

Animal Agriculture Alliance highly concerned about animal rights activist organization's extreme activity

Alliance calls for increased attention to farm security

June 4, 2018 – The Animal Agriculture Alliance, a nationwide nonprofit organization working to bridge the communication gap between farm and fork, is appalled by the recent actions of Direct Action Everywhere, an extreme animal rights group. As part of its “Animal Liberation Conference,” Direct Action Everywhere spearheaded a protest during which hundreds of activists descended upon a California farm. The activists unlawfully entered a barn and stole animals. Ultimately, dozens of activists were arrested for trespassing on the farm.

Alarming, the ringleaders of this stunt are calling upon activists across the country to receive training in order to conduct copycat protests on other farms. Unfortunately, this is not a new tactic for this group. Direct Action Everywhere has conducted several self-proclaimed “open rescues,” in which they trespass on farms and remove animals. As the Alliance stated when the group first began using this tactic, this complete disregard for the safety of animals as well as private property is deeply concerning, and Direct Action Everywhere cannot be allowed to continue to operate in this manner.

It is beyond disheartening that farmers and ranchers, along with their families and employees, have to prepare to potentially be the targets of activist publicity stunts in addition to managing the daily stresses of farming. Caring for livestock and poultry is a demanding task that we entrust to less than two percent of our population. It is unacceptable that they have to add the potential for hundreds of extreme activists arriving at their place of business (with their home frequently on the same property) to an already long list of sources of stress.

These incidents have consequences for the livestock and poultry involved as well, as unauthorized visitors to barns can introduce disease threats and frighten animals, potentially causing injury. Removing animals from their controlled environment also exposes them to potential diseases which could lead to death. Despite activists' claims to the contrary, biosecurity is of the utmost importance on farms and established protocols need to be followed. By entering barns and handling animals without prior authorization and appropriate oversight, these extremists are putting the health and safety of livestock and poultry at risk in order to get attention for their cause.

The organization is clearly willing to take extreme, dangerous measures to further its mission of “trying to destroy animal agriculture” (as stated by leader Wayne Hsiung at the 2016 Animal Rights National Conference). The Alliance once again urges law enforcement and policymakers to take a strong stance against this illegal activity. Every state has animal cruelty laws in place, and any concerns about animal care should be reported to local law enforcement – not “investigated” by extremists with an obvious agenda.

The Department of Homeland Security has recognized agriculture and food production as critical components of our infrastructure and national security. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that business owners continue to strengthen the security of their facilities and that law enforcement provide support to farmers and ranchers. The Alliance urges farmers and ranchers to remain vigilant and aware of threats posed by extremists who have no respect for the law or animal safety. We also ask law enforcement to provide any assistance possible to the agricultural community in preventing these unlawful “visits” from occurring.

For more information on farm security or details about this incident, contact the Alliance at info@animalagalliance.org.

About the Alliance:

The [Animal Agriculture Alliance](http://www.animalagalliance.org) is an industry-united, nonprofit organization that helps bridge the communication gap between farm and fork. We **connect** key food industry stakeholders to arm them with responses to emerging issues. We **engage** food chain influencers and promote consumer choice by helping them better understand modern animal agriculture. We **protect** by exposing those who threaten our nation's food security with damaging misinformation.