

Compassionate Action

The Magazine of Compassion Over Killing

Summer & Fall 2015 • Issue 30

**Meet Chrystal: How I
Became an Undercover
Investigator**

**COK Investigations on
CNN – Three Times!**

**COK Exposes NC
Chicken Industry**

**Foster Farms: A Nightmare
for Baby Birds**

**We're Making Vegan Eating
Business as Usual**

And so much more...

Compassion Over Killing is a national nonprofit animal protection organization based in Washington, DC. Since 1995, COK has been working to expose cruelty to farmed animals and empower people to choose vegetarian foods as a way to build a kinder world.

Relying on a wide range of strategies to achieve our mission, COK conducts undercover investigations, engages in proactive legal advocacy, persuades major corporations to use fewer animal products and offer more vegan options, and much more.

Join our efforts today to help demonstrate the power of compassion. Visit COK.net.

Cover: Photo of Chrystal with a rescued chicken at Hooves & Paws Animal Rescue in Little Rock, CA, taken by Jose Salvador Sanchez. HoovesAndPaws.org

Photo of Erica above taken by Sylvia Elzafon. SylviaElzafon.com

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Voices of **Compassion** at cok.net/blog

 /CompassionOverKilling  @TryVeg

Dear Friend,



Erica Meier at Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary

Thank you! As COK celebrates 20 years of **compassionate action for animals**, we're truly grateful to have you standing by our side. Your commitment to our shared mission is changing minds and saving lives every single day.

To animal agribusiness, farm animals are little more than meat-, milk-, and egg-producing machines. But to you and me, these animals are individuals who experience pain, sorrow, and joy every bit as much as the dogs and cats with whom many of us share our homes.

That's why your support is needed now more than ever.

The meat industry keeps fighting hard to silence us. But with you at our side, we're fighting back.

As you'll read in this issue, COK's undercover cameras keep rolling – and with in-depth reports on CNN, we're shining an even brighter light on hidden cruelties behind the closed doors of animal agribusiness.

"COK is winning time and again for animals, thanks to you. Together, we're changing the world."

And our successes in the corporate boardrooms are having an even **greater impact** – from Dunkin' Donuts and Tim Hortons adding dairy-free milk options on their menus to Subway rolling out new vegan sandwiches in more than 1,000 locations.

COK is winning time and again for animals, thanks to you. Together, we're changing the world.

Sincerely,

Erica Meier

Erica Meier, Executive Director



Meet Chrystal: How I Became an Undercover Investigator

Q: How did you first get involved in animal advocacy?

A: I always loved animals, but like most people grew up eating them. I didn't make the connection between the "meat" on my plate and animals until my mother adopted a stray who had been abused. He had BB pellets underneath his skin, meaning that someone had used him for target practice. This triggered my desire to live more compassionately, and the arbitrary lines that dictated who deserved my compassion began to fade.

Q: What inspired you to become an undercover investigator?

A: Undercover videos were the key to my learning about the ways humans exploit animals and fueled my commitment to fight for them. Investigations are critical in fighting the systematic abuses in animal agribusiness, because their business model depends on keeping the public in the dark.

In addition to exposing the truth about the horrors farmed animals endure, undercover videos have led to the shuttering of facilities, animal rescues, and have fueled people to join the movement. For all of these reasons I knew I had to find the courage to do this.

Q: How has going undercover changed you?

A: This has been the most rewarding challenge of my life. During some of the difficult times, I stayed strong by recalling Sophie Scholl's quote, "How can we expect righteousness to prevail when there is hardly anyone willing



to give [their self] up individually to a righteous cause?" By forcing myself to push through the rough days, I built up my backbone and discovered a level of confidence I never knew I had.

Q: What's next for you?

A: Investigations helped me uncover so much about myself, and I'm looking forward to applying this to future social justice work. I want to fight for those most exploited by animal agriculture: animals, but also workers and communities forced to live in the ecological wastelands that result from industrial agriculture. Hopefully I can tackle that after my next chapter: law school!

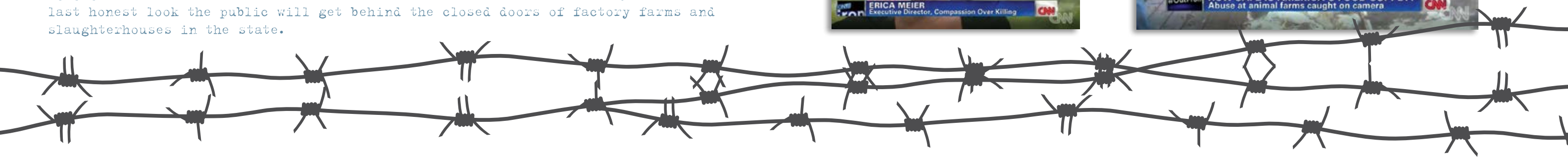
Q: What advice would you give others who express interest in becoming an investigator?

A: Investigations are difficult, but they're also incredibly impactful. I initially had doubts about doing this emotionally challenging work, but reaching out to COK was undoubtedly the right decision. I want people to know they shouldn't assume they aren't the right "fit" -- since I've talked openly about having been an investigator, many people expressed shock that I could do it, a role typically associated with masculine men. People shouldn't dismiss their capabilities simply because they don't fit the expected mold. You'll never know if you can do it unless you try, and I hope that you do.

Interested in becoming an undercover investigator? Contact COK today: investigations@cok.net ■

COK'S EXPOSES NORTH CAROLINA CHICKEN INDUSTRY: Two Investigations Covered on CNN

Warning: After Big-Ag flexed its muscles to ensure the passage of a dangerous ag-gag bill in North Carolina in June 2015, COK's undercover videos may be the last honest look the public will get behind the closed doors of factory farms and slaughterhouses in the state.



PILGRIM'S SHAME: BIRDS BURIED ALIVE

Few people have seen up close the miseries endured by billions of baby birds raised for their meat in the chicken industry – until a brave COK investigator worked behind its closed doors with a hidden camera.

Our investigator's story and shocking footage was covered in an exclusive, in-depth report on CNN breaking the news of our heartbreaking undercover video to millions of viewers. The video exposes the painful reality for birds raised in a facility that supplied Pilgrim's, the second-largest chicken slaughterer in the world.

Typically kept hidden from public view, our video footage uncovers the day-to-day horrors that include:

- birds genetically manipulated to grow so obese, they suffer from painful leg deformities so severe they can't walk
- sick or injured birds thrown around then stuffed into buckets with decaying corpses of other chickens
- **perhaps most gruesome – we documented unwanted birds intentionally buried alive in mass graves, left to die from dehydration, starvation, or possibly even suffocation**

When our investigator asked if the birds who were very much alive would be killed before being dumped, a worker acknowledged they're supposed to kill them first but they don't.

Pilgrim's Corp. stated the acts we caught on video are "unacceptable" and "startling," and the company promptly suspended its relationship with this facility, which is no longer in operation.

Even the National Chicken Council didn't defend the abuses we documented.

Yet, after our evidence of abuse was reviewed by both state and local authorities, the Harnett County authorities decided "not to bring criminal charges in this case."

In other words, chickens have so little legal protection in North Carolina, that intentionally throwing live and fully conscious birds into mass graves—where they may suffer for days before eventually dying from starvation or dehydration—is apparently not a crime.

VIOLENCE & ABUSE AT MOUNTAIRE FARMS CHICKEN SLAUGHTERHOUSE

As featured in powerful detailed reports on ABC News and CNN that aired in May and June 2015, COK's latest gut-wrenching undercover video exposes the hidden horrors inside a North Carolina chicken slaughterhouse operated by Mountaire Farms, the 7th largest chicken slaughterer in the US.

COK's investigator who worked inside this Robeson County slaughterhouse captured extreme violence and abuse on camera, including:

- birds being violently thrown around the facility
- workers punching, shoving, and pushing birds who are hanging upside-down in shackles
- a worker ripping out birds' feathers and throwing them at another worker
- birds being forcefully slammed into leg shackles
- sick or injured birds being thrown into piles of dead and other dying birds like garbage

This level of violence against animals is so egregious that it violates the state's animal protection laws. COK turned over this evidence to Robeson County law enforcement, yet no legal action has yet been taken.

This investigative footage has reached millions of Americans through countless media reports, including CNN, Fox 46, *The News & Observer*, and the *Fayetteville Observer* – all covering the dangerous ag-gag bill that was passed into law a few short weeks after our video was released. ■



Whistleblowers Gagged by Big-Ag

Poultry production is the top agricultural industry in North Carolina, and it proved just how desperate it is to cover up its rampant animal abuse: it worked feverishly to help enact an anti-whistleblower ag-gag law to stop undercover investigations. This dangerous law goes into effect in January 2016.

Rather than doing the right thing to stop these abuses from happening, the North Carolina chicken industry prefers to prevent the public from seeing it and punish anyone who would expose it.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Visit COK.net to learn more, sign up for our action alerts, and get more active for animals!

CORPORATE CAMPAIGN VICTORIES: You're Asking for Vegan Options and Companies are Responding!

Compassion Over Killing is reaching out to national food chains and corporations encouraging them to use fewer animal ingredients and add vegan options – and with your help, we're winning! Thank you for joining our efforts and lending your voice. Together, we're making vegan eating business as usual.



SUCCESS: Tim Hortons now offers soy milk!

With more than 4,500 locations in Canada, Tim Hortons is the country's largest coffee chain, though they didn't have a dairy-free option for coffee – until now! COK is excited to share the news that your requests for dairy-free options were heard: You can now find “Enjoy It with Soy!” signs touting this new option at participating restaurants throughout Canada!

What's Next?

Please thank Tim Hortons for adding this dairy-free option and let them know you'd love to see it – and more vegan options – in all of its locations worldwide, including the US!

888-601-1616

/TimHortons

@TimHortons



SUCCESS: Dunkin' Donuts now offers almond milk!

Dunkin' Donuts is the world's largest coffee and baked goods chain, and it recently added almond milk to its menu after hearing from consumers via our campaign site: WeLoveDunkin.com! The company said it made this change to “accommodate guests looking for a non-dairy alternative.”

What's Next?

Please thank Dunkin' for adding this dairy-free option for coffee while also encouraging it to take the next step: offer an egg- and dairy-free donut, too!

781-737-3000

WeLoveDunkin.com

@DunkinDonuts



SUCCESS: 1,000+ Subways Now Offer Vegan Menu!

Through our campaign website, WeLoveSubway.com, you've been asking for vegan options and Subway is responding: more than 1,000 locations in DC, CA, CT, and FL now offer a vegan menu featuring a Black Bean patty and the Malibu Garden! The company is even touting this new menu with ads encouraging you to “Get Your Vegan On!”

What's Next?

Thank Subway for introducing this vegan menu in several states and let them know you're hungry for vegan options nationwide!

800.888.4848

WeLoveSubway.com

@Subway



NEW CAMPAIGN: Ask Starbucks to Add Vegan Food to its Menu!

Starbucks was one of the first national coffee chains to offer soy milk, and in the past year, the company has also added coconut milk to its menu. Consumers looking for dairy-free coffee beverages can reliably turn to Starbucks – but that's where the company's menu falls short.

Starbucks should continue its progress by taking the next step: offer a vegan food menu!

That's why COK teamed up with Jane Velez-Mitchell to launch a petition on Change.org encouraging consumers like you to let Starbucks know you're ready to enjoy an egg-free muffin, vegan cookie, or plant-based breakfast sandwich with your dairy-free coffee! ■

TAKE ACTION:
Visit Change.org/StarbucksVegan to sign our petition today!

COK Investigates Foster Farms: A nightmare for baby birds



In 2015, Chrystal, a Compassion Over Killing investigator documented shocking horrors forced upon baby birds – from painful mutilations to being ground up alive – inside a Foster Farms turkey hatchery in Fresno, California.

CNN ran an in-depth exclusive report about our investigation, and this story was also covered in other prominent media outlets including the Los Angeles Times, CBS News, and The San Francisco Gate.

While Foster Farms may publicly pride itself for its so-called “humane” treatment of birds, our video exposes the cruel and inhumane reality happening behind closed doors. This hidden camera footage offers consumers a glimpse of the miseries that newly-hatched turkeys endure on their first – and sometimes only – day of life.

Our investigation inside Foster Farms reveals:

- Extreme processing speeds that result in these fragile birds being thrown, tossed, and jostled around on machines

"The birds inside the bag appeared to be squirming, gasping, and blinking minutes after the knot had been tied. A manager said that as long as they were not chirping they should be put in the freezer."

- COK investigator log notes

- Painful mutilations: these baby animals have parts of their toes and beaks burned off without any painkillers. A manager callously joked that these painful practices are “nose jobs” and “manicures”
- Sick, injured, or weak birds are set aside and either dumped into a machine to be ground up alive or gassed to death in plastic bags

Almost 4.5 million baby birds are born into a life of hell at this Foster Farms facility each year. For those who survive this hatchery nightmare, their misery is just beginning. These curious and playful birds will be packed up and shipped out to factory farms where they’ll suffer for the next several months crammed inside dark, feces-filled warehouses before they will be sent off to slaughter.

The Truth About Foster Farms "Humane" Claims

Foster Farms knows that consumers are increasingly concerned about animal welfare and has therefore invested in an extensive campaign to convince consumers that they treat their animals well. Foster Farms is in the process of certifying its turkey production practices as “humane” through the so-called “American Humane Association” (AHA).

Foster Farms chicken already bears the AHA’s seal of approval, but another recent undercover investigation revealing the horrors endured by Foster Farms’ chickens blew the lid off

this humane claim scam. Likewise, the reality for Foster Farms turkeys is far from “humane.”

Foster Farms is Slated to Raise the 2015 Presidential Turkey

Our undercover video reveals that Foster Farm turkeys are subjected to harsh processing, painful mutilations, and often gruesome deaths, on their first day of life. Despite all this, Foster Farms has been selected to present the “2015 National Thanksgiving Turkey” to President Barack Obama for “pardoning.”

Join us in urging President Obama to go beyond the symbolic gesture of “pardoning” a turkey who has committed no crime, and instead show compassion for all animals by choosing a meat-free holiday meal. ■

ACT NOW:

Sign our petition today at Change.org/ObamaThanksgiving.



AVERY'S STORY

Within hours of emerging from an egg shell, fragile little Avery entered a misery-filled world. Jostled around on conveyor belts and forced into mutilation machines that burned off the tips of his toes and beak, from day one he was treated like an assembly-line widget.

Packed up and shipped out to a filthy, overcrowded factory farm, Avery’s life ended short a few months later when he was sent to slaughter.

Compassion Over Killing’s mission is to spare animals, like Avery, from such a horrific fate. We’re exposing the truth, telling the animals’ stories, and empowering others to choose compassion — and we’re succeeding thanks to your support. Visit COK.net to learn more.

DC VEGFEST SUCCESS

RECORD-BREAKING CROWD OF 15,000+ PEOPLE!



Wow! Thank YOU for all of the tremendously positive feedback and for helping us make our 2014 DC VegFest a smashing success.

With a bigger location at Washington, DC's Yard's Park, came a bigger crowd of about 15,000 people ranging from vegans and vegetarians to mostly those who were curious to see what all the fun is about.

Our main stage was beaming with speakers who inspired the crowd with humor, health, personal stories, and some simple yet delicious vegan cooking. Speakers included **Robin Quivers** from the Howard Stern Show, cookbook author **Bryant Terry**, **Micah Risk** from *Lighter* who was recently featured on the cover of *Runner's World* magazine, and *Washington Post's* Food Editor and "Weeknight Vegetarian" **Joe Yonan**, plus many more!

As always, the food was a huge hit – from free food samples provided by **So Delicious**, **Tofurky** and others to dozens of restaurant vendors including **Busboys & Poets**, **Sticky Fingers Sweets & Eats** and **Vegetable Garden**, nearly everything was devoured by the end of the day.

Thanks to V-Dog, we unleashed our first-ever **Barking Lot for our furry four-legged guests**. We also expanded our kids' activity area with yoga, music, and an Ask-A-Vegan Family presentation. And we added a music tent next to the beer garden where people could sit down and relax and meet new friends!

There are so many reasons to celebrate the benefits of plant-based eating – with every meat-free meal, we're choosing to protect our health, the planet, and animals.

The resounding success and growth of the DC VegFest along with the extensive media coverage this event receives – from Fox News to NPR to *The Washington Post* – demonstrates that veg eating has reached the mainstream in the nation's capital, and it's here to stay. ■

★ Visit DCVegFest.com for more photos and mark your calendar for our 2015 celebration: **October 3!**



"Holy DC VegFest!"

"So much fun at DC VegFest today. Can't wait to go next year."

"Thanks for being the best festival ever!"

"My mother has decided to become a vegetarian after attending DC VegFest!"



"I'd been on the fence about going vegan, but after meeting so many friendly and helpful people there today, I'm ready to jump right in and say it: I'm vegan now!"

"I had no idea there were so many options out there – I'll definitely be eating more vegan food now."

Savory Breakfast Sandwiches from COK's *Easy Vegan Recipes*



Makes 4 sandwiches in 25 minutes

- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- ¼ cup olive oil
- Salt & black pepper, to taste
- One 14-ounce package firm tofu, drained and cut in 8 slices
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 8 ounces button mushrooms, sliced
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 2 cups baby spinach leaves (optional: add in any other vegetables you love)
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- Vegan butter (such as Earth Balance)
- 4 English muffins, toasted

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. In a shallow baking dish, whisk together the apple cider vinegar, soy sauce, olive oil, and ½ teaspoon of black pepper. Place tofu slices in a single layer in the dish and turn over to coat with the mixture on all sides. Allow tofu to marinate for 20 minutes, turning a few times.
3. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes, flipping the tofu once at the 10-minute mark.
4. While the tofu bakes, sauté your veggies over medium-high heat, starting with onions and garlic. Then add mushrooms, and once those are browning, add tomato, spinach, any other vegetables you choose, thyme, and salt/pepper to taste. Adjust heat to medium-low if the veggies are browning too quickly. Remove from heat when the tofu has finished crisping. ■

To Assemble Sandwiches:

1. Spread vegan butter on your toasted English muffins.
2. Layer one side of the muffin with veggies, then two strips of tofu, then more veggies.
3. Close the muffin, press down, and eat.
4. This sandwich is delicious and can be messy. It's best with enjoyed with friends! ■



WANT MORE FREE RECIPES?
Visit VegRecipes.org or flip to page 14 to request a free printed copy of our *Easy Vegan Recipes* booklet.

COK Supporter Spotlight: Curt Albright



For over 23 years, Curt Albright has been an investment banker in Charlotte, North Carolina. His life changed forever when he discovered the painful realities forced upon farmed animals, and he's now vegan, but that's just the beginning. While still working full-time, Curt founded the Charlotte VegFest, he's appeared on local media to discuss animal protection issues, and he launched a Change.org petition to help chickens that went viral.

Q: How did you get started in animal advocacy? What was your "a-ha!" moment?

A: I've had many "a-ha" moments, and that leads me to believe that I'm on the right path. After watching Earthlings, I decided to become vegan. Then I watched Philip Wollen's powerful speech "Animals Should Be Off The Menu." I connected with his banking background and realized I can – and need – to do more. That was my wake up call to take my advocacy to the next level.

Q: How did you get started?

A: I knew I wanted to focus on helping the 9 billion animals who are tortured and killed for food every year in the US, and I wanted to learn from the most effective advocates out there. So I flew to NY and DC to meet several inspiring movement leaders and brought their strategies back to Charlotte. Everyone I met showed such kindness, support, and compassion – I knew I found my tribe!

Q: What advice can you offer to those who are new to animal advocacy?

A: For starters, *The Animal Activist's Handbook* by Matt Ball & Bruce Friedrich

is a must-read. It's a great blueprint for what works, what doesn't, and how to effect change for the animals.

Q: What's your secret for getting important media coverage in your community?

A: Most people care about animals, but they don't realize all the cruelty that's around us, especially in North Carolina – hidden in rural areas, trucked at night, and lurking behind ag-gag legislation. So when COK released a powerful video of a North Carolina chicken factory farm, I launched Change.org petition pressuring authorities to take this cruelty case seriously by filing charges. It went viral and got over 200,000 signatures – and the media was eager to tell this story about a local man working on an issue involving a North Carolina business that impacts consumers nationwide. The key is to reach out to the media about your story.

Q: How do you stay motivated?

A: First, I must take care of myself. I refill my pitcher by making sure that I take time out for myself every day. For me, that means meditation, prayer, exercise, and spending time in nature.

I'm inspired by the incredible amount of selfless work being done by others around me and I stay motivated by staying connected to them, through social media, leafleting, networking events, and attending conferences.

I'm also motivated by the undercover investigators who put their lives on the line to bring us the truth from behind the slaughterhouse walls. They are the courageous voices for the billions of unseen suffering animals... they are my heroes!

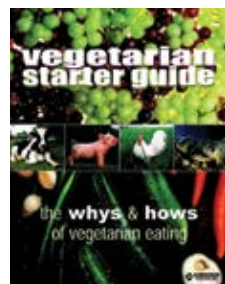
Q: What's next on your advocacy agenda?

A: I want to be available to take whatever action is needed to help the animals as effectively as possible. Locally, the Charlotte VegFest has been a huge success and we've also opened the Charlotte office for The Humane League. Our grass-roots work in the Charlotte area is on fire!

Given the power that media carries for raising awareness, I'm focusing on finding more ways to get our message in the news. We're close to the tipping point. I see proof all around me, and I'm excited to be part of a movement that is making this happen! ■

VEG OUTREACH

First copy is free, \$1 for each additional copy unless otherwise noted. Please contact us at info@cok.net for bulk orders.



Vegetarian Starter Guide

This guide explains the benefits of choosing vegetarian foods. Includes recipes and meal ideas. Free PDF download available on TryVeg.com.



Easy Vegan Recipes

A collection of our favorite easy recipes for breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert and snacks. Free PDF download available on TryVeg.com.



I Support COK Sticker or Magnet

Show everyone just how much you support compassion with our new stickers! Stickers are free. Available as a magnet for \$2 each



Your Donations Help Us Help Animals!

All of our work for farmed animals is only made possible thanks to the generosity of our members. Your support means so much to us and, more importantly, to the animals.

Visit COK.net to learn more. Thank you!

APPAREL



COK Logo Tee

Made in the US from 100% recycled materials. Heather gray, in men's and women's sizes S-XL. \$15.



"Ask Me Why" Tee

Made in the US from 100% recycled materials. Light green, in men's and women's sizes S-XL. \$15.

**Available in men's & women's sizes!*



TryVeg.com Bumper Sticker or Magnet

One of the simplest ways to spread a message of compassion. Stickers are free. Available as a magnet for \$2 each.



Restaurant Manager Cards

Use these pocket-sized cards to kindly encourage restaurants to add more vegan options. Set of 10 for \$2 or 50 for \$5.



Veg Guide to DC

This handy Guide lists dozens of the best veg-friendly restaurants in and around the nation's capital. First copy is free. Free PDF download at VegDC.com.

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Questions? Contact COK at info@cok.net or 301-891-2458. Thanks for your support!

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PRODUCTS



Eating Sustainably

This brochure explains how animal agriculture is a leading cause of pollution and resource depletion, and that we can fight global warming—and animal abuse—with our forks. \$4 per pack of 25 flyers.



Comida con Amigos

This colorful 16-page guide celebrates the flavors of traditional Hispanic foods with a compassionate twist. You'll find vegan versions of 20 delicious cultural recipes. Free copy can be requested online at COK.net.



TryVeg.com Canvas Bag

This canvas bag is a handy way to carry your groceries (or other items) while encouraging others to choose vegetarian. \$12 each.

 **COMPASSION**
OVER KILLING

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Survivors of an egg factory farm, rescued by COK

Compassion
is having the
courage to change
the world.

 **COMPASSION**
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