



# THE Augustus Club AND VANGUARD SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER

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## With Help from Whistleblowers, and YOU, PETA Exposes Cruelty on Factory Farms





# With Help from Whistleblowers, and YOU, PETA Exposes Cruelty on Factory Farms



Animals tormented for food are among the most abused in the world: crammed into filthy stalls and cages, forcibly manually impregnated, separated from their babies, and mutilated without pain relief—all before being killed. Much of this cruelty is legal and considered standard practice, and when a concerned worker witnesses something they know is wrong, they have few places to turn other than PETA.

Whistleblowers often contact PETA after being ignored by management and even government officials. When they do, we listen to them and do all that we can to help them expose—and end—the horrors they have witnessed.

Take the case of Pure Prairie Poultry, a chicken factory-farming and slaughter company that left thousands of chickens on trucks for five days without food or water and failed to provide food for more than 2 million chickens at its contract farms. After a whistleblower risked his career to alert PETA, authorities finally stepped in to feed the birds, and the company is now the subject of a criminal investigation (you can read more about him on page 3).

In the spring, another whistleblower turned to PETA to expose the alleged abuse of chickens at a Virginia slaughterhouse owned by Farmer Focus. “I’ve seen some

things that are not right,” the anonymous whistleblower told PETA, “but I have never witnessed anything like this before.”

The insider reported that, due to rough handling during transport, chickens’ wings and legs were bruised, broken, and dislocated at rates far beyond what the chicken industry considers “acceptable.” Chickens arrived at the slaughterhouse stressed, flapping, and struggling, and some even jumped off the conveyor belt in an attempt to escape. And a faulty electric “stunning bath” led to birds being decapitated while conscious or slowly drowned to death.

Farmer Focus claims to be transparent—yet the whistleblower said that the company consistently places incorrect farm ID labels on its “traceable” products. Farmer Focus is also “animal-welfare certified” by the Global Animal Partnership (GAP), a sham certification scheme designed to mislead consumers with meaningless labels on meat, eggs, and dairy products.



PETA investigators have documented widespread cruelty and suffering at 12 GAP-certified facilities, including animals being kept in severely crowded conditions and workers beating, kicking, and throwing animals.

Yet so-called “animal protection” groups—including the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), Compassion in World Farming, and Humane World for Animals—stand behind the organization. Some of their representatives are even sitting on its board of directors!

The “animal welfare” lies have to stop, and factory farms must be held accountable for their cruelty. PETA is grateful for the whistleblowers who risk their careers to expose abuse on factory farms.



“No matter the challenges animals face worldwide, PETA is there—out front and loud when needed, or behind the scenes quietly working with whistleblowers, undercover investigations, and decision-makers. I am eternally grateful, which is why PETA is not only the recipient of gifts in my lifetime but also the beneficiary of my will, retirement plan, and other financial accounts. This helps to ensure their vital work continues seamlessly.”

—Diana Artemis  
Vanguard Society &  
Augustus Club member



# Iowa Whistleblower Recognized as Champion for Chickens

When 38-year-old Iowa resident Jeremy Schmidt learned that some 2 million chickens were being left without food, he was determined to act—and he knew PETA could help.

An employee of chicken factory-farming and slaughter company Pure Prairie Poultry, Schmidt was alarmed when the company abruptly stopped providing feed for millions of chickens on its contract farms in October 2024. Not long after, Schmidt watched as Pure Prairie Poultry left thousands of chickens to languish on transport trucks without food or water for up to five days outside its now-shuttered slaughterhouse.

When the company failed to answer employees' questions about the starving animals, Schmidt risked his career to report the situation to PETA—the only organization available to industry whistleblowers who want to report cruelty concerns.

Thanks to Schmidt's actions and pressure from PETA, officials in Iowa and Minnesota intervened to feed the starving chickens. Federal officials then launched an investigation into Pure Prairie Poultry, and the company now faces bankruptcy—just two years after it collected more than \$45 million in subsidies.

In honor of Schmidt's courage, PETA awarded him the 2025 Nanci Alexander Activist Award. One of PETA's highest

honors, the award was named for Nanci Alexander, a Florida resident who was among the first to spark debate over SeaWorld's confinement of orcas and other marine animals and was behind Florida's ban on pig gestation crates.

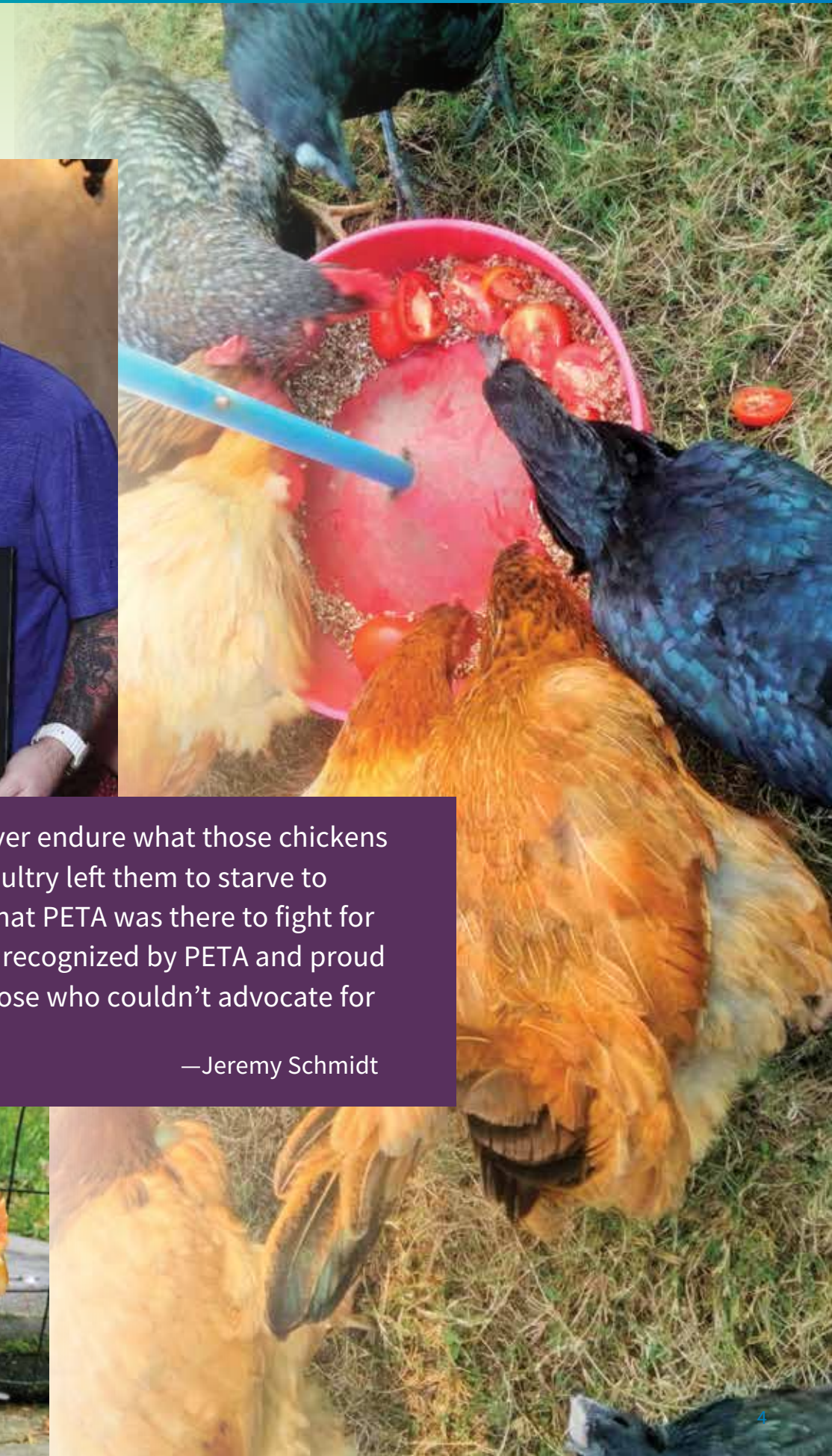
Alexander was on hand in April to present the award at PETA's 45th anniversary celebration in Miami, which Schmidt attended with his wife.

"No living being should ever endure what those chickens did when Pure Prairie Poultry left them to starve to death, and I'm grateful that PETA was there to fight for them," Schmidt says. "I'm honored to be recognized by PETA and proud to have spoken up for those who couldn't advocate for themselves."



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—Jeremy Schmidt





# Vegan Red Velvet Chocolate Lava Cake



## Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups whole-wheat all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups organic sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cocoa powder
- 1 1/2 cups vegetable oil
- 1 cup vegan milk mixed with 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. ground flaxseed mixed with 6 Tbsp. water
- 1/4 cup beet juice (from a can of beets)
- 1 tsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 bar vegan dark chocolate baking squares
- Powdered sugar, for garnish

## Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Combine the flour, sugar, baking soda, salt, and cocoa powder in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, mix together the vegetable oil, vegan milk, flaxseed mixture, beet juice, apple cider vinegar, and vanilla extract. Pour the wet mixture into the dry mixture, stirring until smooth. Pour into a cake pan and insert the chocolate squares evenly throughout the batter.
3. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool and use a strainer to decorate with powdered sugar.

## Makes 12 servings.

This recipe is from PETA's *Delicious Recipes for a Compassionate Kitchen* booklet. Request your free copy by returning the reply form.

## Resources to Help You and to Plan for Your Animal Companions

One of the most important aspects of planning is preparing for your animal companions' future—for the time when you'll no longer be there to care for them yourself.

You can incorporate important steps into your estate planning to ensure the long-term well-being of your animals and to make their transition to life without you as stress-free as possible.

Request your Animal Companion Planning Kit today. Each kit includes the following:

- A detailed 12-page booklet
- An emergency contact wallet card
- An emergency contact card for the home
- An instruction form for emergency caregivers
- An instruction form for family and friends
- An emergency window decal

To request your kit, visit [PETA.org/LegacyToolKit](https://peta.org/LegacyToolKit).

### Create Your Will for Free

If you live in the United States, your estate is simple, and it makes sense for you to create your will online. We've partnered with FreeWill to help you craft a legal will for free. You can learn more and get started at [PETA.org/FreeWill](https://peta.org/FreeWill).

If you want to include a gift to PETA in your will or trust or by beneficiary designation, you will need our legal designation.

### PETA's full legal name:

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Inc.

### PETA's permanent mailing address:

P.O. Box 42516, Washington, DC 20015

### PETA's federal tax identification number:

#52-1218336

### Other Resources Available to You

PETA offers additional resources that make it easy to map out your personal and financial goals and ensure that your loved ones—including animal companions—are cared for.

To request a copy of *Getting Organized*, a workbook that will help you get started with or update your estate plan, please return the enclosed reply form. You can also download this and other planning resources at [PETA.org/Resources](https://peta.org/Resources).



### Donor-Advised Funds (DAF)

If you have a DAF, don't forget succession planning. You can include PETA in your DAF succession plan by:

- Recommending that funds remaining in your plan be distributed immediately.
- Creating an endowed DAF where selected charities will receive distributions for some period of time.
- Appointing a successor trustee to continue recommending grants.

### Keep Your Plans Current

Life changes quickly, and outdated estate plans can create complications for loved ones. Take time each year to review your will, trusts, and beneficiary designations.

Regular reviews ensure your assets will be distributed according to your wishes, potentially saving your family stress and expenses while maximizing your charitable impact for generations to come.



## Augustus Club and Vanguard Society Members: Leaders in the Movement to End Animal Suffering Now and Into the Future

PETA's Augustus Club honors those who are leaving a legacy for animals through a gift to PETA in their will or other estate plan.

Augustus was one of the 17 macaque "Silver Spring monkeys," most of whom were taken from their jungle homes in the late 1970s and purchased by animal experimenter Edward Taub for testing purposes. After PETA exposed the extreme cruelty and neglect that were being inflicted on Augustus and the others in Taub's laboratory at the Institute for Behavioral Research, the police raided it, and Taub became the first experimenter to be convicted of cruelty to animals.

While Augustus did not survive the experiments inflicted on him by Taub, he has inspired thousands of PETA members to leave a legacy for animals, helping create a future in which no animals will lose their freedom to cruel experiments.

Augustus' noble image and dignity make him a fitting symbol of the plight of all animals who have endured—and are still enduring—abuse at the hands of humans.

Augustus Club member benefits include the following:

- Access to special events throughout the year, including galas featuring policymakers, prominent advocates, and celebrities who celebrate animal liberation.
- Invitations to local events that provide an opportunity to meet other local PETA members and bring together friends and associates who may be interested in becoming more involved in animal liberation.
- The Augustus Club newsletter, featuring updates on our campaign, current challenges, and victories for animals.
- A subscription to PETA Global and a 15% discount on PETA merchandise at [PETA.org/Shop](https://PETA.org/Shop).
- Periodic calls from PETA staff to thank you for your support, update you on the progress your donations have helped us make, or schedule a visit at your convenience.
- Invitations to tour PETA's offices in Norfolk, Virginia, and Los Angeles, California.

Visit **[AugustusClub.org](https://AugustusClub.org)** for legacy-planning tools, testimonials, and archived newsletters.

**Together, through the power of our Augustus Club and Vanguard Society communities, we can continue to usher in a new world of freedom and respect for all animals and ensure that every animal's voice is heard—now and in the future.**

Members of PETA's Vanguard Society turn their compassion for animals into action by generously giving \$500 to \$100,000 to support all of PETA's life-changing efforts on behalf of animals suffering on factory farms and in slaughterhouses, in laboratories, in circuses, in puppy mills, and wherever else animals are abused or neglected.

Vanguard was a rescued cocker spaniel/poodle mix who was to be used in fatal and painful deep-sea diving experiments. His name means "the forefront of a movement" and after his rescue and recovery, he found a loving home and has inspired outstanding generosity from Vanguard Society members.

Our Vanguard Society members receive:

- Invitations to special events, such as our exclusive quarterly town hall meetings with PETA's president and senior staff members and private events for animals held throughout the country.
- Vanguard-exclusive updates and a unique—and often behind-the-scenes—look at PETA's groundbreaking work for animals.
- Our annual review and exclusive "Rescued!" calendar.
- A 15% discount on all PETA merchandise at [PETA.org/Shop](https://PETA.org/Shop).
- Additional benefits at increased giving levels.

Visit **[VanguardSociety.org](https://VanguardSociety.org)** to learn more about additional levels of support and benefits, read member stories, and see the impact of your generosity.

