Proposal: Segmenting U.S. Millennials for Targeted Vegan Education
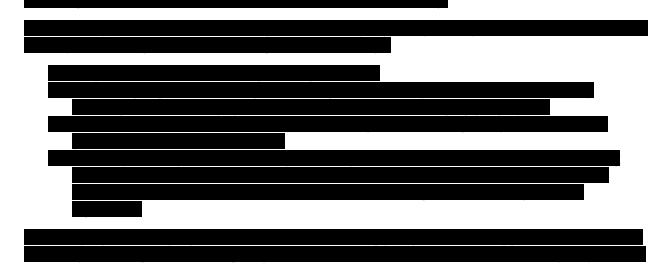
[DRAFT]

Background

We founded Better Eating International after seeing the successful use of targeted advertising in political campaigns (both Obama and Trump), corporations, and social movements (same-sex marriage, HIV prevention). Our experience conducting outreach in the animal rights movement also showed us how different people respond to these issues in different ways. While showcasing untargeted video often creates an immediate intent to change, follow-up face-to-face conversations have demonstrated that the widespread dissemination of this untargeted content fails to address most people's individual concerns. Audience segmentation and targeted ads solve this by allowing us reach people with more uniquely persuasive content at a scale that has previously been inaccessible to the movement.
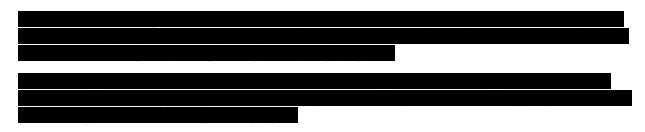
From the inception of this idea, it's been obvious that rigorous research would be important, but we'd originally planned to perform studies on a rolling basis with an on-staff Research Director, analyzing different demographic-based segments immediately prior to producing content for them. However, through conversations with industry leaders and academic experts, it's become clear that a foundational study led by a research firm specializing in segmentation will be necessary to *identify and characterize* the segments before be begin developing content.

There's often a question of the cost/benefit of segmentation and how narrow each segment should be. We've discovered that marketers tend to recommend deeper segmentation when the product or idea being promoted is fringe or controversial. Before something is normalized, people are far more skeptical of its benefits and necessity, so arguments in its behalf must be tailored to the needs and attitudes of specific audiences. For something that is already popular (e.g., Coca-Cola), segments can be far more broad because only simplistic arguments are necessary.

The most relevant example of audience segmentation use for social change comes from the same-sex marriage movement, which in the last decade reversed public opinion and the national law with messaging that was audience-tested, constantly refined, and highly segmented[1]. We spoke to Goodwin Simon, the research firm that revolutionized that movement's approach through their work with *Freedom to Marry* and they saw vast potential for using a similar approach to help animals. Since that firm's notoriety has inflated their costs beyond feasibility, we've reached out to six other firms to discuss their capabilities, costs, and approach to segmentation research. ██

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[1] 12/2015. How Data Helped Win The Battle Over Same-Sex Marriage. *FiveThirtyEight*
http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-data-helped-win-the-battle-over-same-sex-marriage/

Goals

With this study, Better Eating International aims to:
- Understand the attitudes and perceptions of non-vegans toward vegan eating & animal agriculture.
- Attempt to determine which traits (socio-political, socioeconomic, psychographic, or demographic) predict who may be more likely to consider or adopt veganism.
- Test the resonance of concepts such as:
  - ➢ Animal rights
  - ➢ Climate change
  - ➢ Vegan food affordability
  - ➢ Perceived feasibility of adopting a vegan or semi-vegan diet
  - ➢ Appeal or knowledge of certain foods
  - ➢ Healthfulness of a vegan diet
  - ➢ Knowledge and comfort with nutritional shifts
  - ➢ Perceptions of different facets of veganism
- Understand which concepts resonate most with each group of potential vegan adopters.

Literature Review

It is well-known that social science and marketing research methodologies have done a great deal to shape modern American politics[2]. Since the birth of these methodologies, marketing research and political research have become one of the most important steps for successful political campaigns, social movements, branding campaigns, and marketing efforts.

The animal rights and vegan movements are no exception. This limited literature review contextualizes some of the current research in this area. Remarkably, this review reveals that the current body of research has mostly been undertaken *after* messaging campaigns (not before) and argues that further research is needed to explore the persuasive value of different arguments to specific effectiveness of their own initiatives, many of these studies have serious limitations. Notably, they review past campaigns in order to gauge outcomes. These studies do little to provide critical analysis on which aspects of these actions have proven to be most effective at achieving the outcomes they observe.

For example, Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM)[3] completed a study of the support required to switch to a vegan diet for those that claimed to be enthusiastic about switching to a vegan or vegetarian diet after viewing FARM's "10 Billion Lives" video. While this research is useful for helping organizations speak to those that are already sympathetic to the vegan cause, helps identify concerns about switching to a vegan diet, and identifies care for animal rights among sympathizers, no information was collected about which specific facet of the argument presented in the "10 Billion

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[2] Lepore, Jill. (9/24/2012). The Lie Factory. *The New Yorker Online.* Retrieved 10/7/2012.
(http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/09/24/the-lie-factory)
[3] FARM. Survey of College Age Youth Recently Persuaded to Try Veganism.

Lives" video inspired their new commitment to a vegan diet. More importantly, this research does not help to understand the audience that was NOT receptive to the "10 Billion Lives" message. Since this research does not detail which arguments were most effective in convincing these new vegans to change their diet, it cannot be used to help Better Eating International to create new messages.

Behavioral change research conducted by Mercy For Animals[4] (2015) noted that no detectable change in animal consumption occurred as a result of viewing online videos about animal cruelty and factory farming. This research is limited in that it examines delivery of only one message. Furthermore, research into the effectiveness of the factory farming message could have been undertaken before the creation of the videos, as opposed to after the launch and dissemination of the videos. It would be flawed to believe that if one particular iteration of the factory farming and cruelty message seems to create little behavioral change, that there are no other iterations of the same message that would succeed in creating behavioral change or increased sympathies to farm animals. The research that is proposed here tests the resonance of different topics related to veganism, and matches those messages to specific psychographic and geographic social groups. This way, messages can be crafted for specific groups of consumers.

Other studies comparing the behavioral change inspired by different leaflets commonly fail to analyze the particular aspects of the leaflets which lead to differences in their effects[5,6]. A study by Jacob Peacock and Harish Sethu at Humane League Labs[7] compared two different leaflets distributed on different college campuses. When given to students who had not previously encountered the literature, a leaflet titled *Something Better* prepared by Farm Sanctuary appeared to spare 36.38% more animals than the *Compassionate Choices* leaflet prepared by Vegan Outreach. The research also analyzes the effect of receiving the *Something Better* leaflet after having received the *Compassionate Choices* leaflet at an earlier date. However, this research did not analyze specifically what it was about the two leaflets that made one more successful than the other. Again, this research cannot be easily used by other vegan groups as they prepare new messaging campaigns, and it does not help understand which groups are most likely to be inspired by which sorts of arguments.

While studies that focus on the perceptions of current vegetarians and vegans are useful for understanding their view points and the reasons for their dietary choices, these studies do not help organizations understand those that have made no commitment to reduce their animal consumption. A study by the Humane League Labs provided excellent intelligence about the demographics and preferences of current vegetarians, vegans, and reducing omnivores[8]. That study does not help to understand the attitudes, interests and demographics of all omnivores. The research that we are proposing focuses entirely on people that have not yet made any commitment to reducing their consumption of animal products. These individuals represent the area where the vegan movement has the most work ahead, and also the most potential for growth.

[4] Vogel, Gayle and Matthew Maher. 1/20/2015. Impact Evaluation of a Landing Page Used in Mercy For Animals' Facebook Advertising Campaign. Edge Research, Arlington Virginia.
[5] 6/14/2016. Analysis of Pay Per Read Data. Vegan Outreach.
[6] 11/2014. Vegan Outreach Pamphlet Study –Follow-up results. Vegan Outreach
[7] Peacock, Jacob and Harish Sethu. 8/11/2017. Which Leaflet is More Effective: A Reanalysis. Humane League Labs.
[8] 4/2014. Diet Change and Demographic, Characteristics of vegans, Vegetarians, Semi-Vegetarians, and Omnivores. Humane League Labs.

Other research by the Humane League has analyzed which types of vegan materials are most compelling. These other studies detail which types of photos are most persuasive[9], whether vegan, vegetarian, or reduction messaging is most effective[10], and which vegan meals are most appetizing.[11] These studies each provide useful insights[12], however, they do not break respondents down into segments for quantitative analysis. The research proposed here would take this extra step which allows for targeted messaging and more rigorous measurement of future campaigns' effectiveness.

Research by Faunalytics (formerly The Humane Research Council) assesses the difficulty in staying vegan or vegetarian[13], specifically due to the fact that the diet positions them on the margins of society. While that study provides useful insights into how to best support current vegetarians and vegans, and potentially how to reinspire lapsed vegetarians or vegans, it provides little understanding into how to best motivate new vegan sympathizers. The research here does exactly that with a rigorous quantitative methodology designed to collect deeper cultural and attitudinal data.

Moving beyond animal rights movement research, a wealth of academic research offers limited insights into the topics that Better Eating seeks to answer more conclusively. One such area of research focuses on the particular ethical maneuvers required to justify meat consumption. While these studies are fascinating, they do not provide the clearest path to creating persuasive vegan messaging. Thomas B. Lund, Dorothy E. F. McKeegan, Clare Cribbin & Peter Sandøe argue that while vegans are most likely to hold consistent views about animal rights, omnivores rely on a mixture of moral positions with a predisposition towards utilitarianism. These mixtures, the authors argue, are a result of the need to justify a diet by using multiple, contradictory moral positions[14]. Demis E. Glasford and Krystle Lynn Caraballo find that victims that are spatially and temporally separated from potential sympathizers are seen as less familiar, and are less likely to inspire other groups to advocate on their behalf[15]. The research proposed here would provide insights into the most salient considerations for individuals as they navigate these decisions. A follow-up qualitative phase to this study would provide insights into the language most commonly used by those that the messages are meant to target. This would be a phenomenal help to those crafting the messages, as mirroring the language of targeted groups can make messaging more effective.[16]

In a similar vein, Simon Timm argues that moral disengagement occurs due to the practice of eating animals itself. The justification for eating animals is not consistent with the overall value that individuals ascribe to animals as a class, so it is no surprise that animals that are intended for food

[9] Doebel,Sabine and Susan Gabriel. 1/2015. Report: Which Farm Animal Photos Are Most Likely To Inspire People To Eat Vegan? The Humane League Labs.

[10] Doebel,Sabine and Susan Gabriel. 8/2015. Report: Does Encouraging The Public To "Eat Vegan," "Eat Vegetarian," "Eat Less Meat," or "Cut Out Or Cut Back On" Meat And Other Animal Products Lead To The Most Diet Change? The Humane League Labs.

[11] Doebel,Sabine and Susan Gabriel. 1/2015. Report: Which Vegan Meals Do Omnivores Find Most Appetizing and Accessible? The Humane League Labs.

[12] However, the study about reduction, vegan, and vegetarian messaging is inconclusive, and further research is needed to understand the mechanisms truly at work.

[13] Asher, Kathryn, Che Green, Dr Hans Gutbrod, et al. 12/2014. The Humane Research Council.

[14] Thomas B. Lund, Dorothy E. F. McKeegan, Clare Cribbin & Peter Sandøe (2016) Animal Ethics Profiling of Vegetarians, vegans and Meat-Eaters, Anthrozoös, 29:1, 89-106, DOI: 10.1080/08927936.2015.1083192

[15] Glasford, Demis and Krystle Lynn Caraballo. (2016) Collective action from a distance: Distance shapes how people view victims of injustice and decreases willingness to engage in collective action. *Group Process and Intergroup Relations.* 2016, Vol. 19(1) 27–42

[16] Diane M. Mackie, Leila T. Worth, & Arlene G. Asuncion (1990) Processing of Persuasive In-Group Messages. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.* Vol. 58, No. 5,812-822

are devalued more quickly than other animals. However, this value calculation is much more complex than it may appear[17]. Again, while understanding the complexities of how individuals justify eating meat is useful, this research does not supply insights into the arguments which are most likely to be most effective at convincing specific groups to consider transitioning to a vegan diet. Nor does it predict which groups are most likely to be flexible and open to vegan messages.

In conclusion, many studies have been undertaken by a number of different vegan activist groups and academic researchers. However, these studies fail to identify which cultural, socioeconomic and geographic groups are more receptive to which specific pro-vegan arguments.

Approach
This project will be comprised of seven phases:

1. Review and brainstorming: A deeper review of existing research followed by a brainstorming sprint (including Better Eating staff and advisers) to identify potential bases for segmentation, such as interests, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, cultural identity, demographics and psychographics.
2. Survey Design: 20 minute survey including close-ended and up to 4 open-ended questions to assess respondents' food choices and preferences, leisure and lifestyle choices, and demographic and psychographic profiles.
3. Online data collection: A 20-minute survey conducted in both English and Spanish through online panels to achieve our recruitment targets in a timely and cost-effective manner.
4. Statistical Modeling: Latent class analysis, cluster analysis, and factor analysis of the data.
5. Segment Selection: Convergence of "Art & Science" to select the most intuitive, meaningful, and actionable segments of non-vegans around vegan eating.
6. Persona Development: Quick uptake of key differentiators across target groups, offering context behind differences.
7. Ongoing Classification: Development of a "typing tool" to classify future potential targets based on responses to a small subset of predictive questions.

Target Audience
- Age: 18 to 24 & 25 to 34
- Non-vegans
- Gender: Balanced to near-50/50
- Race/Ethnicity: Quotas for African American, Asian, Latino, Caucasian, Native American, and Middle Eastern participants
- Location: National (US), limited to urban and suburban dwellers and excluding rural dwellers
- Occasional-to-frequent consumers of online video

Sample Size & Cost
We have been advised not to drop below N = 4,000 to ensure our ability to conduct multivariate analysis with a minimum of three variables. For example, we could potentially identify that a majority of Asian (1) women (2) who enjoy yoga (3) belong in a certain segment and target them accordingly. However, increasing the N to 6,000 or 8,000 would be ideal, as it would allow us to increase the number of variables considered simultaneously with confidence and create narrower segments.

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[17] Timm, Simon. (2016) Moral Intuition or Moral Disengagement? Cognitive Science Weighs in on the Animal Ethics Debate. *Neuroethics.* Springer Science+Business Media, Dordrecht, Netherlands. Vol: 14 July 2016.

With the goal of obtaining statistical significance for minority demographic groups, we have asked ▮▮▮▮ to set minimum quotas for two age groups, four main racial/ethnic groups, and two smaller ethnic groups. In addition, we have implemented a sub-quota to ensure significant representation from Spanish speakers. Since we are unsure whether such groups will prove relevant in the segmentation analysis, we have ensured not to stray too far from census figures as to allow for a weighted analysis of the overall 18-35 year old U.S. population.

Option		N = 4,000		N = 6,000		N = 8,000	
Quota Group	Gen Pop IR	18 - 24 age group	25 - 34 age group	18 - 24 age group	25 - 34 age group	18 - 24 age group	25 - 34 age group
African American	0.13	400	400	500	500	600	600
Asian	0.05	300	300	400	400	500	500
Latinx	0.17	550 (incl. 100 Spanish Speakers)	550 (incl. 100 Spanish Speakers)	600 (incl. 100 Spanish Speakers)	600 (incl. 100 Spanish Speakers)	700 (incl. 100 Spanish Speakers)	700 (incl. 100 Spanish Speakers)
Caucasian	0.62	550	550	1,200	1,200	1,900	1,900
Indigenous /Native American	0.01	100	100	100	100	100	100
Middle Eastern	0.02	100	100	100	100	100	100
Subtotal	1	2,000	2,000	3,000	3,000	4,000	4,000
Cost (incl. 20% Overhead)		$117,420		$134,220		$149,820	

Survey Content

We propose that the survey be split into four sections: 1. Screening, 2. Food & Lifestyle, 3. Social & Animal Rights Issues, and 4. Demographics. Sections 2 and 3 will be presented in alternating order to counteract sequence bias.

- Screening:
  - ➢ Age
  - ➢ Gender
  - ➢ Race/ethnicity
  - ➢ Location
  - ➢ Usage of online video
- Food & Lifestyle
  - ➢ Eating behaviors, choices and attitudes
  - ➢ Food sources and spending
  - ➢ Information sources

- ➢ Health needs and attitudes
- ➢ Health and fitness behaviors
- ➢ Online behavior and media consumption
- ➢ Types of advertising they pay attention to
- ➢ Music, movie, sporting, travel preferences
- ➢ Attitudes towards family, culture, and upbringing
- ➢ Awareness/perception of what a vegan lifestyle entails
- ➢ Impression/attitudes around aspects of the vegan lifestyle
- ➢ Likelihood to consider or adopt vegan/partial vegan lifestyle
- Social & Animal Rights Issues
  - ➢ Socio-political attitudes (including political views and attitudes towards political activism)
  - ➢ Views toward wild, domesticated, and farmed animals' sentience/intelligence/emotions
  - ➢ Views about factory farming and animal abuse
  - ➢ Belief in the importance of addressing climate change, farmworkers' rights, global hunger, and other issues affected by animal agriculture
- Demographics
  - ➢ Employment
  - ➢ Income
  - ➢ Education
  - ➢ Household members
  - ➢ Number and ages of children
  - ➢ Pets

Hypotheses

We are reluctant to be too specific at this stage in study development, but we do have several broad hypotheses already:

- This study will identify cohesive audience segments that share similar values and attitudes toward veganism, animals, and related issues.
- We are likely to find dividing lines for segments and subsegments based on unexpected criteria.
- Women, the younger age group, wealthier people, urban dwellers, and political progressives will be more open to dietary change towards veganism.
- Different audience segments will be more sensitive and susceptible to different pro-vegan arguments (e.g. environmental impact, ethics, health, etc.)
- People with marginalized identities will have polarized views on animals (splitting between strong empathy and very low empathy).
- Political progressives and libertarians will hold farmed animals in higher regard.
- Most people will express empathy for farmed animals.
- Most people will have a negative view of vegans and veganism.

Deliverables

███████ will deliver the following:

- Quantitative survey, Spanish translation, online panel programming and hosting, and sample procurement
- Segment Personas and Typing (Locator) Tool
- Crosstabs and final data file in SPSS
- Data banners by a variety of variables, such as region, race/ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, income, education, employment, as well as key attitudinal metrics
- A full report of findings cut by the banner points above

- Thorough analysis and research report in presentation-style format

Timing

Week	Milestone
1	Kickoff Review of past materials Brainstorming session
2-4	Survey development
5	English programming Begin translation / Spanish programming
6	Spanish programming Begin English data collection
7	Continue English data collection Start Spanish data collection
8-9	Complete data collection
10	Segmentation modelling
11-12	Review models Select a final segment solution
13-14	Development of segment personas and reporting