

*The following was posted by Tricia Barry, Farm Sanctuary Communications Director, on the Animal Rights & AntiOppression Blog, challengeoppression.com*

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If you're interested to know Farm Sanctuary's response to this video, here it is:

Farm Sanctuary has recently been criticized for its involvement in a broad coalition in Ohio – called Ohioans for Humane Farms – which was formed to initiate a landmark campaign to end some of the most egregious abuses on factory farms in the state. Farm Sanctuary signed onto this campaign because we believed in the specific objectives established to end extreme confinement, the slaughter of downed cattle and calves and the inhumane euthanasia of animals on farms. These three specific objectives are near-term reforms intended to improve the lives of animals on farms and drive a spike in the cog of factory farming.

Many individuals, organizations and businesses signed onto this broad coalition with the same goals in mind. They do not necessarily hold the same values as Farm Sanctuary, but on these specific issues, we found common ground. When building and joining coalitions, this is typically the case. Coalitions are created to concentrate efforts and resources around one central objective to build the groundswell of support needed to achieve a successful outcome.

Farm Sanctuary would never promote or serve any animal products at an event that we organized. Our events have always been and always will be

vegan. The event referenced by James LaVeck in his video was not attended, organized or sponsored by Farm Sanctuary. It's unfair and misguided to characterize Farm Sanctuary as he has. LaVeck never once contacted us for clarification or to express any concerns about this event, nor is he willing to meet to discuss his ongoing criticisms of Farm Sanctuary despite several requests on our part. Instead, he's taken a course aimed at creating divisiveness within our broader movement to end animal exploitation.

Farm Sanctuary has always had the short- and long-term in mind when advocating on behalf of farm animals. We directly rescue farm animals from abuse and provide them with urgent care and lifelong homes. We educate people about the benefits of a plant-based diet and encourage a compassionate vegan lifestyle. We also advocate for institutional reform through legislation, ballot initiatives and the like to address farm animals currently suffering within animal agriculture. We employ many strategies to end the suffering of farm animals.

We stand by our efforts to advocate for incremental reform at the institutional level. We wish the world would turn vegan tomorrow, but we also know that social movements throughout history have taken time and required both personal and institutional reform. We would be doing an injustice to farm animals being abused and exploited every day to ignore their suffering.

We see our movement to end animal exploitation on a continuum and various organizations and individuals work at all points along this continuum. We engage in vegan outreach and education just as we engage in welfare reforms that improve the quality of lives of animals suffering on

farms. We don't see our work, and the work of other organizations in this movement, as either welfare or abolitionist and we believe this characterization of the movement is unhelpful and inaccurate. Farm Sanctuary always has and always will strive to meet people where they are at, and we organize various campaigns and activities that appeal to people at every point along this continuum that encourage kind and compassionate choices and force institutional change.

Farm Sanctuary's involvement in Ohioans for Humane Farms was consistent with our values as an organization. We chose to participate in those activities within this campaign that correlated with our values. Had we held a fundraising event in association with this campaign, it would have been vegan.

For anyone commenting on this thread, if you've specifically supported our work in the past, we thank you, and we hope you will continue to support us moving forward, as we work at every opportunity to end the slaughter and exploitation of farm animals.

If you don't support us and you don't agree with our position, that's fine too. Everyone is welcome to their opinions and I would hope that we all continue to work toward the end of animal exploitation in the best ways we know how. For Farm Sanctuary that's rescue, education and advocacy.

Yours in compassion,  
Tricia Barry,  
Communications Director  
Farm Sanctuary