

Get Real
Facing Reality and Crafting Strategies Accordingly
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16 August 2003
United Poultry Concerns Forum
Boulder, CO

Thanks to United Poultry Concerns for inviting me to give this talk, to Annie and Neil Hornish for taping it, and to Miriam Jones for transcribing it.

Introductory Remarks

It seems to be my lot in life to always be telling people things they don't want to hear. That is in fact my woeful task today. I am going to be talking about some things that will be pretty hard to hear, but I want to say in advance that, despite these things, I feel profoundly hopeful and I am going to do my best to give some practical tips for how we might get past the current woeful situation.

Let's give another round of applause for [UPC President] Karen [Davis]. One thing I love about Karen is that sometimes she'll forego giving a formal speech and just tell you what she's thinking about right now, which is great, because who doesn't want to know what Karen Davis is thinking about right now? I'm going to take a page from her book today, and I'm not going to give a polished, inspirational speech, but instead I'm going to talk to you in a direct way about a few things I've been thinking about and that I think we all need to think about if we're really serious about ending or even significantly decreasing meat consumption in the United States and around the world.

Facing Facts

U.S. Per Capita Meat Consumption in Pounds by Decade						
	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	2000
beef	52.8	69.2	80.9	71.7	63.2	64.4
pork	45.4	46.9	45	47.7	47.6	47.7
veal/lamb	8.5	6.2	3.5	2.4	1.7	1.4
chicken	16.4	22.7	28.4	36.3	47.9	52.9
turkey	4.1	6	6.8	9.9	13.9	13.6
fish	10.9	10.7	12.5	14.2	14.7	15.2
total	138.1	161.7	177.1	182.2	189	195.2

Let's look at per capita meat consumption in the United States. Looking at the numbers, you can see that meat consumption in the United States has risen steadily since the 1950s and is currently at an all-time high. And that's per capita consumption, so it doesn't mean that there's more consumption because there's more people, it means more meat consumption per person.

Let's break this down a little bit before we talk about the overall increase and what that might mean for us. We see that beef consumption did decrease pretty sharply in the 1970s when the whole cholesterol/heart attack thing came up, but has started to rebound, and is still considerably higher than 1950s numbers. Pork consumption is only moderately up, it's been pretty stable, really.

Now, here's a pretty significant thing for us to pay attention to: veal and lamb. Look: This is the only category that has gone down, and gone down sharply. Now that's us -- that's something to take credit for, and it's also something we're going to think about later, in terms of what that might mean in terms of the specific arguments we've used for veal, that apparently have been successful.

But we haven't been successful overall. Look at chicken! Chicken consumption has more than tripled since 1950 and still is going up and showing no signs of doing anything other than that. Ditto turkey: tripled. Fish, also significantly up. Total overall meat consumption up 41 percent since the decade of the 1950s. While we're being very real, let's remember that our movement essentially started in the 1980s, and we see, as we look at the totals, we see a steady increase despite our efforts.

Flip over to world meat production [next page]. Now we're just looking at recent years. We're going to look at specific trends that are going on right now. And the big trend that's going on right now is that the location of meat production is shifting from the United States to developing countries. The other big story is, of course, that world meat production is continuing to increase.

Looking at total world meat production, we see that it's up and has risen every year, and is up 6.5 percent just between 2000 and 2003. And again, I want to look at chicken. Poultry, which is the first line on the world chart, is up 10 percent just since the year 2000. That's incredible. Think of how many billions of birds that means.

Now if we look a little lower, then we'll see that meat production still is rising in the developed countries, especially in the United States and Europe -- up overall 2.6 percent in the past years. But where the real increase is happening is in the developing countries at an overall increase of 9.7 percent, just since the year 2000 in terms of meat production in metric tons.

So these are the facts I'm talking about us having to face, like it or not, comfortable or not. So: First of all, we have to acknowledge that overall, we've failed to make a dent in meat consumption. Now, we might say, "it would be worse if we hadn't done all the things that we've done," and that might be true -- but it might not be true. We don't know; we don't have that data. Because it may well be that every time we've had a success, the meat industry has upped what it's done in a way that it wouldn't have if we hadn't had that success; so it may well be that consumption is exactly where it would have been if we hadn't been doing what we've been doing.

Second of all, we have to understand that we have a very real danger right here as we're working on increasing veganism here in the United States, a very real danger that we won't end animal exploitation, but that we'll simply change its location. Because the meat industries have responded as we've been putting the squeeze on them, trying to reduce demand here in the United States and at the same time, squeezing them on the production end with environmental regulations and animal welfare regulations. We've been raising their costs and doing our best to decrease demand. But they're not just going to let their profits be squeezed, they're just going to go elsewhere -- and they've already begun to do that, as we can see.

World Meat Production in Metric Tonnes								
	2000	2001	%change	2002	%change	2003	%change	2000-2003 % change
World								
poultry	67.7	70.4	4.0	72.9	3.6	74.5	2.2	10.0
pig	89.6	91.7	2.3	94.3	2.8	95.8	1.6	6.9
bovine	59.6	59.4	-0.3	61.3	3.2	61.2	-0.2	2.7
sheep & goat	11.4	11.5	0.9	11.7	1.7	11.8	0.9	3.5
other	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.5	0.0	4.5	0.0	4.6
<i>total</i>	232.5	237.5	2.1	244.7	3.0	247.7	1.2	6.5
Developing Countries								
poultry	35.4	37.0	4.5	38.6	4.3	39.9	3.3	12.7
pig	52.3	54.1	3.4	56.1	3.7	57.6	2.6	10.1
bovine	29.5	29.9	1.4	30.8	3.0	31.5	2.3	6.8
sheep & goat	8.1	8.2	1.2	8.4	2.4	8.6	2.4	6.2
other	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.8	0.0	2.9	3.6	7.4
<i>total</i>	128.0	132.0	3.1	136.8	3.6	140.4	2.6	9.7
Developed Countries								
poultry	32.3	33.5	3.7	34.3	2.3	34.6	0.9	7.1
pig	37.3	37.6	0.8	38.2	1.6	38.2	0.0	2.4
bovine	30.0	29.5	-1.7	30.5	3.4	29.7	-2.6	-1.0
sheep & goat	3.3	3.3	0.0	3.3	0.0	3.2	-3.0	-3.0
other	1.6	1.6	0.0	1.6	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0
<i>total</i>	104.6	105.5	0.9	107.9	2.3	107.3	-0.6	2.6
Source: Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2003 figures are projections as of April 2003. All other figures are actual.								

What's going to happen then? Well, it may well be that the situation gets worse. Because many of these developing countries, they're essentially under the control of the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, and they have to have policies consistent with what the World Bank

wants or they won't get the debt relief that they need. They won't get the money they need to feed their people. And usually, what the World Bank wants them to do is not have environmental regulations that will make meat companies mad, not have labor regulations that will make meat processors mad, etc. So what we're looking at here is not just a changing of location, but perhaps even a worsening of the animal exploitation, because the animals that are raised in those countries may have even fewer protections than the very minimal ones we've been able to institute here.

So this is really a very grim situation. But... Veal. We did something with veal. So, this tells us that we can do something. And I would say we can draw some more specific conclusions.

Interpreting the Data

So, here are just a few of my interpretations of this data: First of all, in the United States, we are clearly not reaching enough people. And I would argue that's because we're not reaching a diverse array of people. If you just look around this room, you'll see that this room is in no way representative of the population of the United States in terms of race and I would guess in terms of class. So that's one thing. Because if we only continue to make vegans out of a subset of a subset of the population, we're never going to go past a certain plateau.

On the global level: Ditto.

Then, returning to veal, our one piece of good news, that tells us that at least in some circumstances, a relatively straight abolition message based on animal exploitation can work. Remember, the veal campaign has not been based on "let's make conditions better for veal calves." The veal campaign, for the vast majority of it, has not been a health thing, and it's not been an environmental thing. It's been, "look what these animals go through and this means you can't eat them." Period. And, at least with veal, that worked.

Of course, veal is something that's relatively easy for people to give up, because they don't eat a lot of it to begin with, and many people see it as a luxury item. But we can draw the conclusion that, at least in some circumstances, a straight animal message will work and has been demonstrated to work.

So, first, we need to reach more and specifically different populations within the United States. Second, I would argue that we also need to identify and form relationships with what I would call the best prospects for future vegans. Three, obviously, we need to go global, much more than we already have. And four, I would say, since these might be shocking figures for some people who've been going around saying we've been so successful, "we need to get real." And that means constantly looking at the real numbers, the real figures, and assessing how we're doing and making changes based on those assessments. They may not be changes, they may be additions to what we're doing. And in fact, I think it's additional actions that we need, rather than stopping any of the things we already are doing.

Now I'm going to talk about each of those things in turn: why, and most importantly how, we can (1) reach more and different populations, (2) identify and make relationships with best

prospects, (3) go global, and (4) get real.

More and Different Populations

If you have a doubt that I am right -- and by the way, this is why people like me are constantly saying our movement needs to diversify, not only because it's the right thing ethically, but because it's the pragmatic thing -- and if you doubt that, just think of one group -- Latinos -- currently the largest so-called minority population in the United States and soon to be the majority of people in the United States. Yet how many of us other than Why Vegan have our materials routinely in Spanish? [Note: PETA also translates all its materials into Spanish.] And my organization is totally guilty. Me saying all these things I think we need to do doesn't mean I've already done them. How many of us have our websites translated? How many of us have thought about the concerns of different Latino populations? How many of us know what the concerns of the Chicano community tend to be as opposed to Cuban refugees? How many of us even know the definition of the word Chicano? Things to think about.

And that's just one group. We still have African Americans, Asians, Asian Americans, and Native Americans -- and that's just race. We haven't even started talking about economic class. I'm mostly going to talk about race here, just because I don't have a lot of time, but most of the things I'm going to say about race also go for class.

So we have to diversify. But, some might ask, why? Why can't we stay just exactly as we are and just do different things to reach out -- outreach -- to the different groups? Three reasons: no moral authority; aren't trusted; and don't know. White people don't have any moral authority in the eyes of people of color. Ditto for middle class people in relation to people living in poverty. If we're going to be making ethical arguments... well, it's pretty hard to effectively introduce an ethical argument if you are in a group that is not trusted to make ethical assessments. I hope that makes sense.

Also, we have a very specific problem. We all know there's a problem for everybody, that they get defensive when you talk about human animals and non-human animals, because they're like, "are you're saying I'm an animal?" Well imagine that you're a white person saying this to a group that white people have called animals and in fact have treated as chattel by calling them animals, and imagine how much more defensiveness you're going to face, and how much easier it would be if someone within that group was making that argument rather than some white person making that argument. So that's the no moral authority issue.

Not trusted. Jack [Norris of Vegan Outreach] was just talking about some of our arguments about environment and health not being trusted. Well, again, white folks tend not to be trusted by people of color. I'll give you an excellent example from the AIDS epidemic. The AIDS activist movement sprang up very quickly, people started doing great work, and really very quickly changed behavior within the gay community, and particularly within the white gay community. And that was great. But the thing is, as that was happening, HIV infections skyrocketed among people of color. So the AIDS activists said, "we've got to go into those communities," and they went into those communities, and they failed abysmally at first. And what the problem turned out to be was that they weren't trusted.

And I'll just give you one example that I personally, as an AIDS activist, encountered. It was a relatively common idea in low-income black neighborhoods that the push for the use of condoms to prevent HIV transmission was a secret genocidal plot to get black people not to reproduce anymore. Now that might sound ridiculous to you, but within that group, that's not a ridiculous idea at all. If you think about the things that have been done to the African American community -- including forced sterilization -- that's not a ridiculous idea at all. That's why you need a diverse group, so you don't face those kinds of communication barriers when you're going into a community trying to do education.

Also, we just don't know certain things. A predominantly white group probably just doesn't know how to frame certain arguments in ways that certain other groups will be able to hear. A predominantly white group maybe doesn't even know where to go to find receptive people, or how to get their ideas across when they get there. Again, returning to the AIDS issue, one thing that activists found out in southern black communities was that barbershops and beauty salons were places where people get their health education. So if you're going into a small town and you're doing AIDS education, you don't go to the local health department and get them to give out your brochures. You go to the local barber, talk to him, get him to understand where you're coming from and get him to give out your brochures -- or better yet, make up his materials to give out to folks.

All right. So that's why we must diversify. And I mean it. If you're in a predominantly all-white group, that's okay if you're in a community that's all white. But if you're not in a community that's all white, and you're all white, then you're doing something wrong. Or failing to do something right. And you can't just let it stay the way it is. You must diversify.

There are two ways you can diversify. You can diversify internally, and you can diversify externally. What I mean by externally is increase the diversity of your coalitions with other organizations. The feminist anti-rape movement learned when it was trying to diversify that some women of color do want to integrate anti-rape organizations and make them strong, diverse anti-rape organizations. But a number of women of color said "no, we don't want to do that. What we want is to start our own organizations to work within our own communities, and what we want you to do is share your resources with us so we can do that." So you have to be willing to do that if that's what folks want.

But what about internal diversity? There are a whole bunch of dos and don'ts, far too many for me to go into here. I'm going to be talking about specific things in the next section, so I'll just give you an example of some of the dos and don'ts if you're trying to increase your internal diversity. For example, do structure your organization so that people of color and people of other nondominant groups have both the opportunity and the resources to make up events and programs that speak to their community without having to get the permission of the dominant group. But don't expect that people in those groups will have an interest in doing that, because they might not. Do defer to knowledge that other people have that you don't have. But don't see each person as the representative of their group, and turn to your one black member and say "hey, what does the black community think about this?" And you know, people do that in good faith. People do want to know, but people pretty much don't like being put on the spot like that

because nobody can speak for their entire community.

I don't have time to go through the whole list of dos and don'ts, but any group can get in touch with me to talk about their own situation. When I worked at the Baker-Mandela Center for Anti-Racist Education it actually used to be my job to help groups diversify. What we used to do was go into activist organizations, or academic institutions, or businesses, or whatever, and help them craft strategies to become more diverse. I'm happy to help any organization in our movement do that -- of course, for free. So just contact me if you want some help or advice on that.

Best Prospects

We need to identify and build relationships with our best prospects. Why? Well, obviously, it's best to maximize your use of resources. If we're going to be expending resources on trying to convert folks to veganism, and we've already got such a small percentage right now, it seems like our first step should be converting the people who are going to be easiest to convert so we can begin to build up a critical mass. Right? Second of all, I'm about to tell you my picks for best prospects, and you'll notice they're not the dominant group. And I need to remind us all, because a big trend lately has been reaching the mainstream -- mainstream this, mainstream that -- is that the mainstream is not the majority. [Applause.]

I need to repeat that. The mainstream is not the majority. You add up the people who are not the mainstream: add up the people who have been hurt in some way by the dominant group -- add up the people of color, add up the people who are living in poverty, add up disaffected youth, add up gay men and lesbians, add up survivors of domestic abuse and sexual assault, etc., etc., etc. -- and what you're going to find is that you've got the majority.

You don't have to appeal to this mythical conservative mainstream to win. And in fact, I would argue that if we do that, we won't win. Because we're not appealing to the majority.

Here are my picks for specific activist groups and subgroups that I think we can make external alliances with. By working together on shared issues, we'll have a process of natural cross-fertilization of ideas occur, so that we have more vegans over time in those groups.

First: people in the so-called anti-globalization movement (which is really a pro-globalization movement, a globalization of sharing and love, but it's called the anti-globalization movement because it's a movement against trade globalization). Look: These young activists, these anti-globalization activists, these are folks who are already boycotting products for ethical reasons. These are people who have already made changes in their lives. They're not buying products from this company because it uses sweatshops; they're not buying products from that company because it exploits the environment. These are people who have shown that they are willing to change their purchasing and consumption habits in response to ethical arguments. Obviously, a perfect target for us.

Also there's a perfect issue for us to work on with them, and that's genetically modified organisms (GMOs). They're already really big on fighting GMOs -- mostly GM plants, but

that's mostly because they have no idea what the scientists are doing to GM animals secretly in the labs. We know that. People like Karen Davis have written really important works on that, and you can find some stuff on the UPC website on that, and on the Compassion in World Farming website. They've written a great report that you can download in pdf format called "The Gene and the Stable Door," which pretty much summarizes the whole GM animals issue.

So we could work with the anti-globalization activists on the genetic engineering issue. We could make alliances with them on that particular topic, and in the process of doing that, spread our vegan message.

Next, feminists. You'll see, you've got a handout about the links between speciesism and sexism [available online at <http://www.bravebirds.org/speciessex.pdf>]. I believe, very strongly, that speciesism and sexism are linked at the root, and that we cannot possibly end one if we don't end the other. Period. I also think that feminists -- who are already used to thinking about connections, specifically between race and sex -- are ready to hear about the speciesism-sexism connection if we are ready to talk about it and ready to structure our organizations and our actions in a feminist way. Obviously, feminists aren't going to want to work in male-dominated organizations, just to give one example, so there's some things we're going to have to do to get ready for that alliance, but it's an important one.

Disability activists. That might surprise some people, but these are folks who are already protesting some of the same corporations we are. I'm talking about radical disability activists. I'm not talking about the March of Dimes people. I'm talking about Not Dead Yet. I'm talking about people who protest the March of Dimes. Heck, they're already protesting the March of Dimes, and so are we! All right, let's get together with them and let's talk about veganism, because they already don't trust the medical establishment so we can say, "yo, look at what they haven't told you about the ways that meat, dairy, and eggs hurt you." There you go.

Obviously, any folks who are working on sustainable development, agriculture reform, or water - - because animal agriculture is the number one cause of water pollution in the world, and depletes more water than all other forms of human activity combined -- are good prospects. All of these people we can work with, and I know that's working more on the side of production than consumption, but it's always good to interfere in the production of meat. In the course of working with them to interfere with production of meat, again, this cross-fertilization of ideas will occur and hopefully we can get the vegan message out.

Anti-colonialists in other countries, people who are interesting in working on anti-imperialism, are very open to the idea of talking about how diet change has shifted world health and disease and are very open to the idea of talking about the ideas of dietary racism and agricultural colonialism. And, absolutely, they are the people we're going to need to reach if we're going to go global. Because we can't go global from here. What we're going to have to do is form alliances with people who are there and are trusted by people there.

Finally, peace activists. Many of them can be reached with an anti-violence message. Actually, I wrote this past winter, on a whim, an essay called "Who Would Jesus Kill?" just because I was annoyed on Christmas day. It's basically a peace essay that then talks about meat eating and

factory farming as one of the causes of war. And to my great surprise, it's been published all over the world. I keep finding places that have published it. I think in some ways that's because elsewhere in the world they like people using the idea of Jesus against war, but they had to print the whole thing -- including all that animal stuff at the end -- if they wanted to have the fun of publishing this antiwar essay by an American. That gives you example of how there are ways that you can get our ideas into the peace movement discourse.

Go Global

I've already explained why we need to go global. It's pretty much the same process we need to implement domestically, which is forming alliances with other organizations -- either animal or vegetarian organizations in other countries, or organizations that are working on some of these other issues I just talked about, feminist organizations, anti-globalization organizations, agriculture reform organizations, you name it.

Why form alliances with other groups rather than going in on our own? That goes back to what I was talking about before, how white people in this country aren't trusted by people of color in this country. Imagine how people from the United States are perceived by people in other countries, particularly people in the regions we're in the process of bombing right now. They're not going to listen to what some American organization has to say about why they should change their diet. They will listen -- they will listen -- to the hunger activists in their own town and they will listen to the folks who are distributing seeds in their own towns. We need to get to those people, build relationships with those people, be trusted by those people, share ideas -- and I do mean share, back and forth -- with those people, and then trust those people to go and do that work in their own communities. And be willing to share our resources with them so they can do it, and you'll notice I'm harping on that point.

What to Do?

Now I'm going to talk about some how-tos. These how-tos can go for going global, they can go for building alliances here, and they can go for diversifying your own group. There are four categories: The first is PC equals Plain Courtesy. Two is that coalitions are good relationships. Three, Be Prepared like the Boy Scouts. Four, vegan means all animals. So, let's talk about each of those.

PC Equals Plain Courtesy

I'm actually stealing a page from the book of Robin Morgan, former editor of "Ms. Magazine," when I say that to me, PC equals "plain courtesy." Because most of the things that get called PC, and most of the things we really need to do when we work with people who are different from us are just plain courtesy. Call people what they want to be called. Ask rather than making assumptions. Apologize if you inadvertently offend someone rather than defensively say, "well, I didn't mean it, so I shouldn't have to apologize." Respect other people -- and that means respect them as full people, meaning people who have concerns about ethics.

One of the most shocking assumptions that people make is that people of color don't care about

animals, or people living in poverty don't care about animals. I know sometimes people are coming from a very well-meaning liberal place in that they're saying "look, they've got so many troubles in their lives that they don't have time to think about the animals." But yo, you tell me why a person living in poverty wouldn't be willing to base the decision between two equally priced shampoos on whether they were tested on animals or not. They are no more or less willing to make the decision on that basis than any other group of people.

People living in poverty, people struggling with horrible things, make ethical decisions every day. Everybody does that. Everybody tries to live as ethical a life as possible within the constraints that their lives offer to them. And we have to remember that, and we have to respect that when we're working with people and not have these sort of misguided ideas that they're not going to care about the animals so we can't talk about the animals with them -- all we can talk about is environment and health with them. Because it's just not true. And it's insulting. [Note: Recent research has shown African Americans in general and Latino women in particular to be concerned about animal welfare.]

Coalitions Are Just Good Relationships

So: Have respect and be courteous. Next: Coalitions equal good relationships. There's not a thing that goes into building a good coalition that isn't something that goes into building a good relationship. So let's go through some of those things. First: Be honest. Be honest. And that means don't hide that you've got another agenda. Of course you've got another agenda. Your coalition partners do too. The whole point of a coalition is people with different agendas working together on a shared concern.

Of course, if you're going to work with your coalition partners on this one thing that you do agree on, and you're different kinds of groups, well of course you're going to hope that at some point you're going to be able to talk to them about the animals. They're probably going to hope that they can talk to you about something that you need to learn about, and undoubtedly there is something that you need to learn about. So don't be all duplicitous, and act like "I only care about this thing that I think you'll care about," when in fact you care about all these other things. Be honest, while at the same time focusing on the things that you think will help to bring you together.

Going back to the bases of good relationships: Communicate. And that means two things: Talking and listening. Communicating in an effective way on the talking side means learning the language of the people you're talking to. That means, when you're planning to work with other activist groups or other communities, learning how they talk about certain issues. It may be a little weird for you to think about the idea of dietary racism, or to see the expansion of factory farming as agricultural colonialism, but believe me, those are phrases that certain groups will respond to. There are certain phrases that are used by activists working on a particular issue. For example, when talking to feminists, you can talk about "reproductive freedom" when you're talking about cows and you're talking about hens, because feminists are used to thinking about the concept of reproductive freedom. So you've got to learn the lingo and language of whoever you're trying to talk to.

But it's not just talking. Communication is also listening. And it's not pretending to listen. It's actually listening, and that does mean sometimes being willing to change your mind. After all, you're hoping they'll change their minds about some things. You need to be as open as you hope they'll be. That brings up the next thing: Being undefensive. Which is good for relationships and also good for coalitions. Again, you're hoping that they're not going to be all defensive when you're asking them to change something that's as basic as their diet. So you need to not be defensive if they ask you to change something about your life, like where you buy your shoes or what kinds of jokes you make.

Here comes a big one. Brace yourselves. Share. Supposedly we all learn this in kindergarten, but all evidence that I've seen shows me that our movement knows nothing whatsoever about sharing. I do coordinate this Global Hunger Alliance, an international coalition of organizations. I can't tell you how many times I've put out a request of help with something, whether it's a request for materials or for help implementing a project, only to have none of our US organizations respond at all, and have organizations in places like Bangladesh and Kenya write and say, "we can't do very much but here's what we can do." Shocking.

Share. Figure out in advance what you can afford to share, and get ready to share it. Build sharing into your organization's budget. [Applause.] Build sharing into your fund raising. Get ready to share. Because you just have to.

Be reliable. I think that's obvious. Be reliable. And I want to say again, in case you missed it before, anyone who knows me knows I've failed on every one of these at some point or another in my life, so me standing up here saying "do this, don't do that, do this, don't do that," is not me saying "oh, I'm so great, and I never failed to share myself," because I have. I'm not going to tell you when but, believe you me, there are stories people could tell.

Finally, be real. The psychologist Carl Rogers, who is the founder of what's called Humanist Psychology, talks about this concept of genuineness, which is basically being consistent with yourself. It's really important. It's important in every relationship, and it's totally important when you're trying to build relationships with people who are very different from yourself, either one-on-one or as an organization. And it also fits with my Get Real theme, did you notice that? Be real.

Be Prepared

All right. Like the Boy Scouts said, Be Prepared. That means, first of all, educate yourself. And you may be saying, "My heavens, I don't have time to learn about anything new!" I know. But you know, there are ways to squeeze it in. Again, you know, we're asking other people to educate themselves about the animals, to find times in their busy schedules. Often they're activists working on really urgent problems like hunger or the water crisis, and we'd like them to learn about the animals. We've got to be willing to take time too.

One way to do it -- and I know some people will be mad at me for saying this -- but you know, we all tend to fall into this trap of constantly reading books by people who already agree with us, so that we can have the fun of nodding along. Stop it. At least half the time, when you have the

urge to buy one of those books, or pick up yet another vegan cookbook -- not that I don't love the publishers of vegan cookbooks -- but go ahead and pick up a book on race instead. Go ahead and pick up a book on poverty, or political theory, or something else that might help you with all of this instead. And again, you can take a page from the book of my pal Karen Davis. Check it out: Sometimes, randomly, just ask her "what are you reading right now, Karen?" It's incredible. She's always up on the animal stuff, but you never know what else she's going to be reading. You should be that way too.

Think it through. Think through what you're trying to do, and the problems you can anticipate coming up. And then write it out. This little handout I gave you about speciesism and sexism is a very rough first draft of my effort to do that about a particular intersection of issues. What I found at the Baker-Mandela center -- when we were trying to make connections between things like race and class or disability and sexual orientation -- is that it's really useful to make yourself sit down and spell out the connections between the issues. Because when you write it out, you become more facile and articulate about the ideas and then you can just say them, say them, say them to people without have to stop and think every time.

Vegan Means All Animals

Finally: Go vegan. And by that I mean don't participate in any animal exploitation. If you really believe that there's not a moral distinction between humans and non-human animals, then that means you can't participate in the exploitation of human animals any more than you can participate in the exploitation of non-human animals. This is pragmatic as well as ethical. It's obviously the right thing to do, but it's also pragmatic, because you know, you're asking people to make changes in their lives around the animals, the least you can do is think about the changes you might need to make in your life around sexism or homophobia, disability, or whatever the case may be.

Get Real

And I'm out of time, so I'll just say in terms of getting real: The grant agencies are right when they ask you "how are you going to assess this program?" Don't just do it when the grant agencies ask you to do it. Do it when you're planning what you're going to do. Build assessment into your planning.

Oh, and by the way: Do plan. Do things like look at numbers and make up some kind of strategic plan for how you think the whole big picture can change and how what you're doing fits into that. Do share that plan with other organizations and see if you can come up with a plan where you do one piece of it while they do another piece of it.

Don't assume that people are like you and will be swayed by the things that you were swayed by, including how things taste, as Bruce [Friedrich of PETA] said. Don't assume that what seems effective is effective. Don't make big jumps on the basis of small anecdotal evidence like a focus group with only seven people in it. You should pay attention to those kinds of things, but be realistic in assessing the degree to which their findings can be generalized. And then finally, follow up. Follow up as much as you can whenever you do it. You know, if you talk to some

group of people, go back six months later and find out -- out of the ones who told you they were going to go vegan right after you talked to them -- how many of them are still vegan. How many -- out of the ones who seemed so defensive that they would never change -- reconsidered the evidence once they felt less defensive and now agree with you?

That's all I have to say, except I know that some of the things I've been saying have been hard to hear. I also know that I've just given this huge laundry list of things to do more or differently, and it might seem rather overwhelming. But I need you to know that I really believe we can do these things. We're all people who have made really fundamental changes in our world views, and really fundamental changes to our behavior in response to new information and in response to ethical evaluations of that new information. I have no doubt whatsoever that we can do the same thing in relation to the other issues so that we can make these connections, so that we can diversify our movement, and so that we can do what we need to do to move us all towards what I would call total animal liberation. Thank you.

Patrice Jones is cofounder and coordinator of the **Eastern Shore Sanctuary and Education Center** [www.bravebirds.org]. Located in an epicenter of poultry production, the Eastern Shore Sanctuary shelters chickens and other birds while promoting local agriculture reform. Jones also coordinates the **Global Hunger Alliance** [www.globalhunger.net], which promotes plant-based solutions to the worldwide hunger and water crises. Previously, Jones worked with the Baker-Mandela Center for Anti-Racist Education and taught a University of Michigan course on the theory and practice of social change activism.