



United We Stand; Divided We Fall

For those who work with animals, or animal related businesses and industries, our strength lies in being the true experts. We have science, data, facts, and best practices on our side. Unfortunately, making sure the public receives positive information about the animals in our care and our industries is time consuming and doesn't always happen as it should. We also have the added challenge of being targeted by well-funded animal extremist groups. We need to keep in mind that animal extremist groups are willing to unite for their common cause.

Individually it is difficult for us to stay ahead of the challenges we face, and that is why it is so important to create strong alliances and partnerships. With just a little effort we can create a strong system that will help us in our times of need and can even help our businesses grow. Imagine the possibilities of creating a strong network when you have the truth on your side.

Creating a Network

We should certainly support businesses and associations that represent animals. To start creating our network, or adding to it, we must do our homework to ensure that any individuals, groups, associations, or organizations we would seek to align with have a similar and united mission and philosophy. This is not to say we must agree on, or even completely understand each other's business, but rather that we have core values in common. We must have the core values of being law abiding individuals, businesses, and organizations who have a common interest and stake against a well-funded AR machine.

Ways to Create Important Alliances at the Local and State Level

It is important to create state and local alliances directly impacting or relative to your business. For example, a small theme park, zoo, fair, or farm will want to develop strong relationships with their local chamber, legislators, law enforcement, media, shelters and rescues. It is imperative that they also have solid relationships with national and state associations such as agriculture associations, ZAA and AZA (zoo and aquarium associations), and industry associations like the IAAPA (amusement parks) and IAFE (fairs and expos).

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



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Newspapers and the Media

Getting to know the media is also important. Reach out to local television stations and newspapers. If at all possible, invite them out to your place and you can control the narrative and story. Create or join in a local fundraiser, campaign, etc. Anything you can do proactively to get to know these folks, and for them to know who you are, and your facility, if appropriate.

Chamber of Commerce or Tourism Council

Your local Chamber of Commerce and/or Tourism council are also great avenues to create a strong local alliance. The local newspaper, media outlets, attorneys, marketing folks, and fellow local business owners typically have a seat at these tables and discuss important topics. One thing we have seen in this battle with animal extremist groups is that local business owners will often side with a fellow local business owner who they know and trust as opposed to outsiders.

Be Proactive with Local Law Enforcement

Being proactive with local law enforcement is one of the most important steps to take. Creating a good relationship with your local law enforcement agency is key as a method to help ensure the overall security of your facility. Unfortunately, many businesses do not call on law enforcement until they are needed. Educating your local law enforcement officers from the start and allowing them an inside look at your facility and animals will go a very long way to protect your business. Equally important is for your business to educate law enforcement officers about concerns with animal extremist groups seeking to damage your business or hurt your animals. They need to know about the activities these groups commonly engage in; from the very real possibility of these types of groups making an attempt to “liberate” your animals, to insisting that you are abusive or neglectful. Creating a relationship with and even being available as an expert will provide you with strong allies and credibility. This will be especially important when animal extremist groups turn their focus to your facility.

HSUS Is Training Local Law Enforcement Agencies

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and other animal extremist organizations are now offering training to law enforcement and first responders. These “free” courses are a clever way to push the animal extremism ideology and nefariously present themselves as an asset to law enforcement. In addition to training, in some areas, law enforcement agencies have become a misguided tool of animal extremist groups. While it is unfortunate that some law enforcement officers have been misled, it would certainly be better to know and have an opportunity to be prepared than to be blindsided. The Stand at Paxton County, a movie produced by PTH Executive Director Forrest Lucas, is based on a true story and illustrates what can happen in this type of scenario.

Animal Control Agencies and Rescue Shelters

The movie, The Dog Lover, also based on a true story, outlines what happens when animal control officers are wrongly influenced by animal extremist groups.

Many local shelters and rescues do wonderful and important work. At first glance, you may feel a local shelter or rescue would be an ideal alliance and they certainly can be. Depending on the type of business you have, you might even be able to help these groups by partnering on a fundraising drive. Many of these organizations have little funding and are struggling. Shelters with ‘Humane Society’ or Society for the Prevention of Cruelty (SPCA) in their name feel the pinch when the HSUS and ASPCA launch fundraising campaigns in their local area. The HSUS



and ASPCA knowingly divert millions of dollars in donor funds away from local shelters to their organizations by misleading the public. The HSUS has even been caught by HumaneWatch using SEO search terms with local shelter names in order to divert donations.

However, it is imperative to do a bit of homework before becoming involved. A prudent exercise would be to review websites and social outlets to learn about the mission and philosophy of your local shelters and rescues. It is also important to read through articles they have published and to investigate the organizations they cite as partners. Alignment with known animal extremist organizations like the HSUS, PETA, or the ASPCA are immediate red flags. Language about the utopian 'wild'; disparaging circuses, racing, rodeo, agriculture, and vilifying breeders are also red flags.

Note that some of these organizations are simply misguided and others are completely entrenched. Therefore, it is important to take the opportunity to have a conversation and help to inform these groups about the work you are doing and how it benefits animals. You may find that a little discussion and education might change their mind.

Learn from What Happened to Circus Groups

Here is an example of why it is important to look carefully into the ideology of groups before getting involved. Animal extremist groups realized circuses who held a very large number of exotic animals were underrepresented and an easy target. Ten to fifteen years ago, circuses would seek out appropriate facilities to take in retired animals. Circus animals often live to ripe old ages. Animal sanctuaries and even zoos were eager to take in well-trained animals. Often the care of the animals was paid for by a stipend from the circus.

Even with a stipend and a good relationship between sanctuaries and circus owners, it didn't take long for some sanctuaries to discover they had taken in a revenue-generating animal. Some of these sanctuaries created huge fundraising campaigns claiming the animals were mistreated by the circus and were "rescued". If your organization decides to retire an animal via donation or even a loan, it is important to have written parameters for all parties to avoid these types of scenarios, and still ensure the animals get the care they need.

Networking is Ongoing

There are endless opportunities to get creative and network. We understand owning a business and/or caring for animals is a more than full time job. The saying "the best defense is a good offense" certainly applies here. Creating partnerships and alliances is a strong offense and will go a long way towards protecting yourself against the agenda and activities of animal extremist groups. Learning to tell your story, and meeting folks and creating these alliances might be a wonderful role for the young adults and older teens in your life. As the future animal and business owners, they should certainly be mentored in this direction. A great start for our youth are the wonderful FFA, 4H, and Farm Bureau programs.

At Protect The Harvest we also believe in the power of networking and partnerships. Our association alliances include all segments of animal and agriculture related industries which include: Agriculture, Entertainment, Fairs, Amusement Parks, Zoos, Aquariums, Research, Pets, Animal Breeders, Shelters, Restaurants, Truckers, Legislators, Law Enforcement, and more. We are also a collective voice for animal owners and businesses within government agencies, advisory panels, and regulatory agencies.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



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