

## Mercy For Animals India Foundation: 2020 Year in Review

### Message from the CEO



We can all agree that 2020 wasn't exactly what we'd expected. From the pandemic to global social justice action, we experienced many world-changing events. The second wave of COVID-19 in India created a situation the likes of which few of us have ever witnessed. Almost no one was unaffected, but everyone—rich or poor, government or NGO—united to support one another and help mitigate the widespread pain

and suffering. At Mercy For Animals India Foundation, we too had friends and family affected. We believe nothing is more important than the health and safety of our loved ones, and only when they are protected can we make progress towards our mission of constructing a kinder food system. To this end, in addition to the leaves we provide, we gave our employees a paid week off to focus on their physical and mental health and be with their loved ones.

Yet amid all the uncertainty, Mercy For Animals India Foundation restarted operations in India in full swing and recorded many positive developments for animals. Here are just a few major highlights:

- Along with People for Animals and Humane Society International/India, Mercy For Animals submitted recommendations to the central standing committee on science and technology for the committee's report on environment, climate change, and public health, highlighting the role of animal agriculture in emerging infectious diseases.
- We began working on innovative reforms with the plant-based task force of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- In partnership with People for Animals and Ahimsa Trust, we submitted a [representation](#)





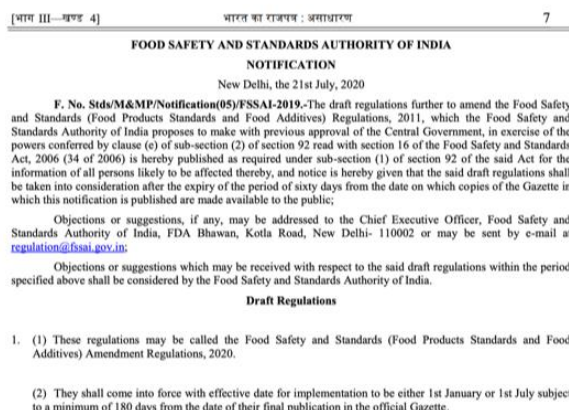
to the FSSAI to promote plant-based foods as part of their [Eat Right India](#) campaign. Our combined efforts led the FSSAI to release a host of advisories and posters promoting plant-based [eating](#) on their website and social media channels. We will continue to urge promotion of plant-based diets by the prime minister of India and FSSAI.

dairy terms. We continue to work closely with the Good Food Institute, Humane Society International, and People for Animals to reverse this amendment. We have submitted joint comments and advised plant-based dairy companies on submitting their own comments. We will also continue to oppose an FSSAI draft notification that aims to restrict use of the term 'milk' by vegan milk companies.



- Based on Mercy For Animals India Foundation's representation to FSSAI to make **labels mandatory on all vegan products** (Blue Dot) and . India's food safety regulator, FSSAI, set up a [vegan task force](#) to advocate plant-based eating. The task force has been constituted to advise the government on having a mandatory label for all vegan products (Blue Dot). We have built relationships with task force members and will continue working with them on innovative reforms in 2021.

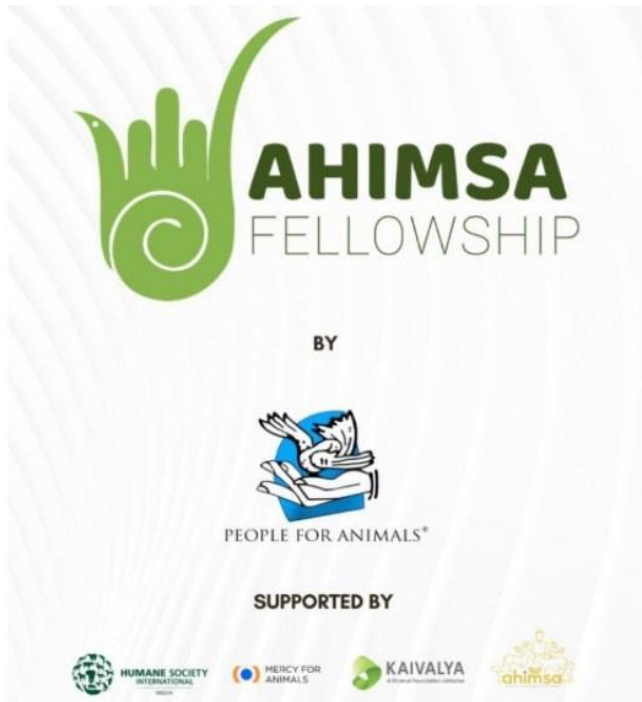
- Mercy For Animals released the '[new normal](#)' campaign, which emphasises building a new normal for animals, too, by making more compassionate food choices. Created by an award-winning Brazilian agency, the campaign video was selected twice by the Swiss NGO Act Responsible for a virtual exhibition in Cannes as one of 2020's world's best social campaigns. [Ads of the World](#) and many other online publications also featured the campaign, and 1,61,451 people worldwide joined the movement.



- We opposed an amendment to the Food Safety and Standards Regulations that [prohibits plant-based dairy products from being labelled 'milk'](#) or other

- MFA India shot a Public Service Announcement (PSA) with Member of Parliament and well known animal rights activist, Mrs. Maneka Gandhi. In the PSA titled 'The Dark Truth Of The Dairy Industry', Mrs. Gandhi is talking about the horrors in India's dairy industry. The PSA was released by Smt. Gandhi on her social media handles and it received wide-spread coverage.

- MFA India collaborated with India's leading public health institute, [The George Institute](#) to establish the Centre For One Health Research, the first research centre of its kind in India, connecting public health and animal agriculture. The center aims to strengthen the research and policies around the Zoonoses in India. The center proposes to organise a series of virtual expert group consultations to transfer knowledge and initiate a multisectoral and multidisciplinary dialogue in the area of One Health in India.



- MFA India has signed up as a knowledge partner to the Ahimsa Fellowship Program sponsored by Ahimsa Trust and powered by People For Animals. The Ahimsa Fellowship Program aims at creating a network of effective animal welfare leaders adept at working closely with state governments and district administrations to enforce animal protection laws in India. Experts from MFA India are going to act as mentors to the fellows who will be intensively trained to understand in-depth the existing legal and policy regime. This will facilitate their leadership in advocacy efforts towards securing and implementing favourable animal welfare policies.



- As part of our celebrity outreach and brand building exercise, MFA India reached out to Bollywood and Tollywood celebrities. We received an overwhelming response from some of the biggest Bollywood and south cinema actors. Many of them have assured support to MFA India's work in 2021. On MFA India's 5th anniversary, Actor John Abraham urged his fans to be NICE to animals and released this public service ad.



## Garnering media attention for animals

Following our strong connections and relationships with media outlets, Mercy For Animal India foundation have received overwhelming media response to its campaigns in the year 2020. Some of the coverage can be seen here.

 ThePrint

### Wildlife groups urge health minister to shut illegal meat, pet markets to prevent Covid-19

New Delhi: A group of animal protection organisations on Thursday ... Humane Society International/India (HSI/India), Mercy for Animals ...  
26-Mar-2020



 The Financial Express

### The green movement: The push for a plant-based diet is getting bigger worldwide

The Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations (FIAPO), Delhi, ... Ahimsa Trust and Mercy For Animals (MFA) pointing out that a ...  
20-Sep-2020



 The Week

### Docs, activists urge PM to promote plant-based diet

"The doctors' call has been supported by animal welfare groups People For Animals (PFA), Ahimsa Trust and Mercy For Animals (MFA) who have ...  
25-Jun-2020



## Plans for 2021

We will restart food policy work in India to persuade major hotels, restaurants, cafes, and food-delivery services to increase vegan options and decrease the use of animal products. MFA India also plans to expand operations in India with hiring in several other departments such as corporate affairs, Media and celebrity and organising. MFA India also plans to apply for FCRA license permission in the year 2021.

Even though the events of this year have defied prediction, we are hopeful that 2021 will bring better days for both animals and humans.

