

Thin Ice*

★ Inside: RPA in and on the news! ★

The Newsletter of Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc.

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RPA Tells Governors: Get Our Universities out of the Meat Industry; Hears from Many Officials

Governors resist needed food discussion and change because our land-grant universities are popular, powerful, and influential. Like universities, government promotes inhumane treatment of animals.

On March 11, 2009, Responsible Policies for Animals sent the first-ever mailing to the governors of all 50 states urging them to help get their states' land-grant universities (LGUs) out of the meat industry – including dairy, fish, eggs, and feed crops.

RPA's mailing to the governors consisted of a letter; the latest revision of RPA Factsheet #1, *10,000 Years Is Enough: Time To Drop University Meat-Industry Courses*; and RPA's factsheet *Get Our Universities Out of the Meat Industry*.

The letter and factsheets are easy to find at www.RPAforAll.org. Or request copies from RPA.

The letter told the governors they must help get our LGUs out of the meat industry because LGU meat-industry programs undermine all that the governors might do to help improve people's health, the environment, and the treatment of nonhuman animals.

The letter also told the governors how RPA has worked these past six years to fulfill the governors' responsibility – and urged them to help arrange for an RPA presentation to the National Governors Association.

LGUs in Dark Ages

Modern universities are Enlightenment institutions, originating in the era that concluded the "Dark Ages" and introduced equal individual rights as the primary governing principle. A core Enlightenment contribution is emphasizing empirical or scientific knowledge a basis of public policy – not prejudice or untested belief.

Disguised as "animal science," our LGUs' meat-industry programs are really anti-science. Zoology is the science of animals. "Animal science" is meat, dairy, fish, egg, and feed-crop technology – not science.

"Animal science" applies data to assist the industries, but it pretends science has not established these basic facts indicating the industries should not exist:

- humans evolved as herbivores, not as omnivores or carnivores;
- humans evolved as prey, not as hunters;

- eating from animals is linked to chronic disease and countless cases of acute food poisoning, even when the immediate source of *E. coli* or other pathogens is plant foods;
- eating from animals is the main root cause of soaring medical & insurance costs;
- there is no possibility of ecologically sound meat production – eating in ways that violate our biological nature is by definition ecodestructive, and meat is the most polluting and wasteful industry;
- all animal use is by definition inhumane.

"Humane" means kind or demonstrating the best of human traits. Humans did not start using other animals thousands of years ago to be kind to them.

"By running meat-industry programs – serving special interests at the expense of the public interest based on prejudice rather than established knowledge – our LGUs show that they remain in the Dark Ages," says RPA founder & director David Cantor. "Individual human rights helped advance the Enlightenment, but we're stagnating due to the lack of basic rights of all individual nonhuman animals not to be used or have their ecosystems disrupted by humans."

Enter the Governors

LGUs are state universities. LGU trustees or not – many are – our governors can influence our LGUs. And there is no question LGU meat-industry programs undermine every government effort in every state to reduce human disease and ecodestruction.

Says Cantor, "Our LGU meat-industry programs are probably the most powerful engines keeping Americans on the standard American diet (SAD), since their millions of alumni in society's influential positions spent years seeing their alma mater promote meat – so how could meat be the main source of disease, pollution, global warming, resource waste, and inhumane treatment of animals? But the facts show that it is."

Governors Respond

RPA members and directors are grateful to the many governors who have replied to RPA's crucial and timely mailing aimed at getting our LGUs out of the meat industry! That is about 20 percent as *Thin Ice* goes to press. Replies continue to arrive more than four months after the

* Responsible Policies for Animals' newsletter, *Thin Ice*, gets its name from the ethical and political "thin ice" animal use and ecosystem disruption are based on and the actual thin ice threatening polar bears and other beings due to those practices.

mailing, and some who do not reply have surely absorbed the gist of the mailing and the **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign. So a "tally" is not particularly meaningful.

We expect to exert much more time and effort before our officials will agree to challenge entrenched university programs serving powerful special interests against the public interest.

"We recognized these difficult realities not only before writing to the governors but before launching the **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign in 2003," says RPA founder & director David Cantor.

Says Cantor, "The point of contacting the 50 governors is to begin the process of educating them – to correct long-term deception about food they're subjected to just like the rest of us and to ensure that they begin to grasp how our LGUs' meat-industry programs. We harbor no illusions that any short-term measure will 'do the trick.'" (See "RPA Will Not Mislead You," page 4.)

Contact Your Governor!

The list of all 50 states' governors is quickly available at www.RPAforAll.org – or have RPA mail you a copy. Make your letter to the governor of your state part of the long-term solution – the only possible kind of solution – to the global meat problem! Then write to as many other governors as you can.

If you are among RPA's dedicated members in countries other than the U.S., write to the governors of California, Texas, Iowa, New York, Nebraska, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. Their LGUs are among the most influential and important – each for different reasons.

The **LGU-presidents list** is also at www.RPAforAll.org – or have RPA send you a copy. Whether or not you have written to your state's LGU before, nothing you ever do is likely to bring far-reaching benefits to animals (including humans) and the environment like getting our LGUs out of the meat industry. *We cannot succeed without long-term repetition.* Keep up the good work! And let us know if you have any questions or desire assistance with your letters or replies to answers you receive. ★

"The aggressive spread of corporate priorities and mercantile values respects few boundaries in our society – and academic traditions and values are not among the few."

-- Ralph Nader, "Greed in the Groves," in *Campus, Inc.*, ed. Geoffry D. White, Ph.D. with Flannery C. Hauck (2000)

RPA in the News!

Responding to RPA's **March 11, 2009, mailing to the 50 states' governors** urging them to help get our land-grant universities (LGUs) out of the meat industry (see cover article), **Susan Soltero of WALO Radio in Puerto Rico** requested an interview with RPA founder & director David Cantor. The interview took place on April 13, 2009,

In addition to its kind & generous members, RPA is ...

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Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc. (RPA), promotes responsible policies for nonhuman animals that are also responsible policies for people and ecosystems: basic constitutional & legal rights of nonhuman animals not to be used or have their ecosystems disrupted by humans.

RPA is a 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit organization. Monetary and in-kind donations to RPA are tax exempt as allowed by law.

Anyone may become an RPA member by donating \$15.00 or more. RPA considers ill, impoverished, incarcerated, and animal-dedicated people for donation-free honorary memberships on an individual basis.

RPA members receive *Thin Ice* and other updates on RPA's work. New members receive RPA's bumper sticker (see www.RPAforAll.org).

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Donate to RPA at www.RPAforAll.org or by mail.

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RPA's comprehensive statement opposing violence in the name of animal rights is available at www.RPAforAll.org or by mail.

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and lasted about 25 minutes. It can be heard at <http://www.rpaforall.org/news.html> and http://www.archive.org/download/audio_12345/2009-04-13_WALO_DavidCantorInterview.mp3. Or RPA can mail you a CD of the interview.

The station titled the interview *Aciencia Cierta - True Science* because "animal science" is the misleading name our LGUs use for their meat-industry programs and RPA explains *the true science showing the meat industry should have no place in universities.*

RPA's members and directors are grateful to Susan Soltero and WALO Radio for giving voice to RPA's crucial work in behalf of all beings!

Helping Yukon Reject Meat & Dairy

About 50,000 people live in Yukon's 207,000 square miles north of British Columbia and east of Alaska. About 30,000 live in Whitehorse, the province's capital, where

RPA's bumper sticker adorns the bicycle long-time RPA member Mike Grieco rides year-round, ice & snow or not (see *Thin Ice*, fall 2007).

In 2008, Mike became convinced that the meat and dairy industry were conniving to establish themselves in Yukon with help from a Canadian agriculture college. In addition to circulating RPA literature, Mike, who regularly advocates for nonhuman animals in the *Whitehorse Star*, published his letter "Why Would We Want These Industries" on May 21, 2009. RPA founder & director David Cantor responded with his letter "Reject the Meat, Dairy Industries," published on May 29, 2009. The gist: "I wish my state - Pennsylvania, USA - had kept inhumane, smelly, hog factories out. Instead, it's been two decades of stench warfare I wish we could eradicate dairy, too, but it's [Pennsylvania's] agriculture secretary's industry, even though the root meaning of agriculture is cultivation of fields, and meat and dairy work against that by toxically growing feed crops on most cropland."

Letter in New York Times Book Review

Headed "Status and Greed," RPA founder & director David Cantor's May 24, 2009, letter in *The New York Times Book Review* told how humans' primate-hierarchy behavior - not an unbounded desire for wealth or power per se but a biological need to outdo others - explains "why some high-paid chief executives, confronted by members of Congress about soaring disparities between executive and worker pay, responded not with contrition but with demands for more compensation than higher-paid executives."

The letter continued, "Maybe learning to separate inordinate affluence and wealth from status and to confer status only on constructive practices can help us reduce greed's destructive impacts." Using and oppressing nonhuman animals is rooted in humans' granting themselves imaginary higher status than the other animals. ★

RPA on the News!

When RPA sent its **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign mailing to all 50 states' governors March, The Society of Environmental Journalists sent about 1,200 environmental reporters a news release about the mailing. The only request RPA received for an interview was from WALO Radio in Puerto Rico - see cover article.

The relative lack of reporting on the first-ever campaign to get our colleges of agriculture at our land-grant universities (LGUs) out of the meat industry is not due to a lack of personal interest or understanding on the part of news writers - it is due to the stature of meat and our LGUs as institutions.

RPA is working to fix that - and countless other deficiencies in reporting on animals, including humans' animal nature - with *Elephant in Every Room: A News Industry Guidebook for Accurate and Truthful Reporting on Animals*, the first publication of its kind.

In April 2009 - thanks to members' kind & generous support! - RPA received the \$3,500 grant the Animal Welfare Trust awarded to complete, print, and distribute the guidebook if RPA could raise matching funds.

About 30 pages, the guidebook is almost finished and will soon be mailed to about 1,000 people in the news industry, about 200 journalism instructors, and many advocacy organizations.

The guidebook will also be available free of charge online in PDF format! ★

Update: RPA's This Land Is Their Land Campaign

In addition to constantly working to advance its **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign to get our land-grant universities out of the meat industry, RPA regularly promotes its **This Land Is Their Land** campaign to protect free-living animals by changing human land-use practices.

Many communities encounter proposals to hold organized deer kills due to the "too many deer" myth. So RPA receives requests for a 1999 article RPA founder & director David Cantor published in *The Animals' Agenda*, "White-Tailed Deer: The Phantom Menace," updated as a chapter in the book *A Primer on Animal Rights: Leading Experts Write About Animal Cruelty and Exploitation*, edited by Kim W. Stallwood (New York: Lantern, 2000).

RPA provides copies of that article; RPA Factsheets 4 & 5 (see www.RPAforAll.org); Cantor's article "Killing Deer No Solution to, and Deer Not the Cause of, Pennsylvania 'Deer Problem'" from the proceedings of the 1999 conference *The Impact of Deer on the Biodiversity and Economy of the State of Pennsylvania*; Cantor's January 2, 2001, letter in *USA Today* "Land Use, Not Deer, Is Villain"; and other information showing construction & paving sprawl is the main cause of "too many deer" because it significantly increases the deer-food supply.

Pocono Mountains Deer-Kill Proposal

Contacted by animal advocates concerned the deer-kill problem might spread to their 3,000-home gated community Saw Creek Estates in Bushkill, Pennsylvania, on June 11, 2009, Cantor spoke with Saw Creek Estates' Wildlife Committee established to consider whether "something needs to be done about" deer living in and around the community.

Even the Committee members viewed as pro-kill were not able to refute any of Cantor's points about the reasons for so many deer; methods other than slaughter for living with deer; and the continual failure of deer kills to solve problems caused by reckless land use. So the Committee agreed to consider hiring an ecologist to study the connections among all of the beings in the area rather than move inexorably toward slaughter. RPA is assisting the Committee in locating an appropriate expert to conduct the study.

10,000 Years Is Enough Campaign Heroes

The **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign to get our land-grant universities out of the meat industry is a pioneering effort for nonhuman animals, humans, and the environment. *A long-term effort is the only solution.* So RPA's members and directors appreciate every letter written in the campaign! We hope examples of dedication to our "flagship" campaign will inspire more people to increase their participation and support.

Maryanne Appel of Garnet Valley, Pennsylvania, has for many years dedicated herself to educating people about the necessity of plants-only eating to improve the treatment of nonhuman animals, human health, and the environment. A member of Responsible Policies for Animals since 2003 and a long-time member and current Board of Directors member of CARE (Compassion for Animals - Respect for the Environment), Maryanne pioneered the **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign by writing to the heads of *all 50 states' main land-grant universities (LGUs)* provided at www.RPAforAll.org shortly after the campaign began! Maryanne received replies from some LGUs that *still* have not answered RPA! And from some that took years and multiple mailings to get them to answer the organization.

An experienced counseling psychologist, **Suzanne McAlister Avery, Ph.D.**, has no difficulty understanding that institutions and other social forces influence people's basic food choices - such as whether to eat meat - far more than facts about the treatment of animals, health, or environment, facts that long ago would have ended animal use if a fact shortage were the problem! So in the last couple of years, Suzanne has written to many LGUs urging them to end their meat-industry programs. Living and working in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, Suzanne started with Penn State University. After a high-level administrator answered her first letter, she followed up, refuting his P.R.-style denials. Suzanne has also written to Cornell University, University of Connecticut, University of Florida Gainesville, and Michigan State University. Replies keep coming, and Suzanne keeps following up. She is also expanding her efforts to her elected officials who influence Penn State and its funding.

That is the stuff basic change is made of! Thank you, and congratulations, Maryanne and Suzanne! ★

RPA Will Not Mislead

The often-overlooked part of Margaret Mead's famous statement,

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has,

is the last part: "it is all that ever has."

Why is it crucial to understand that a *small* group of *thoughtful, committed citizens* is all that ever changes the world?

Abandoning It Doesn't Promote It

Large animal-advocacy organizations grew quickly by abandoning strategies that can lead to the basic autonomy rights nonhuman animals need for their interests to be respected and their lives fulfilling. By definition, the animal-rights movement works for "empty cages," not "bigger cages." Animal use is so broadly and deeply embedded in human institutions, people running big animal organizations recognized decades ago they could not easily popularize animal rights. But "animal rights" sounds good, so organizations kept the term while working instead to "help animals" with *no rights* - much easier for building support. The upshot: no progress toward animal rights and mass confusion about what "animal rights" means.

There is no question nonhuman animals need help. But there is also no question *inhumane treatment of animals - animal use and ecosystem disruption - is too firmly established and spreading too rapidly for conventional helping measures to reduce animal suffering.* Demanding change in powerful institutions perpetuating animal use and ecosystem disruption - not urging people to make different shopping choices - is the way to animal rights. *We don't know of any organization doing it besides RPA.* The countless helping-animals-with-no-rights endeavors do not promote rights - not now, not ever, no matter how much support they receive. The more helping animals is confused with animal rights, the more people erroneously believe meaningful protection is just around the corner.

Responsible Policies for Animals will not mislead you! It is good to help nonhuman animals, just as it is good to help humans. Each of us helps in different ways. That does not make help part of a rights movement. RPA *frankly tells you* the organization's **10,000 Years Is Enough campaign** to get our LGUs out of the meat industry and its **This Land Is Their Land** campaign to protect free-living animals by changing human land-use practices *are necessarily long-term efforts* - the only tangible short-term result *the true animal-rights message reaching the most powerful institutions and people who run or influence them.*

That is how human rights are established, enforced, and expanded. And that is how nonhuman animals' rights will be established. With inhumane treatment of animals, global warming, chronic disease, soaring medical & insurance costs, food and water shortages, species extinctions, and other calamities worsening every hour due to the lack of basic rights for nonhuman animals, *never doubt we must dedicate ourselves to animal rights.*

And never doubt that Responsible Policies for Animals will adhere to animal rights. **You can help RPA avoid costly & wasteful fundraising methods by renewing your membership each year without reminders and donating whenever possible.** *Your support is invaluable.*

Thank you for being a thoughtful, committed citizen! - the key to establishing basic rights for all animals! ★