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### Seven Big Wins for Farm Animals in 2020

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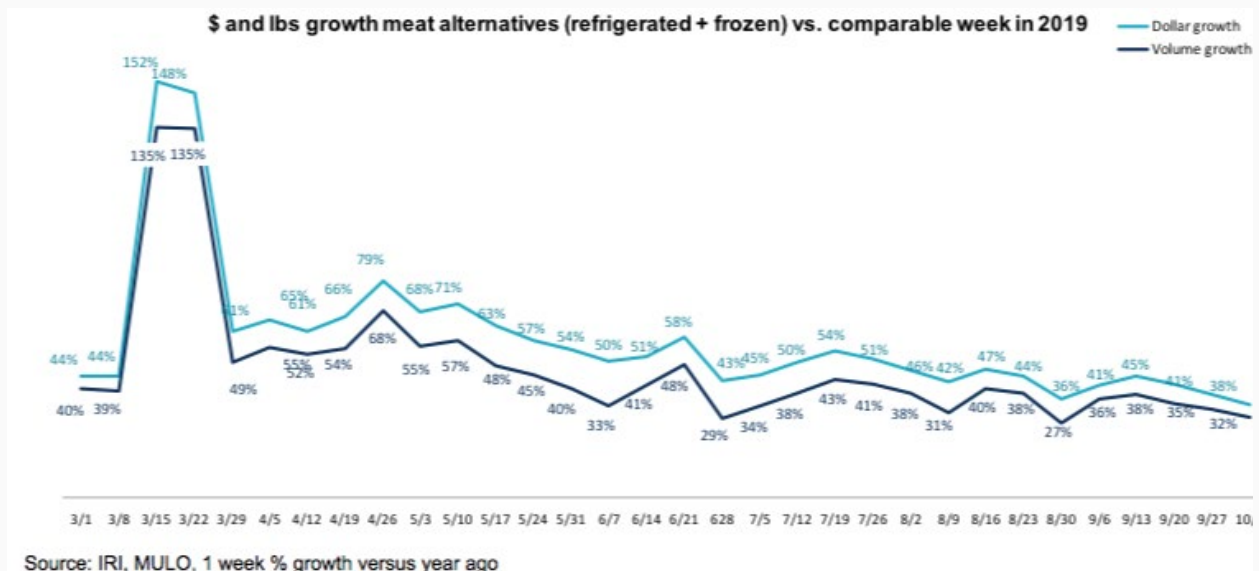
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## Seven Big Wins for Farm Animals in 2020

After a tough year, here's some good news. In spite of COVID, advocates for farm animals and alternative proteins achieved a record year of wins. Here are just a few of them:

- **Plant-based meat surges.** Three of China's largest fast food chains — KFC, Dico's, and Starbucks — started selling plant-based meat, as China's top state planning agency called for investment in the space. McDonald's announced a long-awaited line of plant-based meats, the creatively named McPlant. Food giants Nestle, Cargill, and Unilever unveiled ambitious plant-based meat plans, including in China, and the largest meat companies in Brazil, Japan, and Thailand launched new meat alternatives. US plant-based meat retail sales grew by a record 30-50% year-on-year.

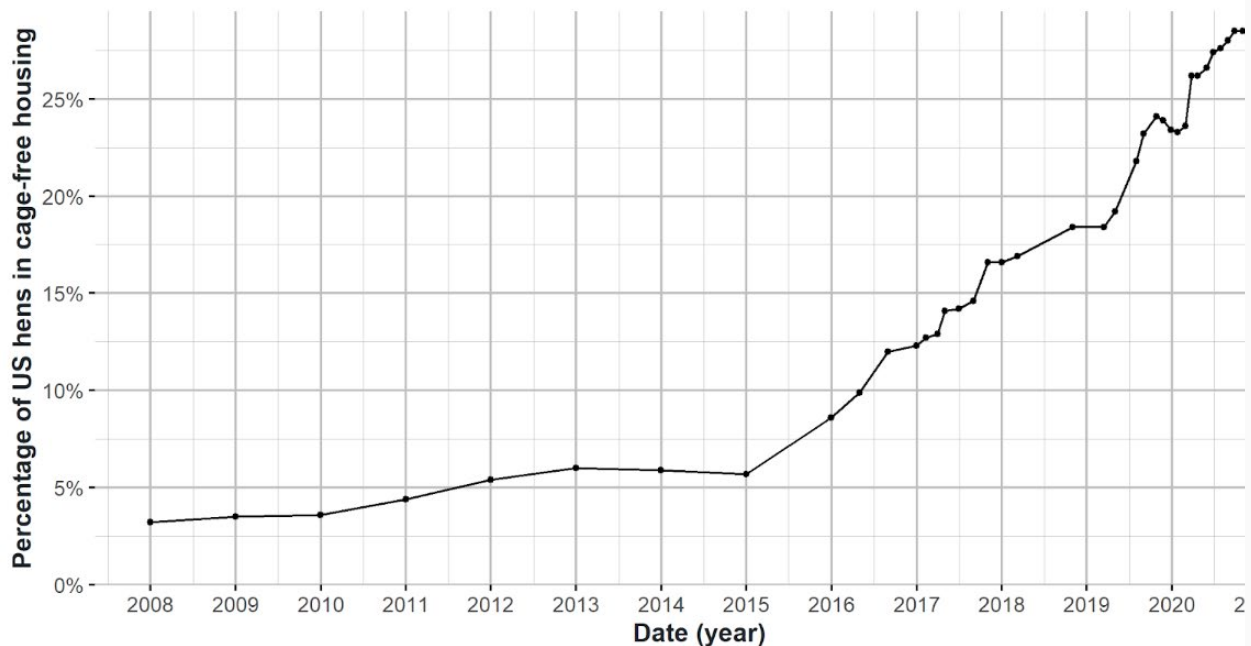


US plant-based meat retail sales surged during the initial COVID-19 lockdown, then remained up by 30-50% year-on-year. Source: IRI and MULO retail data compiled by [Meatingplace](#) (paywall).

- **Europe legislates for farm animals.** The European Commission said it will revise key animal welfare directives covering its two billion land farm animals, and the European Council voted to launch an EU-wide animal welfare label. The European Parliament narrowly rejected a ban on plant-based products using meat-like terms, thanks to a concerted campaign in defense of veggie burgers. France and Germany promised to ban the killing of day-old chicks and the castration of piglets without pain relief. The Czech Republic voted to ban battery cages, as did the Dutch Parliament, while the UK pledged to ban the live export trade. Europe's three largest fur producers (Denmark, Poland, and the Netherlands) all moved to restrict fur farming.
- **Corporations pledge broiler welfare reforms.** Advocates won pledges to improve the welfare of broiler chickens, raised for their meat, from 120 companies. These included Europe's second-largest retailer, Aldi, and France's two largest, Carrefour and E.Leclerc (meaning all of France's largest retailers are now pledged). They also included major chicken chains Popeye's and

Nando's UK, and pizza chains Pizza Hut and Domino's across key European markets. We estimate that the new 2020 pledges, once implemented, will affect >350M chickens/year or >40M alive at any time.

- **Corporations pledge cage-free reforms.** Advocates won pledges from 155 companies to stop sourcing eggs from caged hens. These included the first global pledge from a top five fast food chain, Burger King, following a coordinated campaign by groups across five continents. They also included a long-sought pledge from Brazil's largest retailer, GPA, and from the last three of Spain's top 10 retailers to pledge. Combined with earlier progress, advocates have now won pledges from Brazil's three largest retailers and the top 10 retailers in each of Europe's five largest egg producing countries (France, Germany, Poland, Spain, and the UK). We estimate that the new 2020 pledges, once implemented, will affect >30M hens alive at any time.
- **Cage-free pledges get implemented.** Advocates won progress in implementing cage-free pledges, including from Poland's largest retailer, Biedronka, which said they will stop selling caged eggs next year, four years ahead of schedule. US advocates won a new law phasing out the sale of caged eggs in Colorado — they've now passed such laws covering roughly a quarter of Americans. New data showed that over half of Europe's hens are out of cages for the first time, as are over 90M US hens, or 28.5% of the US flock — up from just 6% when cage-free campaigns took off in 2015.



*The percentage of US hens in cage-free housing has risen sharply since advocates' corporate campaigns began in earnest in 2015. Source: USDA data compiled by The Humane League Labs.*

- **Cultivated meat achieves milestones.** Cultivated meat startups raised more money in 2020, cumulatively over \$250M, than in all previous years combined, led by Memphis Meats' \$161M raise. Singapore became the first country to approve the sale of cultivated meat; Israel's prime minister the first national leader to try it (he called it "delicious and guilt-free"); the National Science Foundation the first US government agency to fund research on it in two decades (NASA

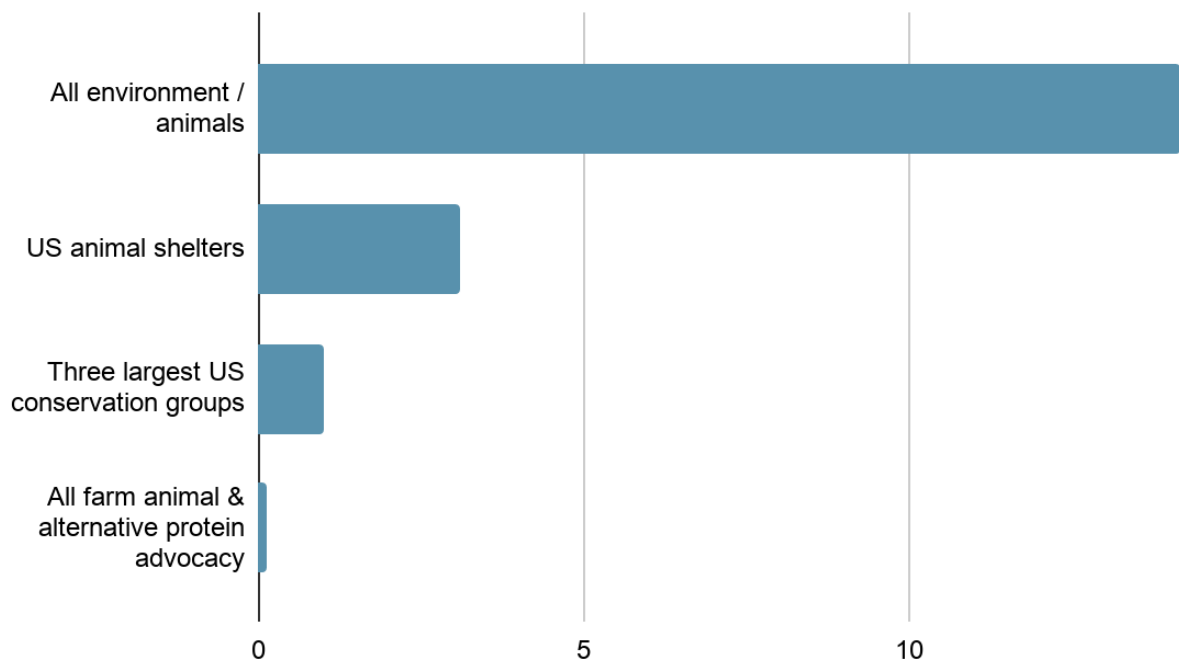
funded some initial work in 2001); and Robert Downey Jr. the first celebrity to create an animated video of himself touting its benefits ([it's better](#) than it sounds).

- **Fish welfare advances.** The most neglected farmed animals of all — those who live underwater — finally got some attention. The European Union's Platform on Animal Welfare, an officially recognized advisory body, adopted fish welfare standards for the European Commission to consider. Friends of the Sea became the first major aquaculture certifier to issue species-specific fish welfare standards. And the world's largest shrimp producer, Thailand's CP Foods, announced it had ended the practice of [eyestalk ablation](#), sparing tens of millions of shrimp from having their eyes cut out.

### The philanthropic opportunity to accelerate change

All this was achieved by a small cadre of advocates working on a relative pittance of funding. Of the \$450B that Americans gave to charity last year, less than *one twentieth of one percent* went to all advocacy for farm animals, from animal welfare reforms to veg advocacy to promoting alternative proteins. By contrast, three big US conservation groups (the Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund) raised six times more than the >200 groups globally advocating for farm animals and alternative proteins *combined*.

### US philanthropic support for environment / animals (\$B, 2019)



*Data and sources:* for total US environment / animal giving, [Giving USA 2020](#); for US animal shelters, [IBIS World](#); for three largest US conservation groups (the Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund) only counting private donations (not program revenues), [Forbes](#) and form 990s; tally of all

*groups advocating for farm animals (including promoting alternative proteins, but excluding non-advocacy activities like sanctuaries) compiled from form 990s and private info (see 2010-18 data [here](#)).*

The flipside of this neglect is a unique opportunity to do good. We face a huge challenge: over 100B vertebrate farm animals suffering in abysmal conditions at any time, with billions more added each year as factory farms continue to grow. But advocates have also shown that, through focused and sustained campaigns, they can achieve major wins.

If you have the ability to, I hope you'll join me in donating to support these advocates to help more animals in 2021. I'm donating to a number of groups directly, and to Animal Charity Evaluators' [Recommended Charity Fund](#) and the [EA Animal Welfare Fund](#) (of which I'm a fund manager), both of which currently have funding [matches](#). There are lots of other excellent options too.

Whether you're an advocate, funder, or supporter, thank you for all you do to make this progress possible. Happy holidays and may 2021 bring more progress!