

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Songwriter Diane Warren Helps 4-H Student Save Lamb From Slaughter



For animals used in 4-H, the National FFA Organization (FFA), and other agricultural programs, the summer fair circuit is unlikely to come to a pleasant end. The animals in these programs are typically destined for one of two heartbreaking fates: to be sold at auction for **slaughter** or to be used as “breeders” (and likely sent to slaughter later, once they’re no longer **profitable**). All the while, these programs teach children the harmful message that sending their animal friends—with whom they’ve likely bonded for months—to a violent, terrifying death at the slaughterhouse is acceptable.

But the bond between a California boy in a 4-H program and his beloved lamb, Cotton, was too strong to allow this to happen. The boy approached legendary songwriter and PETA supporter Diane Warren and begged her to help save his lamb from slaughter. Warren knew that she was facing an uphill battle.

The program organizers tried to stop her from helping by threatening to cut off funds to the boy if his parents sold the lamb to Warren. But the Golden Globe winner was determined to prevent the lamb from being sold at auction, so she secretly outbid butchers at the Santa Barbara County Fair to win Cotton’s freedom.

Now, thanks to PETA and Warren (along with her attorney Ryan Gordon of Advancing Law for Animals), Cotton is safe and sound at the star’s private animal **sanctuary**, and the boy who helped save his life has been invited to visit him.

“4-H programs aim to compel children like this caring boy to betray their beloved animal friends in order to prop up the meat industry, to choose violence and death over compassion,” says PETA President Ingrid Newkirk. “Diane Warren had a hard fight, but she saved this lucky lamb, whose story PETA hopes will inspire other kids to reject such despicable programs.” PETA held an eye-opening protest at the Santa Barbara County Fair in support of Cotton and all the other animals **exploited** in 4-H programs.

According to one former FFA student, “I joined [FFA] because the organization sounded like a bomb club to join if you’re into animals, leadership, and agriculture. But I soon discovered that joining FFA meant agreeing to a very hypocritical code of ethics.” FFA, 4-H, and other agricultural programs could easily stop using animals and focus instead on some of the animal-free programs that they already promote, like gardening, expressive arts, and leadership programs.

# Vocabulary: Songwriter Diane Warren Helps 4-H Student Save Lamb From Slaughter

Using contextual evidence from the passage, define the bolded terms in your own words.

**slaughter**

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**profitable**

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**sanctuary**

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**exploit**

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# Comprehension Questions: Songwriter Diane Warren Helps 4-H Student Save Lamb From Slaughter

1. Why did the boy need Diane Warren's help?

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2. What obstacles did Warren face? How did she ultimately save Cotton from slaughter?

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3. In addition to sending thousands of animals to slaughter every year, what other negative effects do 4-H and other agricultural programs have?

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4. Do you think 4-H, FFA, and other agricultural programs should stop raising and selling animals and instead promote animal-free activities, like gardening, expressive arts, and leadership programs? Please explain your answer.

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