



# PETA's augustus CLUB

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## *The Art of Persuasion:* Convincing Corporations That Consumers Care

Most people are familiar with PETA's colorful demonstrations and grassroots campaign techniques for pressuring corporations to end animal abuse. But there's another facet of PETA's strategy that the public seldom sees: our shareholder activism and boardroom negotiations with corporate decisionmakers. We've had success with some of the biggest names in the business world, from Ann Taylor and Anthropologie to Zappos and Zara.

### **Working Behind the Scenes**

Before we ever publicly target companies, we *always* attempt to work cooperatively with them. For every one we've openly protested, there are dozens more working with us behind the scenes.

Led by our Corporate Affairs Department, these collaborations are one of the most effective areas of PETA's work—we see victories almost weekly as a result of our discussions with top executives.

One of our most successful tactics has been buying stock—or working with PETA members who own stock in the companies that we're trying to influence—so that we can submit shareholder resolutions and attend their annual meetings. This tactic has helped us get a foot in the door, because companies hate it when we speak at their yearly "pep rallies." Even the mere threat of attending such meetings has opened doors that were previously shut tight.



### **Dairy's Dark Secret**

While our real desire is for the world to go vegan, we are pragmatic and know that such a transition won't happen fast enough to affect the animals who are suffering right now.

So while we push hard to promote a vegan lifestyle, we also do what we can to improve their living conditions, as long as it does not allow people to rationalize continuing to buy meat and milk products.



## *Inside* **THIS ISSUE**

The Art of Persuasion: Convincing Corporations That Consumers Care .....	1
Meet Anne Brainard, PETA's Director of Corporate Affairs .....	4
Animals Are Wondrous: Alligators and Crocodiles .....	6
You Are PETA: Augustus Club Member Ricardo Ferreira .....	8

Here's one of the dairy industry's best-kept dark secrets, which has prompted many people to request our vegan starter kit after learning the truth: As documented in a PETA eyewitness investigation, standard dehorning procedures include burning off calves' horn buds as they thrash in agony and smoke rises from their seared flesh. They are not provided with any pain relief.

As the only animal-protection group actively addressing the issue of dehorning, PETA has persuaded companies such as Amy's Kitchen, Baskin-Robbins, Chipotle, Chobani, Compass Group, Dannon, Dean Foods (one of the largest U.S. dairy processors), Dunkin' Donuts, General Mills (which owns Häagen-Dazs and Yoplait, among other brands), Harris Teeter, Kroger, Mondelez International (which owns Cadbury, Nabisco, Oreo, and many European brands), Nestlé, Peet's Coffee & Tea, PepsiCo, and Shake Shack to pressure their dairy suppliers to stop this cruel mutilation while also pushing them to offer more vegan foods.



### Wool, Feathers, and Skins

Of course, being vegan isn't just about what's on people's plates—it's also about what's in their homes and closets.

That's why we target industries and specific companies that use animal-derived materials for fashion and furnishings—including angora, wool, down, and exotic skins. And have we ever seen a transformation!

Thanks to the shocking revelations of PETA Asia's investigation of angora farms—showing rabbits tied down and screaming as their fur is ripped out—PETA and our international affiliates have persuaded *more than 200 retailers* to ban angora wool. The list includes Ann Taylor, Anthropologie, bebe, Calvin Klein, Eddie Bauer, Esprit, Express, Forever 21, Gap Inc., H&M, Lands' End, L Brands, Perry Ellis, PUMA, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, QVC, Zappos, and many others.

At PETA's behest, not only did Inditex—the world's largest clothing retailer and the owner of Zara—stop selling angora, it also donated all 50,000 angora garments in its remaining stock to refugees in Iraq and Lebanon. We have decimated the angora trade: Chinese angora exports are down by 81 percent.

We're also working to stop the exploitation and abuse of sheep for their wool. Within a two-year span, PETA released six video exposés of the wool industry that documented cruelty on three continents, proving that there's no such thing as "humane" or "responsibly sourced" wool. As a result, top labels are making changes, and this will eventually have an impact on meat prices as well.

For example, designer Stella McCartney and retailer Patagonia suspended all purchases of wool after the release of our video exposé showing workers in Argentina hacking into fully conscious lambs on farms in the Ovis 21 network—a supposedly "sustainable" wool supplier. Luxury goods company Kering also stopped using Ovis 21 as a source for all its brands, including Balenciaga and Gucci.

And retailer Brooks Brothers stopped purchasing wool from a supplier affiliated with two Chilean sheep farms after a PETA exposé revealed that workers had cut off



lambs' tails and punctured their ears without any pain relief, stabbed fully conscious sheep in the neck in order to kill them, causing them to kick frantically as they slowly died, and even skinned one animal alive.

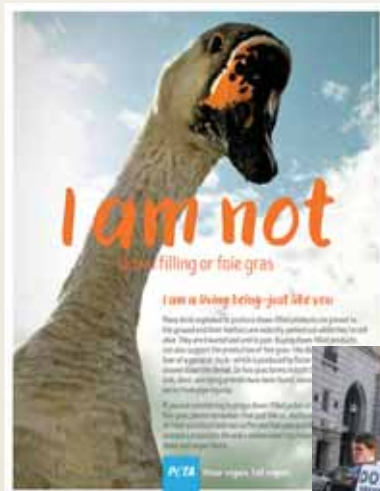
Ducks and geese have no better friend than PETA, particularly since we launched our campaign against down—the first one of its kind in the animal-protection movement. PETA's exposé of so-called "humane" down suppliers revealed that on goose farms across China—where 80 percent of the world's down and feathers are produced—workers stepped on geese's delicate wings and necks, tightly bound their feet together, and ripped their feathers out, causing them to scream and bleed.

After meeting with PETA, leading outdoor gear manufacturer Coleman stopped using down in its gear, including sleeping bags, and online clothing retailer Haband—which boasts more than 5 million customers—stopped selling *all* down products. In addition, PETA U.K. persuaded ASOS' private label as well as Dr. Martens, Hobbs, Nigel Hall Menswear, Reiss, and Topshop to go down-free.

PETA also persuaded Williams Sonoma and its subsidiaries Pottery Barn and west elm—as well as Restoration Hardware, Crate & Barrel, and its sister store CB2—to offer synthetic alternatives to all their down products.

And the victories for animals keep coming: Following discussions with PETA, Marriott reduced its use of down bedding by 50 percent and Marriott brands Moxy Hotels and AC Hotels banned down altogether!

When *The New York Times* broke PETA's exposé of the highly secretive ostrich-slaughter industry in South Africa, which supplies ostrich skins for top accessory labels, the public outcry left the exotic-skins industry reeling.



Our exposé revealed that birds are imprisoned in barren dirt feedlots, where their feathers are sometimes yanked out while they're held in a restraining device. At the slaughterhouse, they're electrically stunned and flipped upside down, and their throats are cut. As a result of our exposé, Global Brands Group banned ostrich-derived products from its controlled brands, including David Beckham, Frye, Jennifer Lopez, Jones New York, Juicy Couture, and many others.

### **Cruelty Is Not Entertainment**

PETA has also achieved major victories in our campaign to end the advertising industry's exploitation of chimpanzees and orangutans, who are removed from their mothers as infants and typically subjected to physical and psychological abuse during training, only to be discarded at roadside zoos when they reach adolescence and become too strong to handle. Thanks to PETA's efforts, our list of advertising agencies that have pledged not to use great apes now includes 40 of the top agencies in the U.S.—including the top 10. And we are out to win over the rest!

In another exciting initiative, PETA and our international affiliates have persuaded dozens of travel agencies to stop promoting captive-elephant "attractions" and the world's largest travel site, TripAdvisor.com, to stop selling tickets to activities that put wild and endangered animals (and human travelers) at risk, including elephant rides, tiger encounters, and "swim with dolphins" excursions.

### **You're Vital to PETA's Success**

It's often easier to induce companies to improve their animal-welfare policies by meeting and building cooperative relationships with them, and it's usually faster and less expensive than launching a public campaign. However, if that doesn't work, you can bet that we'll launch an effort replete with action alerts asking our supporters to make their voices heard.

Our supporters then flood the companies with e-mails, and we often get calls from CEOs asking us to make them stop. Your voice makes a greater impact than you can possibly imagine. So keep up the fantastic work, and thank you for making PETA's vital corporate campaigns so successful through your generous support!



A model of persuasive diplomacy, Anne Brainard has led many successful PETA campaigns. She induced Gap Inc., H&M, and Inditex—the three largest clothing retailers in the world—to ban angora wool from their shelves, leading Inditex to donate more than 50,000 brand-new angora items to refugees in Iraq and Lebanon. She also persuaded popular home-goods stores—such as Pottery Barn, Crate & Barrel, and Restoration Hardware—to offer feather-free bedding and pillows as an alternative to down.



**Augustus Club: How did you become involved in animal rights?**

**Anne Brainard:** Like most kids, I grew up loving animals. When I was a child, my family would buy animals from pet stores, and at that time, it made me happy because I thought we were “rescuing” them from the stores and giving them a good home. I didn’t realize that we were actually fueling the demand.

At one point, my family bought a bird. I remember the sound of her wings as she would fly around her cage and smash herself into the bars. One day, when I was 10 years old, I came home from school and found her dead. There were feathers and blood everywhere. That’s when I realized that animals don’t belong in cages.

I’ve always been committed to fighting for causes that I believe in. As a lawyer, I taught life skills courses to prison inmates, worked with Congolese refugees in South Africa, and advocated for the rights of abused children here in the U.S. About five years ago, I saw the documentary *Food, Inc.*, and I realized the inherent contradiction in loving animals while also eating them. I made the decision to align my actions with my values, went vegan overnight (which is one of the best decisions I’ve ever made), and knew that I had found my true passion: advocating for animals.

**MEET ANNE  
BRAINARD,**  
*PETA’s Director of  
Corporate Affairs*

## AC: What brought you to PETA, and what was your first position?

**AB:** After I had that epiphany, I immediately began searching for a new job. I knew that PETA was the most powerful voice in animal rights, so that's where I set my sights. I started out as a corporate liaison and worked my way up to my current position.

## AC: Can you give our members a sense of the corporate negotiation process?

**AB:** When we expose cruelty to animals—for example, during one of our eyewitness investigations—we determine where the animal-derived items are being sold, i.e., which companies are buying them. We then show those companies the abuse being inflicted on animals in the production of the goods and urge them to reduce or eliminate their trade in them. The trick is to find common ground—to identify intersections between their goals and ours—and then implement mutually beneficial solutions.

## AC: Describe a facet of your job that makes you especially happy.

**AB:** I love working with corporate executives who “get it.” It's common to think of corporations as giving the highest priority to producing goods at the cheapest cost, and sadly, animals often pay the highest price. But I've had the privilege of working with a lot of executives who realize that they have an ethical obligation to consider the repercussions of their business practices. Fortunately, the market supports this mindset: Research shows that ethical supply chains and corporate accountability are important to people, particularly millennials, who are expected to outspend baby boomers this year.

I also love collaborating with my coworkers at PETA. They're wonderful people who always stand up for what's right, even in the face of daunting obstacles.

## AC: What's been your most gratifying accomplishment in your time at PETA?

**AB:** I'd have to say our success in getting angora off retail shelves—and the fact that there has been an 81 percent decline in Chinese angora exports. I'm also proud of all the advancements we've made regarding down. [For more details on PETA's progress in reducing the use of angora and down, see page 2.]

## AC: What makes PETA more successful in this capacity than other organizations?

**AB:** We're the only organization with major campaigns against the use of angora, exotic skins, leather, wool, and down. So we're breaking new ground.

## AC: Are you optimistic about long-term changes in society's treatment of animals?

**AB:** Absolutely. Demand for vegan items is higher than ever. Consumers are willing to pay more for items that don't involve cruelty, and they're more aware than ever of production methods. They want to support ethical companies, and they make decisions based on their personal values.

## AC: Are there any funny career moments that stand out in your mind?

**AB:** One time, I was meeting with a cruise line executive to ask that the ships use pillows made with synthetic down instead of real feathers. He argued with everything I said and seemed to dislike me, but I couldn't figure out why. When the meeting ended, he said, “I would have more respect for your request if you weren't carrying a leather purse.” This apparent contradiction really ruffled his feathers, so to speak! I then explained that the purse was completely vegan, and I tied it back to our request by saying, “It's another great example of companies' not having to sacrifice style or quality by using cruelty-free materials—be it vegan leather or synthetic down.”

## AC: Is there anything else that you'd like to share with our Augustus Club members?

**AB:** I would like to thank them for making such a meaningful commitment to PETA's work and for ensuring that we can continue helping animals well into the future.



# ANIMALS ARE WONDROUS:

# Alligators and Crocodiles

*WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT ALLIGATORS AND CROCODILES ARE TRUE?*

- They like to surf.
- They like to play with balls and other toys.
- They give each other piggyback rides for fun.
- They like to slide down slopes repeatedly.
- Some have been observed playing peacefully with river otters.
- One even had a close 20-year friendship with a man who rescued him after he was shot.



*IF YOU ANSWERED, "ALL OF THE ABOVE," CONGRATULATIONS! YOU ARE CORRECT!*

Unfortunately, these intelligent animals—who are so clever that some of them respond when called by name while others know how to use tools to lure prey to them—are raised in appalling conditions and killed by the tens of thousands every year so that their skins can be made into handbags, belts, shoes, wallets, and watchbands.

But with your help, we're working to stop this. With resources provided by Augustus Club members like you, PETA has released scathing video exposés of the alligator- and crocodile-skin industry.

Through first-of-its-kind investigative footage—viewed more than 38 million times—PETA showed that thousands of crocodiles factory-farmed in Zimbabwe

were confined to crowded, barren concrete enclosures for years on end and that alligators on a Texas farm were raised in pits of excrement-filled water inside dark, windowless sheds and crudely slaughtered in painful ways.

PETA revealed that Hermès uses skins from these farms in "luxury" goods such as Birkin and Kelly handbags and that each bag requires the slaughter of three to four crocodiles. Public outrage at these findings was so vociferous that Hermès pulled its crocodile-skin bags from display shelves in New York City, London, and Paris.

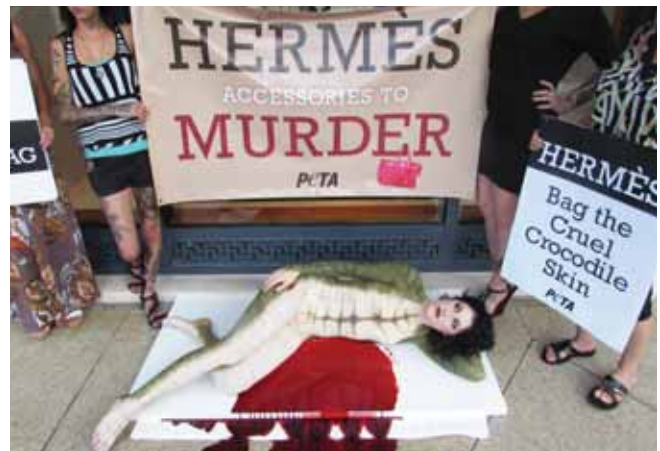
Last year, eyewitness footage revealed what happens to tens of thousands of crocodiles on farms in Vietnam. At one of them, about 5,000 crocodiles were kept in



small concrete enclosures—some narrower than the length of their own bodies—for months at a time. At another, animals were jam-packed into concrete pits.

Video footage reveals that workers electroshocked the crocodiles then attempted to kill them by cutting into their necks and ramming metal rods down their spines. They didn't die instantly, and experts have found that crocodilians remain conscious for over an hour after their spinal cord has been severed and their blood vessels cut. But workers took them into an adjacent room and cut off their skin anyway—a process that takes 15 to 20 minutes.

Two of the factory farms investigated have supplied crocodile skins to Louis Vuitton's parent company, LVMH. PETA has now purchased just enough stock in the company to attend its annual meeting and will be using this tool to pressure it into joining a growing list of others—including adidas, Adolfo Domínguez, Ann Inc., Arcadia Group (which owns Topshop), ASOS, bebe, H&M, L Brands (which owns Victoria's Secret), Mango, Nike, Nine West, Overstock.com, and PUMA—that have banned exotic skins following discussions with PETA and our international affiliates.



Alligator: © Dean Perus | Dreamstime.com  
Handle: © Luminis | Dreamstime.com • Zipper: © iStock.com

## What You Can Do

It's not necessary to like particular species in order to want to shield them from abuse; nevertheless, people often turn a blind eye to reptile suffering. But we're sure that you won't! Please help us stop this cruelty in the following ways:

1. If people you know purchase crocodile-skin bags or other accessories, please ask them to visit [PETA.org/Investigations](https://www.peta.org/investigations) to see the cruelty that those purchases could be supporting.
2. Please write to Bernard Arnault, Louis Vuitton's chief executive officer, using the online form at [LVMH.com/contact](https://www.lvmh.com/contact)—or at LVMH, 22, ave. Montaigne, 75008 Paris, France—and ask him to stop selling exotic skins.
3. Pledge never to buy or wear exotic skins. For tips on animal-friendly fashions, visit [PETA.org/WearVegan](https://www.peta.org/wearvegan).



THANK YOU!



## You Are PETA: Augustus Club Member Ricardo Ferreira

*In the late 1990s—after Ricardo Ferreira witnessed the horrific Labor Day pigeon shoot in Hegins, Pennsylvania—he began his journey toward animal advocacy. He and his partner, Julie Beckham, often participated in PETA demonstrations against circuses as well as General Motors' use of animals in crash testing, and they still attend PETA events whenever they can.*

*Ricardo has since become one of PETA's dedicated volunteers. After he learned about the terrible plight of dogs who are forced to live confined outdoors and PETA's outreach efforts and doghouse delivery program in rural areas near the Sam Simon Center—our headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia—he wanted to experience it firsthand.*

When I first accompanied PETA fieldworkers as they visited communities as far south of Norfolk as North Carolina, I'd never seen so many dogs in my life—mostly pit bulls—living in such terrible conditions. The doghouses, straw bedding, food, and treats that we brought for these dogs, along with some much-needed attention, made them so happy that it was difficult to leave them behind.

Since then, I've come back several times during the winter to volunteer with this program. I've gotten to know some of the dogs and their owners, and I always look forward to seeing them again—and always hope that their lives will have improved. I've also developed great respect and admiration for the PETA fieldworkers who do this job every day. Not only are they incredibly caring toward these animals, they also have a special way of communicating with the owners. They are able to persuade them to have the animals spayed or

neutered (PETA's mobile clinics offer low-cost and even free services) and to let us provide them with better medical care, and they encourage them to let the dogs live inside or, if the animals are in serious trouble, to relinquish them.

I've also seen how fieldworkers, in cases of willful neglect or abuse, partner with local law-enforcement officials to document evidence and successfully assist in prosecuting and bringing animal abusers to justice.

Over the years, I've witnessed other major successes as well. PETA has been able to influence local authorities in several communities to start talking about and actually pass anti-chaining ordinances. My experiences with PETA's fieldwork have been extremely rewarding. Every time I return home from a weekend of delivering doghouses, I hug my two adopted pit bulls, Sylvester and Nana, who cozily lounge by the fireplace, and I'm glad that someone is out there right now working to make this a better world for all animals.

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Julie and I have found PETA to be uniquely focused on reducing animal suffering and highly effective in bringing about change. It's important that the advocacy work for animal rights continue into the future after we are gone, so in addition to our annual contributions, we have included a legacy gift to PETA in our will. We feel that PETA—a streamlined, dedicated, and focused organization—is best poised to use our gift to bring about positive change for animals now and in the future.

*Ricardo Ferreira and his partner, Julie Beckham, are both members of PETA's Augustus Club and Vanguard Society. They live in Virginia with their two dogs. Ricardo has visited PETA's Sam Simon Center several times to assist with fieldwork.*

*A version of this article originally appeared on [PETA.org/Prime](https://peta.org/Prime).*