

## Why Environmentalists Should Help *Get Our Universities out of the* Meat, Dairy, Fish, and Egg Industries

*Automobiles, nuclear power, dams, clear-cutting, pesticides – problems environmental groups typically address – are only the most visible human assaults against the natural world. Tens of thousands of years ago, humans started systematically infringing on nonhuman animals. All of their infringements disrupted the web of life. Killing predators, supplanting predators by hunting, moving out of natural human habitat, cultivating crops, herding and enslaving nonhuman animals, killing nonhuman animals to protect crops, food stores, and “livestock” – all of this undermined nature, leading to today’s global catastrophes. “Animal science” at our land-grant universities (LGUs) is a major part of these catastrophes.*

*“Animal science” at our LGUs – training, research, collusion, sales, and public relations for the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries – is the most powerful force behind humans’ disruption of the natural world. Responsible Policies for Animals (RPA) has sent LGU executives in all 50 states and the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities more than 350 letters, 200 factsheets, 50 books, 50 videos, and 50 bibliographies on the “animal science” problem. Simultaneously, RPA has informed officials, given lectures, run websites, distributed literature, published articles and letters, and advertised in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Academe*, *the Society of Environmental Journalists* magazine, and elsewhere. Some LGUs ignore the problem; some try to defend the indefensible; none is yet making the needed change. As always, we the people must solve the problem.*



Universities perch atop the hierarchy of institutions – news, family, school, religion, youth and civic groups ... – that determine what people think and how they live. Universities’ ties to powerful life-destroying industries make the industries appear legitimate while they undermine the natural world. News and government present professors’ pro-industry views as “objective” and “scientific,” but conflict of interest makes them the most prejudiced citizens. University-industry alliances suppress research revealing industries’ destructive impacts – a factor in all environmental problems.

“Animal science” at our land-grant universities – training, research, collusion, sales, and public relations for the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries – is the most destructive university-industry alliance. All human beings should concern themselves with impacts of “animal science.” Environmentalists should help Responsible Policies for Animals eliminate it.

### Long Time Coming

All human industries disrupt the living world. In nature, before predator-elimination, hunting, herding, clothing, agriculture, sedentary living, and nonhuman-animal enslavement (“domestication”), humans did not have industries like today. By definition, all of these practices that ended humans’ original, natural plant-foraging way of life in their natural habitat disrupted the natural order – “the environment.”

Humans cannot “go back to nature.” But meaningful problem-solving must address root causes. “Snipping at twigs” has made environmentalism ineffective. “Animal science” at our land-grant universities (LGUs) promotes humanism, speciesism, “the Great Chain of Being,” and other ideologies that drive humans’ destruction of the natural world. Teaching for the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries teaches the entire university community – not only those studying “poultry science,” “dairy science,” “aquaculture,” and the rest – that it is natural for humans to use other animals, other animals exist for humans, eating from animals is good for humans, raising animals for food can be environmentally sound, and other false beliefs.

### Universities Assaulting the Environment

Humans’ use of other animals is the most powerful force disrupting the natural world. So universities should not promote it but assist the public in ending it. Following are some of the most destructive impacts of the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries – kept large, profitable, and popular by “animal science.”

**Heating Earth’s climate.** A 2009 *World Watch* analysis “shows that livestock and their byproducts ... account for *at least* 32,564 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents per year, or 51 percent of annual worldwide [greenhouse gas emissions].” Global warming causes hundreds of thousands of →

human deaths and inestimable death, suffering, deprivation, and disruption of other beings.

**Turning land to desert.** Cattle, sheep, and other grazing turns rich, verdant land to desert. Desertification is linked to the collapse of past civilizations and inestimable loss of life today.

**Poisoning water and soil.** Billions of gallons of toxic animal feces, unnaturally generated and concentrated by the meat, dairy, and egg industries, spills into rivers, soil, and ground water. Stenches and swarms of flies extend for miles.

**Wasting water and soil.** Farming, an unnatural practice, depletes significant amounts of water and topsoil. Raising animals uses much more water and soil than only growing plants for humans to eat. Non-renewable water and topsoil are rapidly vanishing as most farmland provides plants to fatten nonhuman animals for slaughter. This makes already-dire human food and water shortages far more difficult to remedy.

**Killing the oceans.** Toxic-chemical runoff from growing plants to fatten nonhuman animals killed a vast region in the Gulf of Mexico – long before the well-known “BP oil spill.” More than 140 dead zones have been identified in Earth’s oceans. Raising nonhuman animals for food is the main cause.

**Killing carnivores and omnivores.** Humans have killed countless millions of wolves, cougars, coyotes, foxes, waterfowl, bears, tigers, and others to prevent them from eating cattle, sheep, chickens, fish, pigs, turkeys, and other animals and eggs humans misguidedly produce for themselves. In addition to being unjust and extremely inhumane, this killing devastates the web of life.

**Killing nonhuman herbivores.** Farming naturally attracts deer, rabbits, mice, rats, groundhogs, elephants, and other plant-eating animals, whom humans kill as “pests.” Farming can be made less unjust and inhumane. But much more farming – and killing – takes place than if all farmland were used to feed humans rather than 70 percent for nonhuman animals as at present.

**Driving species extinct.** The sixth massive wave of species extinctions, occurring today, is caused by human practices. Species are going extinct about 1,000 times as quickly as before humans invented agriculture. Because of its diverse and far-reaching impacts on the natural world, raising animals for food is the biggest threat to the continued existence of countless species.

## Solving the Problem

Should universities serve industries, train students to work for industries, and reinforce millions of people’s unthinking support of industries that heat Earth’s climate, turn life-supporting land to desert, poison and waste water and soil, worsen already-severe human want and misery, kill life in the oceans, kill millions of nonhuman animals seeking food placed before them by humans, and drive animal and plant species extinct?

*The founders, directors, members, and friends of Responsible Policies for Animals say no.*

Environmentalists agree, once they study the matter. It is too late to prevent some of the harm human beings wreak by destroying, undermining, and subjugating other animals. But environment organizations so far have failed to address the institutions and ideologies driving humans’ assault on the natural world.

Universities inculcate knowledge, belief, and ideology far more powerfully than environment, animal, health, and other organizations do. As long as we let them teach false, invidious, destructive beliefs, life-destroying practices and industries they promote will continue to overwhelm environmentalists’ efforts to halt and reverse the destruction wrought by humans’ long rampage.

## What Environmentalists Must Do

To enable life to continue as it has been experienced by quadrillions of animals over hundreds of millions of years, join in RPA’s 10,000 Years Is Enough campaign to get our universities out of the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries.

Strategy is different for everyone depending on expertise, affiliations, interests, and other factors. But everyone can write to their state’s governor and LGU – crucial steps!

➤ Visit [www.RPAforAll.org/campaigns](http://www.RPAforAll.org/campaigns) for RPA’s LGU and governor lists and to see what RPA is doing.

➤ Discuss with RPA’s directors the most effective actions for your available time.

➤ Help get newsmen to see the enormity of the “animal science” problem. The vast majority take a “hands-off-of-universities” approach.

➤ Become an RPA member. With no paid directors or staff, RPA puts the most possible funds toward getting the job done. RPA members are counted as supporting the most crucial effort to protect life on Earth – the more, the better. Donate online or by mail.

Don’t stop recycling and minimizing consumption and water, energy, and land use. But university-industry alliances ravage Earth more quickly than environmentalism can protect it. So join in RPA’s 10,000 Years Is Enough campaign today to get our universities out of the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries.