



The Year of the Pandemic

2020 began with the news that there was a rapidly spreading virus in China. Soon the virus spread around the world and became the worst pandemic in 100 years.

Those who study these things were not shocked. Since 1940 scientists have identified hundreds of new or reemerging infectious diseases in people. Well known examples include SARS, EBOLA, HIV, West Nile Virus, MERS and now COVID-19.

Most infectious diseases are zoonotic diseases, which are caused by harmful germs that spread between animals and humans. Experts presently believe that COVID-19 originated in bats. (Bats live in huge colonies and travel great distances



which are excellent conditions for the creation and spreading of diseases.) Before jumping to humans, COVID-19 needed an intermediate host to further mutate and

increase its numbers. Pangolins, scaly anteaters, are believed to have been COVID-19's host.



Pangolins are the most poached and trafficked mammals in the world because their meat and blood are considered health inducing delicacies and their scales are used in traditional Chinese medicines. (To meet demand, Pangolins are also raised on factory farms in China.)

Pangolins are brought to market alive packed in filthy cages, often with numerous other species. It is the custom to slaughter Pangolins in front of diners to achieve the full "medicinal" effect of meat from wild animals. All these practices created the perfect conditions for the creation of the coronavirus.

Now we Mainers are suffering the consequences. But we are currently creating conditions for another pandemic. In Androscoggin County over

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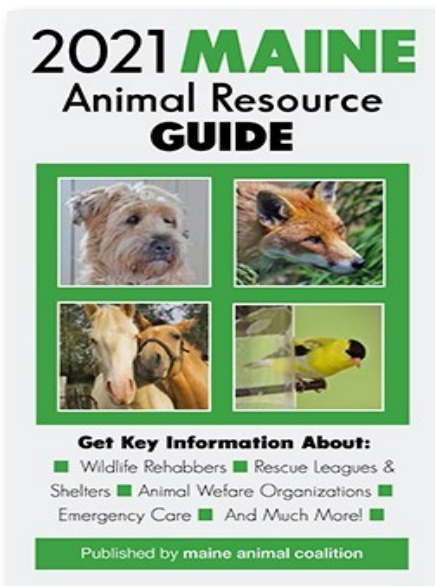
a million egg laying hens are raised annually in battery cages. Within a cage each chicken is given the space of less than the size of one sheet of notebook paper. They never see the sun, breath fresh air or touch the ground. These conditions are ideal for creating bird influenza, believed to be the source of the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic.

Additionally, Maine is now charging full speed ahead into aquaculture - fish farming. Tens of

thousands of fish are crammed into small tanks. Diseases, parasite infestations and high mortality rates are common in the industry. Farmed fish consume as much fish as they produce, and drugs are used to increase their survival rate. Ocean based aquafarms contaminate the surrounding water with fish excrement, uneaten food and parasites.

It is time for the world to convert to a plant-based diet!

9th Edition of Maine Animal Resource Guide



In December MAC published the 9th edition of its Maine Animal Resource Guide and it is available on our website free of charge. The Guide is 31 pages of important information about how to get help in Maine if you have almost any animal welfare issue. The 9th edition includes interactive links to make finding resources easier. A list of pet food pantries has also been added to the Guide.

To follow MAC's activities, sign up on the front page of MAC's website - www.maineanimalcoalition.org - for our emails



MAC at the Legislature

Due to the pandemic, the second session of the 129th Maine Legislature adjourned on March 17, 2020 and did not reconvene. This meant that the vast majority of 700 bills being considered by the Legislature in 2020 died.

The key bill that MAC advocated for, LD 2084 An Act Regulating the Sale of Certain Eggs for Human Consumption, would not have passed even under normal times. The bill, introduced by HSUS, would have made it illegal to sell within Maine eggs from hens raised in battery cages. The bill would have gone into effect at the beginning of 2025.

There was fierce opposition to the bill from State representatives from the Turner area, free market advocates, organic farmers who rely on a cheap supply of manure from the Turner operation, the Maine Farm Bureau Association, and others who dislike the animal welfare movement. While the Maine Department of Agriculture spoke neither for nor against the bill, the Department's State Veterinarian declared in her testimony that the current system of battery cages is humane! (Dr. Donald Hoenig, former State Veterinarian, testified he had a change of heart and endorsed the bill.)

Hillandale, one of the largest egg producers in the United State, is the current operator of the huge

egg producing facility in Turner. Testimony by Hillandale's Maine chief executive provided details about the company's operations in Maine. Hillandale raises approximate 1.3 million hens annually in Maine. Ninety percent of the eggs are sold within the state - mainly to Hannaford, Cisco and Walmart.

Hillandale employs approximately 100 to 150 people in the Turner area.

Rep Margaret O'Neil, the bill's sponsor, offered to extend the effective date to 2030. Hillandale, however, would not budge. To convert to a cage free system, the

old "barns", which each hold 45,000 hens, would have to be replaced, something that Hillandale did not want to commit to.

In August, the Attorney General of New York filed a lawsuit against Hillandale Farms alleging Hillandale took in an extra four million dollars by illegally gouging shoppers on egg sales during the pandemic.

On a brighter note, in December Maine Animal Coalition joined with Maine Friends of Animals and submitted a bill to the 130th Session of the Maine State Legislature. If passed, the bill, LR 1563 An Act To Provide for the Well-being of Companion Animals upon the Dissolution of Marriages, would require a judge to consider the well-being of companion animals when dividing marital property. This requirement would legally elevate companion animals above furniture and other personal property.



MAC's 16th Annual (Virtual) Veg Fest

This year's Virtual Veg Fest was inspired by MAC board member Angela Bell's love for her native Aroostook County. Last summer on a visit home she was thrilled to see in Presque Isle a new vegan business – County Roots. County Roots opened at the beginning of 2020 and includes a bakery, smoothie bar, luncheonette, and store.



Angela Bell

Angela wondered if a vegan business could do well in the County, not to mention during the pandemic. Amy Stedman, the owner of County Roots, agreed to kick off the Veg Fest with a live Zoom

interview. Amy reported that indeed her business was not only thriving (likely due to great tasting food), but her store has also become a mini vegan education center.

Continuing with the Aroostook County theme was the charming video by Lynda Millar on how to make ployes. “Mme. Millar” is an elementary school French teacher in Bar Harbor. She created the ploye video for her students last May when she and her fellow teachers were learning how to do virtual lessons.

Angela Bell also interviewed popular vegan chef Colin McCullough. Colin, upon MAC's request, cooked five vegan roasts and declared they were all good. When pushed to select the best he said, “Well, I think Tofurky is still my favorite.”



Filmmaker Betsy Carson kindly loaned the use of Vegan Mash-up's Holiday Classics Episode with well-known chefs Miyoke Schinner, Terry Hope Romero and Cathi DiCocco preparing great dishes for the holidays.

Dr. Timothy Howe donated to the Veg Fest the use of his interesting, taped lecture entitled *Gut Health*. In addition to practicing medicine, Dr. Howe, a board certified, internal medicine physician, has for the past 31 years with his wife Lyn taught how a healthy plant-based diet and thoughtful living can be used in the prevention and treatment of many diseases. Currently they regularly make presentations for Mid-Coast Hospital's program “Food for Health.”

New to the fest this year was our website dedicated to the fest www.mainevegfest.com. It is still up and much of the fest content is still accessible. (Check out the piano playing chicken.)

MAC Donates Vegan Dog Food to Pet Food Pantries



During the lockdown, MAC realized it needed to innovate. MAC responded by donating 1,445 pounds of vegan dog food to Mainers at a cost of \$2,606. The money came from our generous members, MaineShare donors and a \$500 grant from the NALITH Foundation.

Donations of vegan dog food made sense for many reasons. The first reason was that many Mainers have needed help during the pandemic.

The second reason is that it is important that American dogs go vegan. Currently our pets are consuming huge amounts of meat. Vegan dog

food purveyor Wild Earth claims, "if America's pets were their own country, their meat consumption would rank fifth in the world behind only Russia, Brazil, the United State and China." This consumption of meat results in great suffering of farmed animals, environmental degradation, and in some cases harm to our beloved companion animals.

In addition to helping those in need and promoting veganism, the vegan pet food project helped to publicize the existence of pet food pantries. Many Mainers are not aware that there are pet food pantries. Upon learning of these pantries, some may volunteer at the pantries, donate to them, or simply seek help from them.

MAC donated vegan dog food to the Amy Buxton Pet Food Pantry in Augusta, Dogwill in Bath, Waldo County Pet Food Pantry in Belfast, Halfway Home Pet Rescue in Caribou and No Bowl Empty Pet Food Pantry in Waterboro.

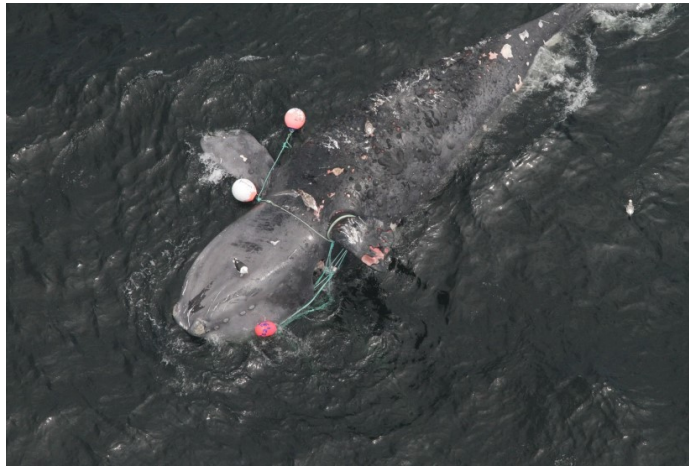


MAC continued to sponsor the Maine Vegan Meetup in 2020. Due to the pandemic our Meetups were mostly virtual. Special shout out to Jen Breyer for cross posting her interesting V-Learning Community events and keeping our Meetup going. To join, go to [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) and look for Maine Vegan Meetup Group. There is no membership fee or cover charge to participate.

Can We Save the Whales?

In 2020 the plight of the endangered North Atlantic right whale grew worse. The major cause of death of right whales are ship strikes and entanglement in fishing lines. The increase and speed of ships, and the strength, durability and number of fishing lines has resulted in an increase in the death rate of right whales.

Scientists believe that fewer than 400 right whales remain and that the death of only one whale each year will lead to their extinction. It's estimated that at least 50 right whales have died since 2017.



An entangled right whale.

MAC's support in 2019 of the Scientific Assistance for Very Endangered North Atlantic Right Whales Act came to naught in 2020 when the bill died in Congress.

In 2020 the State of Maine was also unable to create proposed regulations that satisfied Maine's lobstermen. Operators of Maine's 5,109 licensed lobster boats want to continue lowering 3 million traps into Maine water with 400,000 vertical lines. They believe that it not their lines that are killing the whales.

Maine's proposed conservation plan to use a combination of weak rope and a 25% reduction of buoy lines in state waters was also rejected by the National Marine Fisheries Service as being too weak.

Thankfully, national environmental groups have filed a lawsuit to make the federal government act

to protect the remaining whales. The judge in that lawsuit has warned federal regulators they will face considerable consequences if they fail to meet the courts May 2021 deadline to adopt final rules to protect the endangered right whale.

The New England Aquarium has identified, cataloged, and given a name to every one of the approximate 360 existing right whales. (This catalogue can be found on the Aquarium's website.)

This effort no doubt helps make these whales more than mere numbers. However, it is distressing to learn that "Cottontail," age eleven, likely has been strangled to death in fishing lines.

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Join Us!

If you appreciate our work, please join us! MAC memberships costs \$30 for individuals and \$40 for families. Your support will help us maintain our current programs. And you will also receive a free subscription to VegNews Magazine as a membership benefit.

An even larger donation will help us grow Veg Fest, sponsor animal protection legislation, and provide vegan materials and programs to more Maine communities.

There are multiple ways to donate. You may donate online at our website or complete the form on this newsletter's back page and mail a check to us. Or you could donate stocks directly to MAC's brokerage account.

You may also donate to us at your workplace via MaineShare. If your workplace does not offer MaineShare, contact us and we may be of assistance.

MAC Annual Financial Report

1/1/2020—12/31/2020

Income

Individual Contributions	\$ 9,893.41
Grants	\$ 500.00
Sales	\$ 242.04
Interest	\$.54

Total Income \$ 10,635.99

Expenses

Program	\$ 11,940.12
Operating	\$ 1,972.81

Total Expenses \$ 13,912.93

Total Assets

(cash)

January 1, 2020	\$ 11,471.61
December 31, 2020	\$ 8,194.67

Liabilities \$ 0.00

Total Net Assets \$ 8,194.67



VegNews News

The award winning VegNews magazine describes itself as “the ultimate source for all things vegan.” Check out their website.

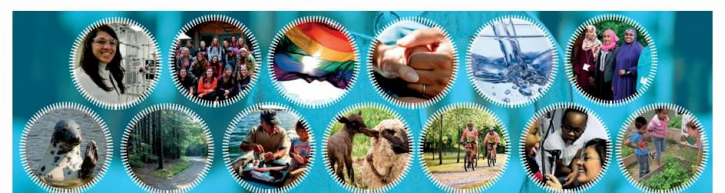
A one year subscription to VegNews Magazine cost \$25, but is free with a \$30 membership to Maine Animal Coalition.

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Maine Animal Coalition is dedicated to the elimination of animal abuse and exploitation through education, advocacy and example. For more information about MAC and our programs, visit our website at www.maineanimalcoalition.org. Phone (207) 773-2215 Email mac@maineanimalcoalition.org

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