

**From:**

**Subject:**

**Date:**

Support for Resolution in Support of Non-Violent Activists

Monday, May 01, 2023 6:29:55 PM

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I am a veterinarian and I encourage you to approve this resolution supporting the non-violent activists who exposed criminal animal cruelty violations within Sonoma's intensive animal agriculture facilities. The situation is dire. Our [regulatory systems](#) are influenced by corporate interests and these companies are causing [extreme animal suffering](#), threatening our [food security](#), [harming workers](#) and putting [public health](#) at risk.

If it weren't for people willing to risk their freedom to shine a light on what goes on inside these facilities, the public would be unaware of what the animals inside experience and these threats to our own species.

Historically, companies exposed through investigations [drop charges](#) against the activists to avoid public scrutiny. Such was the case in Iowa when activists recorded the cruel practice of ventilation shutdown plus (VSD+) in which barns were sealed up, heat and steam were pumped in until the animals inside died after several hours. One day before the trial was set to start [all charges](#) were dropped.

During the avian influenza outbreak VSD+ became one of the [most common](#) methods used, a killing method that would have been unfathomable 20 years ago. The increase in intensification of animal agriculture necessitated these macabre workarounds in emergency situations.

This intensification also creates the [very conditions](#) that cause disease outbreaks and lead to [emergency situations](#). When you have thousands of genetically similar, stressed animals, this creates the perfect conditions for viruses, like influenza, to mutate and spread. Worse still, these viruses can jump species and infect the [human workers](#) who interface with these animals, creating the [next human pandemic](#). This would be nothing new, pandemics of the past have come from our interactions with animals and for years researchers have predicted the [next pandemic](#) would be an influenza virus from animals.

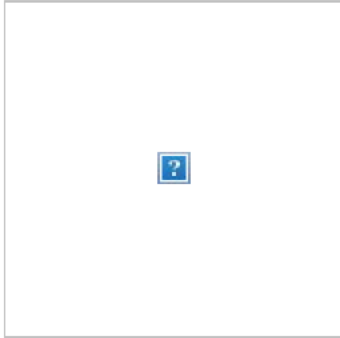
Industry has changed its tactics though. Fearing more exposure, they are now [mercilessly pursuing](#) those who shine a light on their cruel practices. Fortunately, the two most recent trials have resulted in acquittals by juries who are [disgusted](#) to find out the truth about how animals are raised for food, and how they [wield the power of prosecutors](#) and [legislators](#) to [protect the interests](#) of the industry over the interests of animals and public health.

It is concerning how public funds are spent protecting and propping up an industry whose practices harm people, animals and the environment. Law enforcement should be

investigating the abuses inside agriculture facilities, not the people who expose them. Throughout history those brave enough to risk their safety and freedom are the ones who create the positive change needed.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this resolution!

Crystal Heath, DVM



C. Heath, DVM (she/her)

