming starts with campaigns focused on practices that the general public finds morally unacceptable. Using bold new marketing tactics, we will change the current narratives that cast farmed animals as mere commodities and inspire more people to engage, speak out, and advocate policies that create lasting change for farmed animals.

3. **Lessen Demand for Animal Products**
   We believe one of the most effective ways to reduce demand for animal products is to make plant-based eating the norm. By creating tipping points in the behavior of key social groups, we can create ripple effects in their broader networks. We will champion plant-forward policies in more schools, hospitals, restaurants, and other foodservice settings, ensuring plant-based options are accessible and appealing and advocating that they be the default choice. We will also continue to collaborate with governments and intergovernmental organizations to position plant-based eating as a key solution to the climate crisis.

Our 10-Year Global Priorities

Our goals for 2035 are ambitious, so all our efforts must support and advance them. Over the next 10 years, we will focus on making real progress in five key areas to move us closer to our vision.

Our Five Global Priorities

Priority 1
Reduce Large-Scale Suffering for Animals Trapped in the Food System
Reduce large-scale suffering for laying hens and chickens raised for meat

Priority 2
Build Mass Support and Shift Narratives
Campaign on practices the general public finds morally unacceptable to change the narrative about treatment of farmed animals and create more active supporters

Priority 5
Normalize Plant-Based Options in Institutions
Normalize plant-based options in institutions by advocating veg defaults and plant-forward policies, such as food-purchasing agreements

Priority 3
Influence Government Bodies to Include Plant-Based Eating as a Crucial Solution in Climate Plans
Persuade key government bodies to include shifts toward plant-based eating in climate solution plans

Priority 4
Change Behavior in Key Social Groups
Create behavioral tipping points within key social groups that create ripple effects in their broader networks and change societal norms

How We Will Succeed Together

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Our Three Focus Areas

01	02	03
REDUCE LARGE-SCALE SUFFERING	BUILD MASS SUPPORT AND SHIFT NARRATIVES	LESSEN DEMAND FOR ANIMAL PRODUCTS

Our Five Global Priorities

P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Reduce Large-Scale Suffering for Animals Trapped in the Food System Laying Hens, Chickens Raised for Meat	**Build Mass Support and Shift Narratives** Campaign on practices the general public finds morally unacceptable to change the narrative about treatment of farmed animals and create more active supporters	**Influence Government Bodies to Include Plant-Based Eating as a Crucial Solution in Climate Plans**	**Change Behavior in Key Social Groups**	**Normalize Plant-Based Options in Institutions**

Our Goals for the Next Two Years

Impact 96 million animals	Amass 60,000 active supporters	Secure 14 climate-related policies that support plant-based food systems	Get 1,000 people in key communities to take their first movement-related actions	Move food providers to advance plant-forward policies at 45,000 locations

Our Global Priorities (2025–2035)

Over the next 10 years, five global priorities will drive our strategy. Each is rooted in one of our three focus areas to ensure our efforts align with our mission and 50-year vision.

1. Reducing Large-Scale Suffering for Animals Trapped in the Food System

We focus on ending the cruelest industry practices that impact the greatest number of animals. Our focus for the next few years are chickens used for eggs and meat because they are farmed for food in the highest numbers. Chickens make up more than 90% of the billions of land animals slaughtered each year, and the second-most-farmed land animals are laying hens. Policies such as the Better Chicken Commitment (BCC) can reduce the time an animal spends in excruciating pain by 78%. The BCC is a highly cost-effective intervention, and we believe it will continue to be.

Through annual animal welfare reports, such as the Canada Animal Welfare Scorecard, International Cage-Free Equity Index, and Corporate Animal Initiatives Monitor, we will continue to hold companies accountable to their customers and the public by urging progress reports and published plans for completing their transitions.

2. Increasing Public Support and Changing Narratives

We will strive to shift conversations about farmed animals through strategic global campaigns that change how people see, talk about, and understand farmed animals and our food system.

By leveraging powerful storytelling, compelling imagery, and evidence-based messaging, we will challenge deeply ingrained narratives that reduce animals to commodities and elevate factory farming.

Through campaigns that highlight the myriad harms of factory farming to animals, people, and the planet, as well as the sentience, intelligence, and emotional depth of farmed animals, we will foster empathy and a sense of moral responsibility.

We aim to create a lasting change in how society views and treats these animals and inspire more engagement in the movement by encouraging the general public to recognize farmed animals as individuals deserving of care and protection and factory farming as a destructive industry that benefits no one.

By doing that, we also aim to build a strong force of support, moving hundreds of thousands of neutral people to passive and active supporters of our cause.

3. Influencing Climate Policy

According to the United Nations, animal agriculture is responsible for 14.5% of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, more than the direct emissions from the entire global transportation sector.

Although the vast majority of conversations about climate events are still around fossil fuels, it's imperative to say that **we cannot effectively mitigate climate change without addressing our food system**.

Through campaigns and collaboration with scientists and climate advocates, we will highlight the need for plant-based food systems to combat climate change, engaging policymakers to urge governments and other institutions to include plant-based eating as a solution in climate action plans.

We aim to ensure that plant-based eating is recognized not only as an individual choice but as a necessary systemic change to curb the climate crisis.

4. Changing Behavior Within Key Communities

We will target specific cities and other locations and make them Future Food Cities, which will model plant-based eating hubs for a global audience.

Our strategy is to use a three-step approach to reach tipping points in these strategically chosen locations:

- Heavily invest in targeted marketing and advertising, as well as conduct guerrilla marketing actions
- Organize people in the target communities, prioritizing selected social groups to build an unstoppable force
- Influence all foodservice locations in the targeted areas to offer predominantly plant-based options

Our new ultra-targeted approach combined with marketing and organizing tactics aims to create Future Food Cities where a large portion of their citizens eat predominantly plant-based.

We will strategically engage key networks through influential opinion leaders to drive meaningful cultural change. By identifying and collaborating with these leaders, we will amplify messages that challenge existing community norms and encourage shifts in beliefs and behavior.

5. Normalizing Plant-Based Eating in Institutions

We continue to collaborate with key schools, restaurants, coffee shops, and other foodservice establishments to secure and implement plant-forward policies that increase access to plant-based food and beverages.

By partnering with institutions, policymakers, and industry leaders, we secure menu and food-purchasing changes, equal pricing for plant-based choices, and other outcomes that prioritize plant-based options.

Our efforts focus on making plant-based choices not only available but appealing, affordable, and mainstream. By instilling plant-forward principles throughout these institutions, we will work to create lasting change in our food systems.

Success Factors and Organizational Capacity

Our front-end work is what will really drive our impact for animals. But behind the scenes, we will need a robust and solid foundation. We have identified eight success factors to ensure our programs run effectively.

Strong Brand Recognition and Engagement

Mercy For Animals must establish a strong, recognizable brand that resonates with key audiences. By fostering meaningful connections with individuals, organizations, and communities, we can inspire a collective sense of urgency around farmed animal issues. Building brand recognition must go beyond attracting attention; it must focus on motivating action and creating long-lasting relationships that contribute to the organization's success.

Diverse and Sustainable Funding Sources

A key to maintaining long-term impact is ensuring the financial health and sustainability of the organization. This requires diversified funding sources, including new and innovative revenue channels. By building a broad base of financial support, we can avoid becoming too dependent on any single source, safeguarding our ability to continue our vital work.

Efficient Data and Supporter-Engagement Systems

To drive more impact, we must strategically use data to inform and enhance our efforts. Our data systems should not only facilitate efficient engagement with supporters but enable us to analyze and act on insights that can improve program effectiveness. Through strategic data use we can track engagement patterns, identify key opportunities, and refine our strategies according to real-time feedback.

Agile and Innovative Teams

We believe that to end a powerful, ingrained system, we must be agile, adaptable, and innovative in our approach. In an ever-changing landscape, it's essential for staff to remain flexible and open to new ideas, adjusting quickly to shifts in the external environment. By fostering a work environment that encourages creativity and responsiveness, we can stay ahead of emerging trends and continually evolve our approach to creating impact.

Committed Volunteer Networks

A dedicated and well-organized network of volunteers is critical to scaling our efforts. Volunteers enable us to expand our capacity without adding significant resources. A strong volunteer network also builds a sense of community and shared purpose, reinforcing our mission. We will focus on creating meaningful volunteer experiences that ensure volunteers feel engaged, appreciated, and motivated to contribute to the organization's objectives.

Data-Driven Evaluation and Decision-Making Tools

In order to make informed decisions and track progress, we must rely on data-driven decision-making supported

by strong evaluation tools. These tools help measure the effectiveness of initiatives, identify areas for improvement, and inform strategic choices. By using data to assess both short-term outcomes and long-term impact, we can ensure our efforts align with our mission and goals. Regular data analysis also enables us to remain responsive and adapt strategies according to real-time insights, making them more efficient and results-oriented.

Advanced Digital Strategies Integrated with AI

As digital technologies continue to evolve, we must stay ahead of the curve by integrating advanced digital strategies, including artificial intelligence (AI), into our operations. AI can enhance a range of activities, from analyzing large sets of data to personalizing supporter outreach and improving resource allocation. By leveraging AI in a thoughtful and strategic manner, we can amplify our digital presence, reach new audiences, and optimize our operations.

Streamlined Infrastructure, Workflows, and Processes

Efficiency is critical to our ability to scale and achieve our goals. This requires a streamlined infrastructure, optimized workflows, and well-defined processes that enable us to operate smoothly and respond quickly to new opportunities. By eliminating unnecessary complexity, we can help ensure tasks are completed as efficiently as possible to maximize the impact of our resources.

MERCY FOR ANIMALS

Inspiring Compassion. Ending Cruelty.

MercyForAnimals.org