

What is Food For Thought?

Food for Thought is a program of Animal Place. We help animal shelters and rescues extend their compassion to all animals by adopting a vegetarian or vegan menu policy.

What is a vegetarian or vegan menu policy?

A vegetarian or vegan menu policy is a written, board-approved policy. The policy states that organizational funds will only be spent on vegetarian or vegan foods for your guests at events and fundraisers. Adopting a policy aligns your menu with your mission of saving animal lives and establishes you as a Food For Thought Policy Leader.

What is a Policy Leader?

A Policy Leader is an organization that has adopted a vegetarian or vegan menu policy that is verified with Food For Thought. Your organization is welcome to create your own policy or we can help by writing a vegetarian or vegan menu policy on your behalf. With your permission, we will list your organization on the Policy Leaders page of our website and promote you on social media.

Food For Thought Program



Why should you adopt a vegetarian or vegan menu policy?

01

Be a humane leader in the rescue community. Since farmed animals suffer tremendously, it makes sense for animal welfare organizations to adopt policies that don't support this suffering. As a humane leader, it is your responsibility as an organization to operate as compassionately as possible.

02

Recognize all types of companion animals. Animals raised for food have the capacity to feel joy, pain, and fear just like those with whom we share our homes. Many people identify rabbits, chickens, pigs, goats, and other species as companions. If any of these animals came into your shelter, you would certainly provide them with the same level of care you would dogs and cats.

03

Truly be "No-Kill." Three million dogs and cats are killed in shelters across the US annually, yet more than 55 billion land and sea animals are killed for food each year. Do your part to reduce the number of animals killed unnecessarily by adopting a vegetarian or vegan menu policy for your events.

04

Practice responsible donation use. It is essential that animal nonprofits act with integrity by using their donations in service of their mission to help animals and reduce suffering. Using donated money to buy only vegetarian or vegan foods for events is responsible and ethically consistent. There is no justification for using funds obtained through harming one type of animal to help another.

05

Protect the Environment. Animal farming has an enormously negative impact on the environment including deforestation, habitat destruction, ocean dead zones, biodiversity loss, a significant reduction in freshwater, and worldwide greenhouse gas emissions.



FAQ

Have more questions? Email us at FoodForThought@AnimalPlace.org

Does it cost money?

No! All of our services are 100% complimentary. We would love to help you become a Policy Leader for FREE.

Do our rescued animals need to eat a vegetarian or vegan diet?

No! The policy only applies to food purchased for human consumption.

Does adopting a policy mean our staff and volunteers need to be vegetarian or vegan?

No! The policy is about how organizational funds are spent. We are not concerned with what individuals eat on their own time or purchase with their own money.

What if we have events or fundraisers hosted by outside venues where we can't choose the food?

You can still adopt a policy! The policy does not apply to food served by third-party venues unless specified by your organization.

Isn't serving meat with a veggie option good enough?

Having a vegetarian or vegan menu policy confirms to your supporters that you take the welfare of all animals seriously. Many organizations have seen increased support from adopting a policy since a fully vegetarian or vegan event is more inclusive.

What if someone donates food that isn't vegetarian or vegan?

Don't worry! The policy only applies to foods that are purchased using organizational funds.

Do you have any meal or catering suggestions? What if we live in a rural community where vegetarian or vegan foods are hard to find?

Yes! You can request product donations from vegan companies, talk with local restaurants, use chain restaurants with vegetarian or vegan items on their menus, make easy foods like rice, beans, and pasta, or host a potluck. For more specifics, email us!



Grant Opportunities

Vegan Policy Grant

This is a one-time gift awarded to organizations that have adopted a vegetarian or vegan menu policy within the last 6 weeks. Qualified organizations will receive \$250 for adopting a vegetarian menu policy or \$1,000 for adopting a vegan menu policy.

Vegan Event Grant

Qualified organizations will receive a one-time reimbursement of food costs up to \$1,000 for their first fully vegan event.

Vegan Ticket Subsidy Grant

This is a one-time reimbursement of 50% of the cost of vegan meal tickets to an event or fundraiser, up to \$1,000 per organization. Your organization may qualify for the vegan ticket subsidy if you are hosting an event with a clearly defined vegan meal ticket option that will be offered at half price to attendees.

Learn more and apply at
FoodForThoughtCampaign.org/Grants

Sample Policies



People support The HSUS to help animals. As such, our policy is to see that all HSUS events, functions, or gatherings where food is made available—from small catered lunches in our offices to conferences such as Animal Care Expo and gala events such as the Genesis Awards—are free of animal products. Where this is impossible or unworkable, these circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.



Ohlone Humane Society strives to inspire respect and compassion for all animals, advocate for their interests and welfare, and instill in our community that all living beings have a right to be treated humanely. Any organizational event will adhere to serving only vegan fare.



The mission of Pets In Need is to advance the no-kill movement, reduce pet homelessness, and find every dog and cat a loving home. We believe that every life matters and we recognize that all animals deserve respect and compassion. As an extension to our mission, we are committed to serving exclusively vegetarian food at all our events and fundraisers.



Friends For Life believes that all animals should be treated humanely and with compassion throughout their lives. One way that Friends For Life chooses to support the concept of compassion to all living beings is that to the extent the shelter has control, only vegan (entirely plant-based) food and drink shall be provided at any shelter event whether located on or off the shelter campus.

Testimonials



“It sends a mixed signal to the public if you are helping cats and dogs while eating other animals. No one involved in animal rescue would deny cats or dogs have feelings and emotional lives of their own, so it’s a natural step to also believe farmed animals are sentient beings capable of feeling emotions as well.”

- Grace Froelich, Founder, Animal Rescue Inc., PA



“If someone has concerns that there might be drawbacks to adopting a vegetarian friendly policy at their shelter, I would suggest they think long and hard about why they got into this business. We’re the ones on the frontlines rescuing animals in our communities, and it just doesn’t make sense to rescue a dog or a cat... and then turn around and serve meat at a community-based function. Why do we go out there and rescue these animals when we’re serving other ones for people to eat?”

- Todd Stosuy, Officer, Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter, CA



“There seemed little sense in accepting donations from the public toward our cause of protecting animals only to then spend some of that money on unnecessarily supporting the very industries that were causing so much pain and suffering to animals. We are a humane organization; what is the point of protecting animals all day long, only to serve them up on a platter at that evening’s donor reception?”

- Nicholas Gilman, Executive Director, Montreal SPCA, QC

We're here to help!



Food For Thought

For more resources, sample policies, menu recommendations, a full list of Policy Leaders, and more visit us at FoodForThoughtCampaign.org

Ready to adopt a policy?

We'll help you write one at no cost. Email us at FoodForThoughtCampaign@AnimalPlace.org



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