



# ANNUAL REPORT

May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2016

**Animal Agriculture Alliance**  
Connect | Engage | Protect

## LETTER FROM SHERRIE WEBB, CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

Dear Alliance supporter,

Thank you for your commitment to the Animal Agriculture Alliance's mission of bridging the communication gap between farm and fork. At the beginning of this fiscal year, the Alliance staff and board developed an ambitious strategic plan for the next three years. The plan outlines goals and objectives to help the Alliance work toward its mission.

Throughout this annual report, you will see the hard work the Alliance staff has done toward accomplishing their goals and providing value to members and animal agriculture as a whole. I hope you enjoy reading about these accomplishments and continue to support the Alliance going forward.

Sincerely,

Sherrie

## LETTER FROM KAY JOHNSON SMITH, PRESIDENT AND CEO

Dear Alliance stakeholder,

Our small and mighty team has been hard at work over the last year to connect, engage and protect on behalf of all of animal agriculture. This dedication has resulted in amazing accomplishments and excitement to work toward continued success over the next year!

Our annual Stakeholders Summit is an excellent way to reflect on our efforts over the last year and kick off our new fiscal year. The 2016 Summit proved to be our most successful and largest yet with 250 industry leaders in attendance. With the theme of "Securing Animal Agriculture's Future: Action, Please!" we all left the Summit inspired to take action for animal agriculture.

As a part of our strategic plan, it is our goal to increase the Alliance's brand and value among animal agriculture and food industry stakeholders. As such, we sought to retain our current members and grow our membership. We retained 93 percent of members and 94 percent of membership funding in fiscal year 2016. We were also proud to gain 23 new members over the course of the year.

In order to ensure balance to news stories and issues presented in public venues, the Alliance issued 25 press releases throughout the year and earned approximately 300 media mentions. On social media, the Alliance exceeded our goals by having a 24 percent increase in engagement.

To ensure a proactive, unified and strategic approach to engagement on relevant issues, the Alliance convened the Issues Management Committee on a monthly basis to analyze issues and develop strategy for both proactive and reactive engagement. In addition, the Alliance successfully hosted the seventh annual College Aggies Online competition, which had 1,400 students participate through the individual and club divisions.

I hope you enjoy reading more about our successes over the past year in this report. We look forward to making the upcoming year even stronger!

Kind regards,

Kay

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Chairperson:* Sherrie Webb, National Pork Board

*Chair-elect:* Terry Wehrkamp, Cooper Farms

*Treasurer:* Jamie Jonker, PhD,

National Milk Producers Federation

*Immediate Past Chair:* Paul Pressley,

U.S. Poultry & Egg Association

Kimber Ward, Bayer HealthCare, LLC

Jeff Cannon, Diamond V

Kathy Simmons, DVM, National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Joel Brandenberger, National Turkey Federation

Ashley DeDecker, PhD, Smithfield Hog Production

### BOARD MEMBERS

Suniti Mujumdar, Alltech, Inc.

Trudy Wastweet, American Farm Bureau Federation

Sarah Novak, American Feed Industry Association

Ann Nogan, American National CattleWomen Inc.

Peter Orwick, American Sheep Industry Association

Adnan Aydin, PhD, American Veal Association

David Sjeklocha, DVM, Cattle Empire, LLC

Marcy Tessmann, Charleston | Orwig

Christopher Ashworth, DVM, Elanco Animal Health

Cliff Becker, Farm Journal Media

Jer Geiger, DVM, Genus- PIC USA

Pete Block, Hy-Line North America, LLC

Aaron Putze, Iowa Soybean Association

John Graettinger, Merck Animal Health

Derek Yancey, Morning Fresh Farms, Inc.

Tom Super, National Chicken Council

Dallas Hockman, National Pork Producers Council

Robert Hagevoort, PhD, New Mexico State University

Janet Riley, North American Meat Institute

Adam Proctor, Potash Corp.

Josh Winegarner, Texas Cattle Feeders Association

Chad Gregory, United Egg Producers

C.D. Simmons III, United Soybean Board

Christina Lood, Zoetis

## THE ALLIANCE AND CHARLESTON|ORWIG WIN BEST OF NAMA REGIONAL AWARD

The Best of NAMA, sponsored by the National Agri-Marketing Association, honors the best in agricultural marketing communications. The Alliance's new branding materials, designed by Charleston | Orwig, won a regional first place award in the Corporate Identity category for the Carolinas/Virginia region. Overall, there were 1,368 entries in the six regions for this competition, which is one of the tools used to evaluate creative marketing communications and public relations success in the industry.

## OUR MISSION

The Animal Agriculture Alliance is an industry united, non-profit organization working to bridge the communication gap between farm and fork. The Alliance's role is to connect key industry stakeholders to arm them with responses to emerging issues, to engage food chain influencers and promote consumer choice by helping them better understand modern animal agriculture and to protect animal agriculture by exposing those who threaten our nation's food supply with damaging misinformation. Formed in 1987, the Alliance is based in the Washington, DC area and works to provide a united voice for animal agriculture nationwide.

# TACKLING TODAY'S ISSUES

## ACTIVISTS ARE ENGAGING THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

In November 2015, the Alliance formed a working group to examine animal rights groups' strategy of spreading their messages within the religious community and faith-based organizations. The working group has developed an action plan for animal agriculture industry engagement on this issue.

As a first step, the Alliance invited three scholars and theologians to present at the 2016 Stakeholders Summit. The *Activism at the Altar: Use of Religion in the Animal Rights Debate* panelists presented on the Bible's support of dominion over animals and shared how animal rights activists are cherry picking phrases or reinterpreting text in an attempt to convince consumers to stop eating dairy, meat and eggs. According to the panelists, the American public is religious or spiritual in general, but does not necessarily understand scripture. The speakers urged the animal agriculture community to take action to counter the animal rights groups and tell people what the Bible actually says regarding using animals.

Our next step is commissioning an issue paper written by experts using some of the conversation generated at Summit. We will then reconvene our working group to discuss releasing and distributing the issue paper to scholarly journals, faith-oriented publications and other media as appropriate. Finally, we plan to develop a kit of materials that can be used at the community level to be distributed to local churches and interested consumers.

## GROUPS WORKING TO REMOVE MEAT, MILK & EGGS FROM YOUR PLATE

Activist organizations use the "Meatless Mondays" campaign to encourage consumers to give up meat one day a week citing health and environmental claims. Of course, this is a stepping stone to their ultimate goal of removing meat, milk and eggs from our plates seven days a week. Alarming, HSUS employs 15 staff members on its "meatless transition team," working to convince restaurants and foodservice companies to serve less meat.

In February 2016, we debuted our new *Meat Matters* campaign designed to help people understand the role of meat and poultry in a healthy, balanced diet. The campaign debunks the myths about animal agriculture and meat consumption used by the activist groups behind the "Meatless Mondays" movement. The campaign includes a proud omnivore social media pledge, print and web versions of a poster filled with facts and statistics about meat's role in a healthy diet, editorial pieces by third-party experts on nutrition and sustainability and links to published, peer-reviewed research. The next steps of this campaign include sending the resources to college campuses and other institutions targeted by "Meatless Mondays" and incorporating the materials into our College Aggies Online competition.

## RESTAURANT AND RETAILER POLICIES ON FARMING PRACTICES

In August 2015, the Alliance formed a subcommittee of our Issues Management Committee to bring together those working on supply channel issues from each species group. The Supply Channel Subcommittee shares intel and resources along with providing the Alliance input on engaging restaurants and retailers.

The subcommittee saw a need for a thorough review of all animal care policies and timelines so the Alliance created a database of animal care policies and implementation deadlines of restaurants, retailers, food brands, hospitality, foodservice and producers. It includes information on each company's general animal welfare policy, species specific policies, antibiotic policy and activist group influence or response. We will continue to update the database as new policies are announced.

Additionally, the subcommittee saw an opportunity for the Alliance to engage with restaurant and retail associations at the state and national level. The Alliance launched a quarterly newsletter, *Animal Ag Aware*, to introduce the Alliance to association leaders as the go-to resource on farm animal care issues.

## MEAT MATTERS

### NUTRIENTS Found in Meat, Poultry & Eggs

B1

Selenium

Leucine

B6

B12

Riboflavin

### COMMON SENSE ON A PLATE.

Experts agree that a healthy diet consists of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy- and moderate amounts of nutrient-dense meat and poultry. Vegetarian diets require a lot of vigilance to be healthy, and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics states that those who lack meat in their diet completely are at risk for iron, vitamin B12, calcium, vitamin D, zinc and omega-3 fatty acid deficiencies. Meat, poultry, dairy and eggs on our plates help ensure that we're consuming a nutrient-rich diet.

<http://bit.ly/1jplgDS>





# MEMBER RESOURCES

## FARM SECURITY MOBILE APP



America's farms and ranches are the front lines of our food supply. Keeping these facilities safe and secure is essential to animal health and wellbeing, in addition to ensuring the safety of our milk, meat, poultry and eggs. The Animal Agriculture Alliance's Farm Security Mobile App, launched in October 2015, is designed to place the most up-to-date advice and resources right at your fingertips. In addition to offering hiring and security advice and crisis management resources, the app also offers the ability for the Alliance to send users text and email alerts regarding activist activity. This first-of-its-

kind tool provides valuable information to farmers, ranchers, facility managers and industry professionals.

## GETTING THE INSIDE SCOOP

The Alliance gets the inside scoop on animal rights activist groups' strategies by attending their meetings and monitoring their activity through traditional and social media. We keep our members informed via Member Updates, Action Alerts and annual activist conference reports, which also include recommendations on how to respond or engage. You can only get this insider information, both current and historical, as a member of the Alliance.

## ACTIVIST GROUP INTENTIONS EXPLAINED

The Alliance has developed 50 one-page activist group profile reports to accurately and currently reflect groups' missions—which are frequently very different from their public-facing brands. Additionally, we developed a web to show the connections, sharing of financial resources and movement of personnel among the groups. We created a second web to illustrate the connections between animal rights groups and environmental, consumer and humane certification groups. These resources help put the Alliance's nearly 30 years of history tracking activist groups into easily digestible formats. This information is available on our website: [www.AnimalAgAlliance.org/Protect](http://www.AnimalAgAlliance.org/Protect).

## TRUTH, LIES AND VIDEOTAPE REPORT

The Alliance's *Truth, Lies and Videotape* report documents more than 15 years of "undercover" videos recorded and released by activist groups. The report details dates, names of those involved, intended audience, agenda and results, such as media coverage, charges, convictions and policy changes. We now have the information available in a spreadsheet, which allows for easier filtering and searching. We also have separate reports by species and graphs that show trends of the videos over the years. Only the Alliance maintains this kind of detailed information that is extremely valuable in understanding and analyzing trends.

## ISSUE OVERVIEWS

The Alliance has shared issue overviews, including background information and talking points, with our members on the issues of animal care, animal rights activism, antibiotic use, biotechnology, farm protection legislation and sustainability.

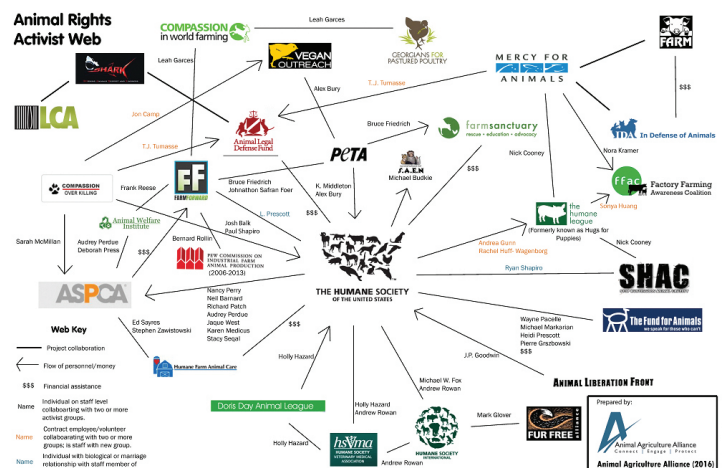
## ADVANCES IN ANIMAL AGRICULTURE REPORT

The Alliance's *Advances in Animal Agriculture* report details what each sector of animal agriculture does to ensure continuous improvement in key areas including animal care, responsible antibiotic use, food safety and sustainability. The report shows that while many groups make negative claims about modern food production, the truth is the animal agriculture industry collaborates, funds research, and evolves to meet the highest food safety, animal care and sustainability standards while feeding a growing population. The animal agriculture industry maintains its commitment to continuous improvement of its own accord and in spite of animal rights, anti-modern agriculture activists and other detractor groups who use fear and misinformation to confuse the public about livestock and poultry production. Access this report on our website to help answer questions about what the animal agriculture industry as a whole and each sector are doing to address current and emerging issues.

## JOURNALIST DATABASE

The Journalist Database will be a new member resource that will include information on prominent journalists writing about food and agriculture. We frequently receive questions from members about our experiences with different reporters. This database will give us a central location to store information about media connections with animal rights organizations and past coverage of relevant issues. Your Alliance membership helps you benefit from the collective knowledge of all members through resources like this.

To become an Alliance member, contact Allyson Jones-Brimmer at [ajonesbrimmer@animalagalliance.org](mailto:ajonesbrimmer@animalagalliance.org).



# ENGAGING INFLUENCERS

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Overall, the Alliance increased followers across all of our social media channels by 24 percent this past fiscal year. Each week, the Alliance selects a timely theme for social media that is gaining attention from consumers or the media. Following that theme, our team posts Myth Busting Monday, Tidbit Tuesday and Question Wednesday on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. On Thursdays we may share a member resource and Fridays are dedicated to sharing a post from the Alliance blog. We save all of our social media content in our online resource library so it can be shared at any time. Going forward, we plan to work collaboratively with our member organizations to share content with similar themes at the same time and amplify each other's messages.

### FISCAL YEAR 2016 BY THE NUMBERS:

- Reached 1.8 million people on Facebook
- Reached 1 million people on Twitter
- Achieved 1,000 followers on Instagram

## #ANIMALCARE CAMPAIGN

On March 23, 2016, farmers, ranchers and animal agriculture organizations came together through social media to share their passion for agriculture and dedication to animal care in a proactive and collaborative response to an advertorial campaign in *USA Today* involving groups like HSUS and ASPCA. More than 350 posts were made on Twitter and Facebook using the #animalcare tag. The Alliance earned more than 20,000 impressions on Twitter using the tag. To read the posts, search "#animalcare" on Twitter.

## FOLLOW US AND SHARE OUR POSTS!



Facebook: Animal Agriculture Alliance



Twitter: @animalag



Instagram: @animalagalliance



Pinterest: Animal Agriculture Alliance



LinkedIn: Animal Agriculture Alliance  
Member Only Group: Animal Ag Aware



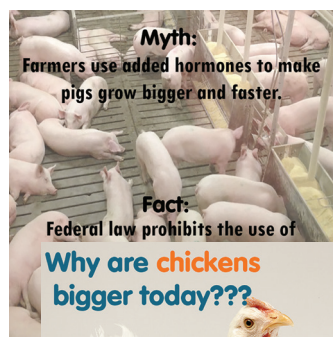
Blog: Animal Ag Engage  
[www.animalagengage.wordpress.com](http://www.animalagengage.wordpress.com)

## ANIMAL AG ENGAGE BLOG

The Alliance blog, formerly known as "Real Farmers Real Food," is now called "Animal Ag Engage." Along with the new name, the blog has a refreshed design and we are eager to share more posts about hot topics in animal agriculture! The new name and look more accurately capture the content we share and our mission of bridging the communication gap between farm and fork. The blog aims to not only share science-based information about animal agriculture, but provide a new perspective to topics that may be controversial. Comments and active discussion are welcome and encouraged. Throughout fiscal year 2016, there were 30,000 views of the blog. Check it out at [animalagengage.wordpress.com](http://animalagengage.wordpress.com).

## MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Alliance staff were interviewed or published in more than 300 stories in trade publications and mainstream media. Alliance staff participated in RFD-TV's Rural Town Hall series asking 2016 presidential candidates questions about how their intended goals would impact agriculture. In addition to writing guest columns for several publications, the Alliance maintains writing commitments for trade media: a biweekly blog for *Meatingplace*, a monthly blog for *Farm Journal Media* and a quarterly blog for *Hoard's Dairyman*. Over the next year, Alliance staff will focus on proactive engagement with mainstream media.



### MYTH: PIGS & HORMONES

Total Reach = 180,372

Total Engaged = 8,511

Total Shares = 1,309

### WHY ARE CHICKENS BIGGER TODAY?

Total Reach = 100,197

Total Engaged = 5,401

Total Shares = 900



### EARTH DAY

Total Reach = 69,622

Total Engaged = 2,832

Total Shares = 506

Alliance staff delivered 22 presentations across the United States and Canada. Interested in having the Alliance present at your next conference, board meeting, team meeting or customer engagement? Contact us!



# ALLIANCE PROGRAMS



**SAVE THE DATE: MAY 3-4, 2017  
IN KANSAS CITY, MO**

## 2016 STAKEHOLDERS SUMMIT: “SECURING ANIMAL AGRICULTURE’S FUTURE: ACTION, PLEASE!”

At the largest Summit yet, 250 stakeholders gathered in Arlington, VA on May 5–6, 2016 to connect, engage, protect and pledge action. Each thought-provoking speaker gave attendees action items they could go home and immediately implement on their farm/ranch or in their business. Some attendees took action after the Summit by visiting urban classrooms, writing articles and blog posts and joining Twitter and Instagram to share their ag story. Attendees made action pledges to develop and continuously update crisis management plans, incorporate video on social media, engage with mainstream media about agriculture and start more in-person conversations about ag. Animal agriculture is sure to have a bright future with all of these powerful action plans in place!

The reach of Summit has gone well beyond those in attendance. Twenty members of media attended and many have published stories about the event. The live streamed and recorded sessions have been viewed more than 600 times. Go to [agtoday.us/2016-aaa-summit](http://agtoday.us/2016-aaa-summit) to see the recordings.



**“Every session was enlightening and all of the speakers were excellent! It was one of the best conferences I have attended and I will certainly look forward to 2017.” – Ron Birkenholz, Iowa Pork Producers Association**



## COLLEGE AGGIES ONLINE

Our 7th annual College Aggies Online competition challenged 1,400 students from 77 different universities to go out of their comfort zone to communicate their ag story. In the individual competition, more than 300 students participated. In the student organization competition, 35 clubs held on-campus and community events to engage with their peers in person. The Alliance awarded more than \$12,500 in scholarships to the winning students, along with additional prizes for weekly competitions.

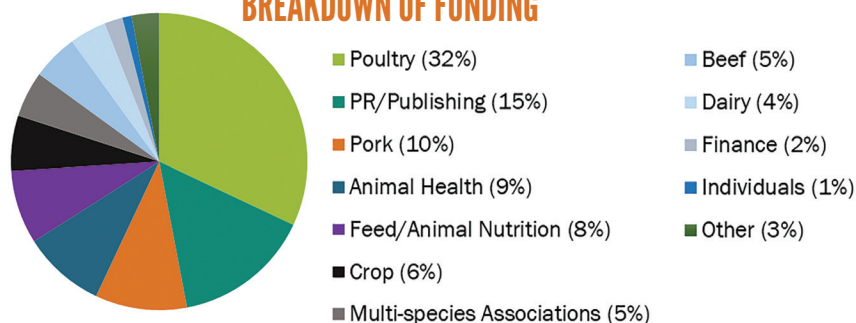


Each week during the nine-week program, individual participants received assignments which focused on a specific social media platform or a segment of the agriculture community. Industry experts hosted webinars and served as program mentors to help educate participants about the pertinent issues facing the industry and how to communicate about those with the public. Over the course of the competition, students generated more than 1,530 Instagram and Twitter posts and more than 530 Facebook posts. In total, there were more than 1.4 million impressions on social media.

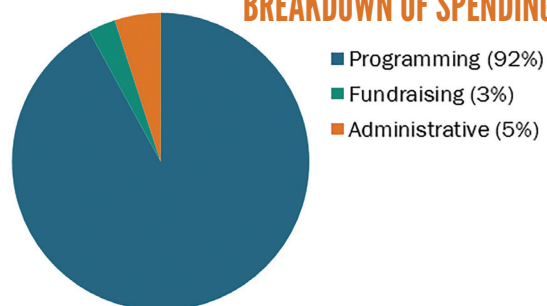
Participating clubs were able to pick and choose from a variety of challenges including teaching at local schools, hosting an Agriculture Day event on their college campus or hosting a food drive in advance of the holiday season. The clubs held more than 50 campus and community activities and reached an estimated 7,000 consumers.

# FINANCIALS

## BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING



## BREAKDOWN OF SPENDING



## MEET THE SMALL & MIGHTY TEAM



Kay Johnson Smith, President and CEO, is the chief spokesperson, and oversees the Alliance's many programs and outreach initiatives, as well as the business operations as a nonprofit organization. Smith also leads the Alliance's international efforts and has provided hundreds of presentations and media interviews on animal care matters. She has been with the Alliance since 1994. She has a B.S.

in political science/public administration along with a minor in business from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Contact Kay at [KJohnson@AnimalAgAlliance.org](mailto:KJohnson@AnimalAgAlliance.org).



Hannah Thompson, Director of Communications, develops and implements the communications strategy for the Alliance. She monitors and responds to misinformation about food production and reaches out to the media with accurate, science-based resources about modern animal agriculture. Thompson holds a B.S. in agricultural communication and an M.S. in agricultural and extension education from

The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Hannah can be reached at [HThompson@AnimalAgAlliance.org](mailto:HThompson@AnimalAgAlliance.org).



Allyson Jones-Brimmer, Membership and Marketing Manager, fosters relationships with current and prospective members and donors of the Alliance.

Jones-Brimmer is responsible for member outreach and engagement, along with processing day-to-day membership affairs. She holds a B.S. in animal science and agricultural science education and an M.A. in agricultural education from Cornell University in Ithaca,

New York. Connect with Allyson at [AJonesBrimmer@AnimalAgAlliance.org](mailto:AJonesBrimmer@AnimalAgAlliance.org).



Casey Whitaker, Communications Coordinator, develops and distributes both written and graphic content for the Alliance. In her role, Whitaker manages the Alliance social media presence, tracks media engagement, provides special reports for members and manages the Alliance website. Whitaker holds a B.S. in agricultural communication from Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama and is from Centerville,

Virginia. You can reach Casey at [CWhitaker@AnimalAgAlliance.org](mailto:CWhitaker@AnimalAgAlliance.org).



Morgan Hawley, Special Projects Manager, manages the College Aggies Online Scholarship Competition.

She coordinates the day-to-day operation of the competition including planning and promotion. Hawley also assists in planning and logistics of the annual Stakeholders Summit. Hawley holds a B.S. in animal science and agricultural economics from the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri. Morgan can be

reached at [MHawley@AnimalAgAlliance.org](mailto:MHawley@AnimalAgAlliance.org).

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Looking forward, the Alliance will continue working toward the goals set in our strategic plan:

### ● TO INCREASE THE ALLIANCE'S BRAND AND VALUE AMONG AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS.

- Ensure at least 95% member retention rate.
- Increase Stakeholders Summit attendance, reach, impact and profitability.
- Ensure financial stability.

### ● TO ENSURE BALANCE TO NEWS STORIES AND ISSUES PRESENTED IN PUBLIC VENUES BY PROVIDING A UNIFIED VOICE.

- Increase traditional media interactions/media presence by 10% each year.
- Maintain growth on social media platforms with a 10% increase overall each year.

### ● TO ENSURE A PROACTIVE, UNIFIED AND STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT ON RELEVANT ISSUES.

- Strengthen and expand issues management efforts, recognition in issue expertise and engagement of stakeholders.
- Grow the Alliance's College Aggies Online Program by increasing participation by 10% each year and evaluating effectiveness.

