

Telling Agriculture's Story: Connecting and Finding Common Ground with Consumers

Beth Meyer, Director of Consumer Confidence

American Dairy Association North East



About me...

Today's
consumer...



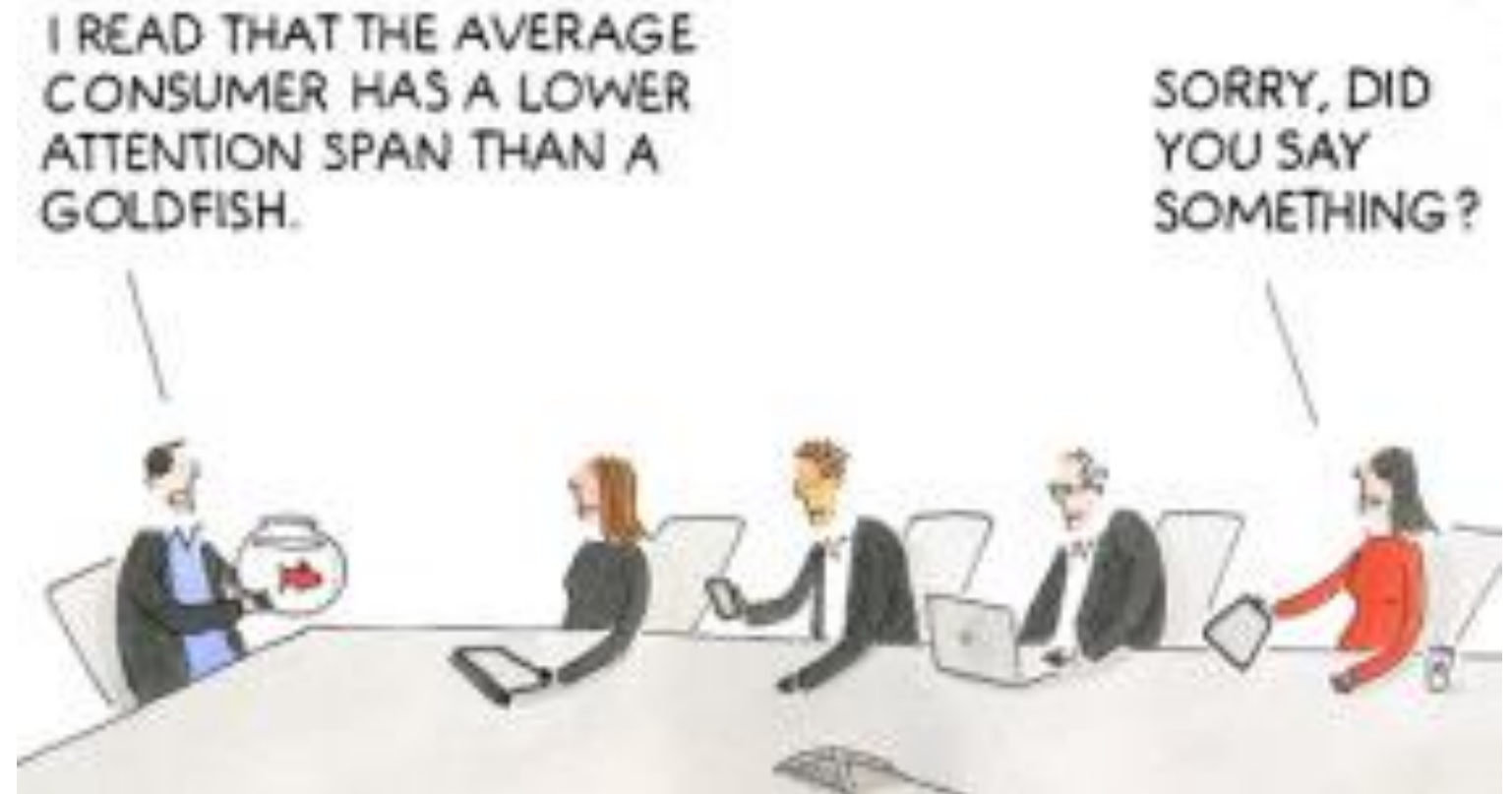
A Masai warrior on a cellphone in the middle of Kenya has better mobile comm than President Reagan did 25 years ago.

Peter H. Diamandis



Consumers switch between screens up to 21 times an hour according to a British study

8 second
attention
span



Quality=Ethics: The Rise of Ethical Eating

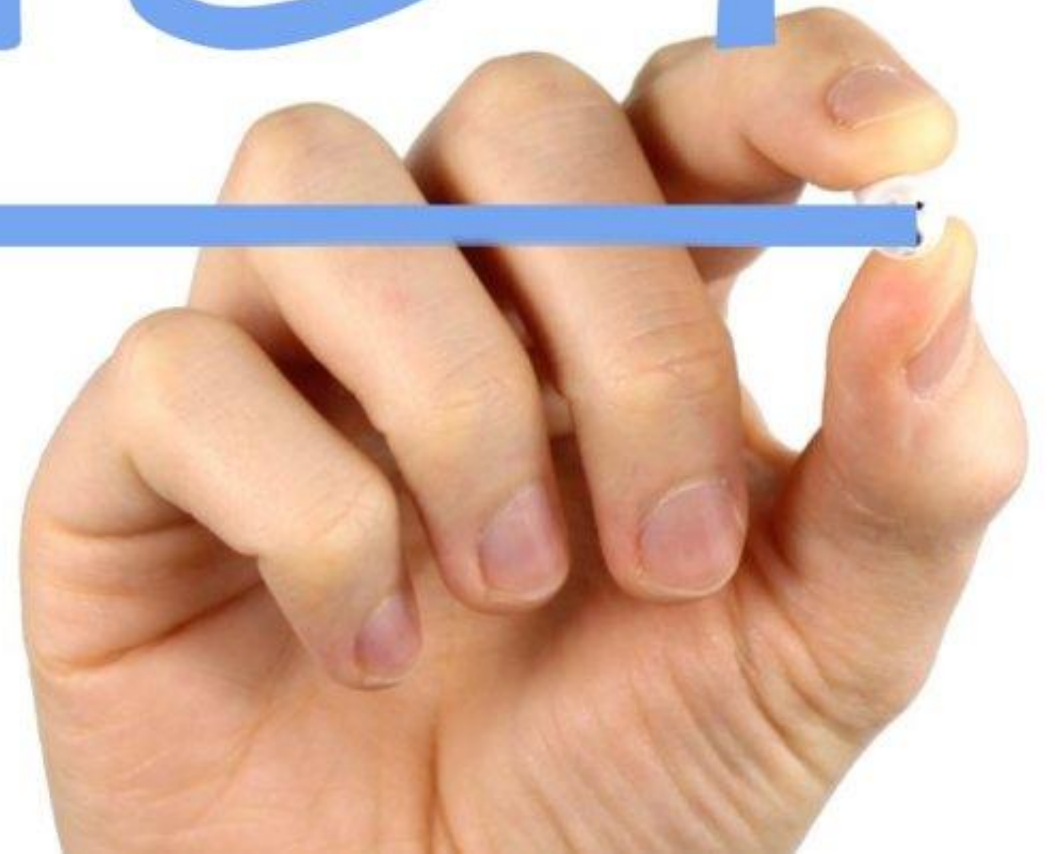
Components of Ethical Eating:

- Animal Welfare
- Waste Reduction
- Pollution
- Worker Welfare
- Reduced impact of production
- Supportive of local economy
- Avoids unnecessary packaging and elements
- Safe



TRUST

- In a post-truth world, consumers are putting their dollars where their trust remains intact.
- Trust has become one of the strongest drivers in how consumers choose products, services, and which organizations and politicians to support



New authorities are emerging in Health + Wellness

Top information sources used to learn about Health + Wellness

- Doctor (48%)
- Online search (35%)
- Health internet sites/apps (29%)
- Immediate family member (27%)
- Friend/other relative (24%)



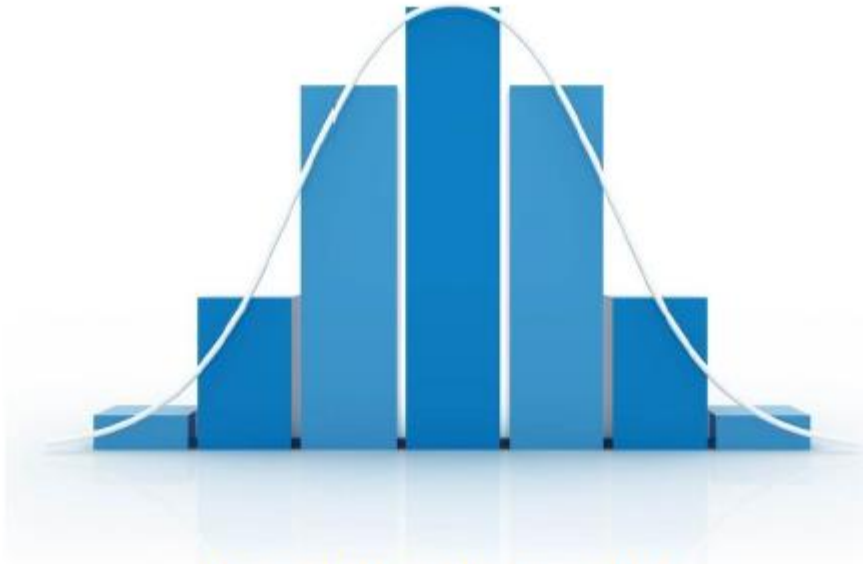
Millennials are more likely than other generations to *trust*:

- Alternative health practitioners (41%)
- Online social networks (27%)



Consumers are coming to believe in the uniqueness of individuals' bodies and minds

Then



The solution that works for *most people* is the best way



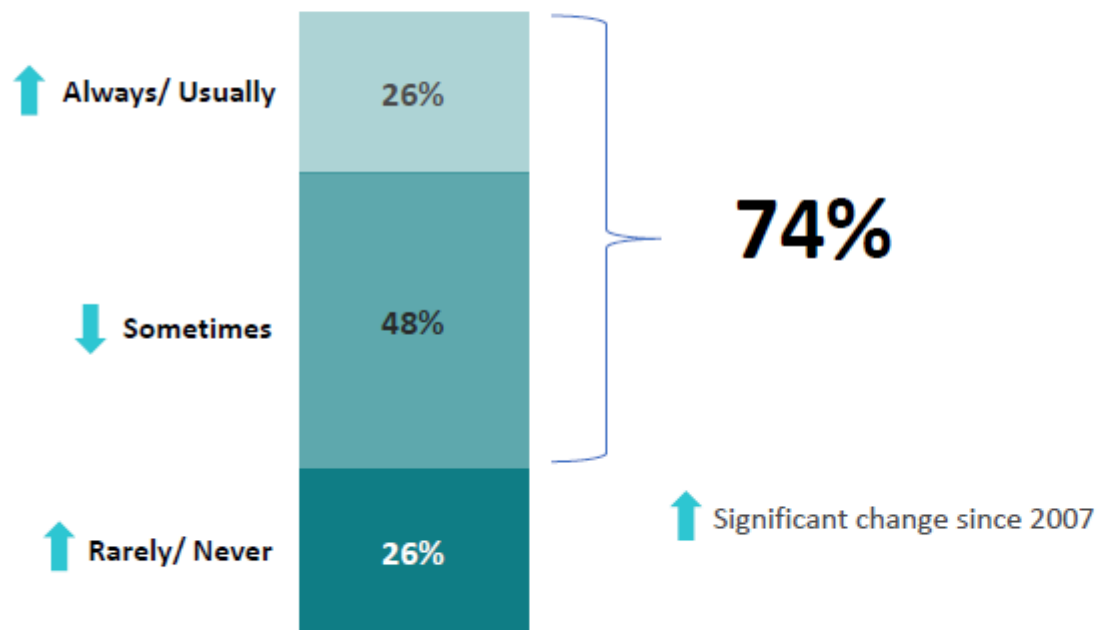
Now



The solution that works for *me* is the best way

The number of those who prioritize sustainable purchasing is up significantly since 2007

Frequency that Purchase Decisions Are Based on Sustainability Concerns



Consumers who always/usually base their purchasing on sustainability concerns are more likely to be:

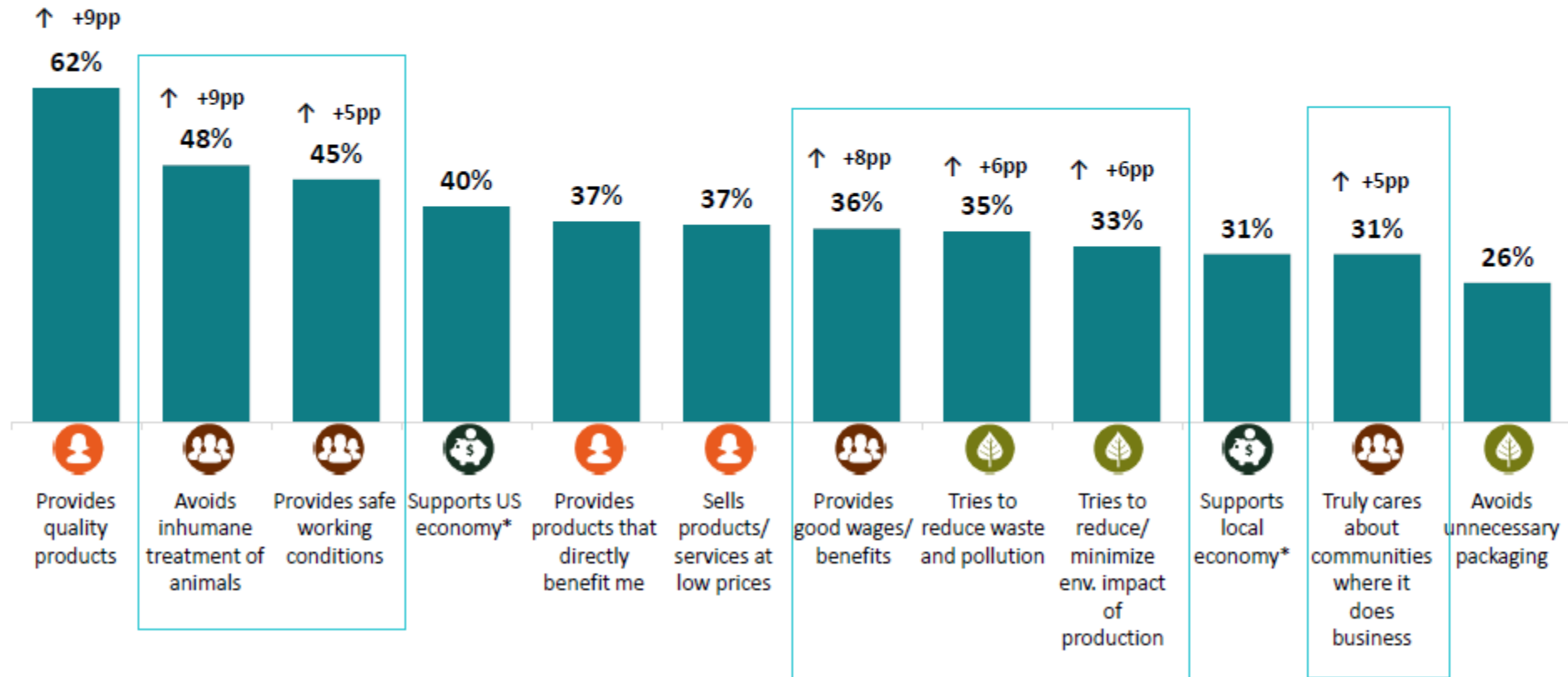
Millennials 33%

Those with children under 18 in the household 31%

Politically Liberal 36%

Animal welfare, labor and employment issues, waste and pollution reduction have become more important to consumers

Importance of Company Practice/Policies in Purchasing Decisions
Top Box Scores — Very Important



Issues that resonate now, and in the future, are those that cover multiple zones of responsibility and connect to Health + Wellness

Waste



Monoculture and deforestation



Water quality, scarcity, and rights



Labor issues



GMOs & glyphosate



The impact of meat



Animal welfare has already become a clear case of 'better for me, better for the world' for the majority of consumers

Markers of 'unnatural' animal products: consumer beliefs

Antibiotics and hormones

Unsuitable foods

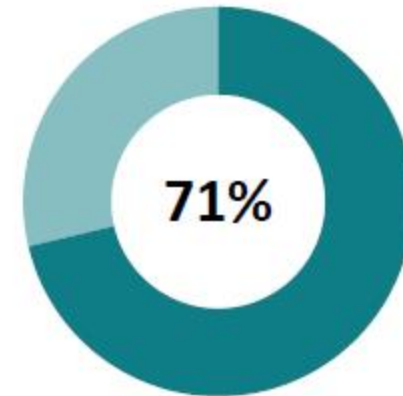
Confinement

Stress



When Making Purchasing Decisions, It Is
Important to Me That the Company
Avoids Inhumane Treatment of Animals

Top 2 Box — 4 or 5 (very important) on 5pt scale





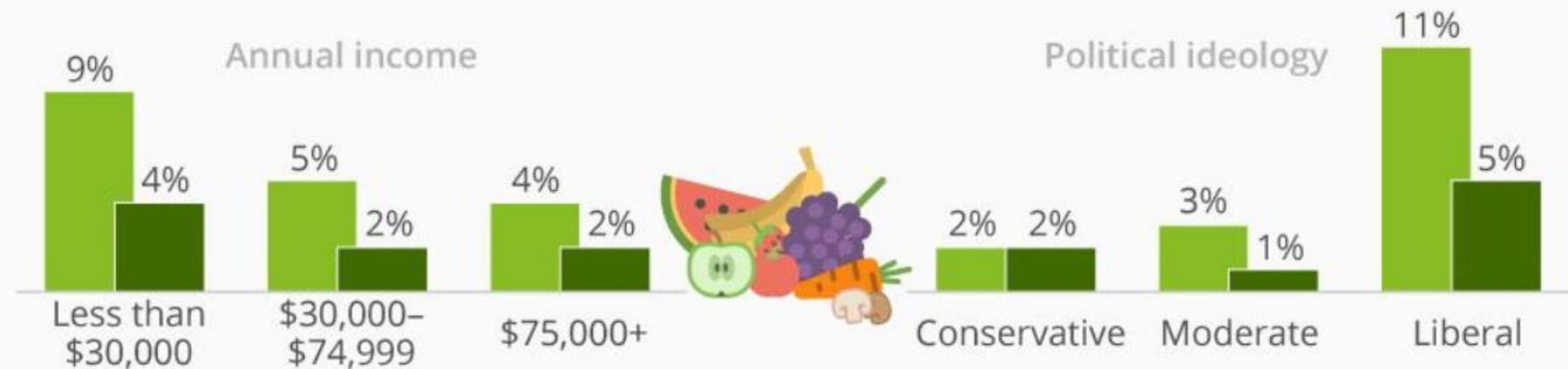
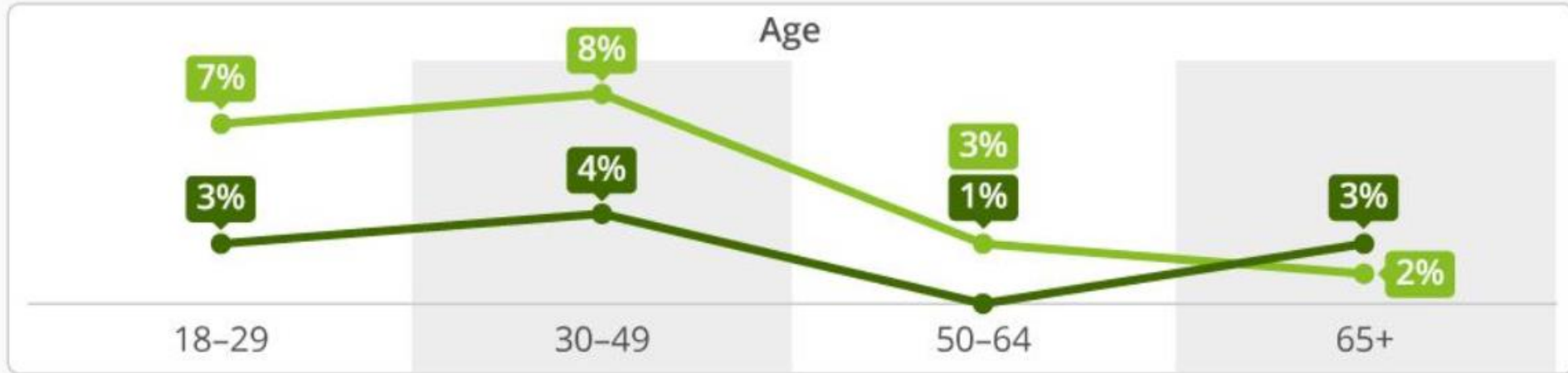
- Budget-minded consumers are weighing a variety of value factors for each purchase decision, and brands are making these individuals a priority

Value

Who Are America's Vegans & Vegetarians?

"In terms of eating preferences, do you consider yourself vegan, vegetarian?"

● Vegetarian ● Vegan





HELD RESPONSIBLE
TO ENSURE SAFE FOOD

- 1. Federal Regulatory Agencies**
- 2. Food Companies**
- 3. Farmers**
4. State Regulatory Agencies
5. Family
6. Grocery Stores
7. Family Doctor
8. Restaurants
9. Nutrition Advocacy Groups
10. University Scientists
11. Dietitians



TRUSTED
TO ENSURE SAFE FOOD

1. Family
2. Family Doctor
- 3. Farmers**
4. Dietitians
5. Nutrition Advocacy Groups
6. University Scientists
7. Grocery Stores
- 8. Federal Regulatory Agencies**
9. State Regulatory Agencies
10. Restaurants
- 11. Food Companies**

** Results are similar for ensuring healthy food* © 2018 THE CENTER FOR FOOD INTEGRITY




Top 3 Most Searched Food Topics



1. Ingredients in Food
2. Impact of Food on Health
3. Food Safety

FOOD-RELATED ISSUES

 Most Trusted

 Least Trusted

#1 Family Doctor

#2 Family

#3 Farmer

#14 Food Companies
& Manufacturers

#15 Dr. Oz

#16 Food Babe

Celebrity does **NOT** equal credibility.

*"If farm animals are treated decently and humanely,
I have no problem consuming meat milk and eggs."*



Only 25% believe U.S. meat is derived from humanely treated animals.

TRUST ALERT

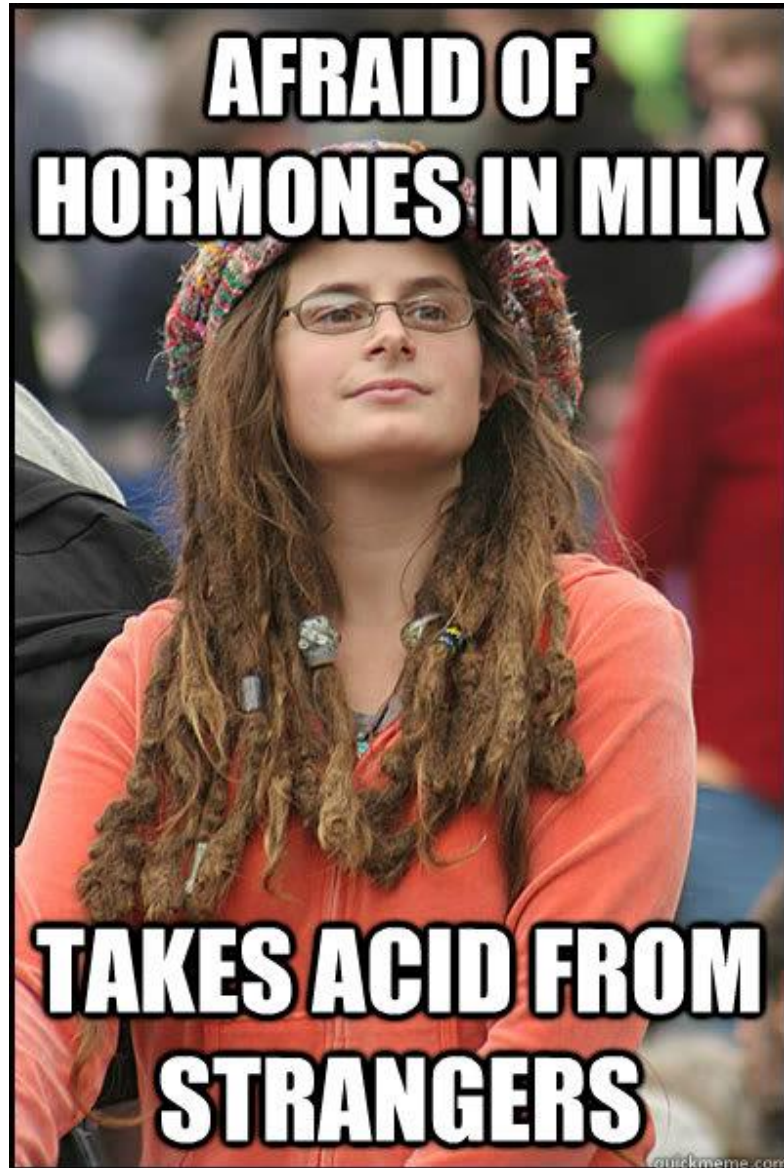
"U.S. farmers take good care of the environment."

Only **30% strongly agree**, compared to 42% the previous year.



80% moderately or strongly agree that they are more concerned about global warming and climate change than they were a year ago.

TRUST ALERT



... shared a post.
July 11

... is this true hahahahahaha maybe you should find this stupid ass lady and give her a tour of the cow crusher??



Animals are people, too.
July 9

Like Page

Cow crushers designed to crush cows to death is one horrid thing but this is a whole new level or cow torture! This device gives farmers a kick from LITERALLY crushes the poor animal whilst rotating it up, down, side to side in a rapid movement controlled by a big tractor machine, shaking it around in HORROR! This is NOT a theme park! This poor cow had no hope, the blood would have rushed to her head until she passed out and who knows what the "farmers" did to the poor animal after that. All I know is that she is dead now and is probably covered in urine.

I found this photo on google, which I thought was a G rates site. I WILL find the cowards who did this to poor Stephanie (my children named her that out of respect) and let it be known that my eldest son is in the group ANTIFA, so let that be a warning to anyone else who takes sexual pride in torturing poor animals.

Have a great day, Sam

Aubrey Storey shared a post.
October 7, 2016

This poor women, I feel sorry for your unborn child. And I hope you breast feed, not til then will you understand how relieving it is for our cows to be milked. You need to be educated, maybe you should explain in a live video why a fresh cow may or may not have blood in their milk. You have a way of keepin your sanity with educating these kinds of people.



Sonia Sae
October 5, 2016

Follow

This is "natural" cow's milk before it gets whitened. Breastfeed milk with BLOOD and PUS.

This is what they sell you. This is what you drink. The dairy industry doesn't care if cows are so exhausted and over exploited they have injuries and blood coming from their breasts being sucked 24/7. They suckle every single drop of milk that should be going to their babies while these babies are killed for veal.

A cow's lifespan is more than 20 years, but in the dairy industry, they stop being productive at 4-5 years. When they are so destroyed in the inside they can't continue. Then they are sent to the slaughterhouse where they have their throats slit and are cut into pieces.

There are alternatives: soy milk, oat milk, hemp milk, almond milk, rice milk, coconut

Shared by farmers: Let's stop being our own worst enemies!

THIS IS HER PUNISHMENT WHEN SHE WOULDN'T CONFORM TO THE "FARMERS" ABUSE! SHE DOESN'T DESERVE THIS!



Like Comment Share

791 views • Liked by newmexicomilkmaid and donschino
tillamook_dairy_farmer How dare that farmer try and help
cow. Let's make a video with sad music and make it look
abuse. God I get tired of ignorant activists who can't tell t
head from their bottom. #dumb #truthbomb #ignorance
#notanexcuse #askafarmer #dairydoneright #advocate

We need to stop educating consumers

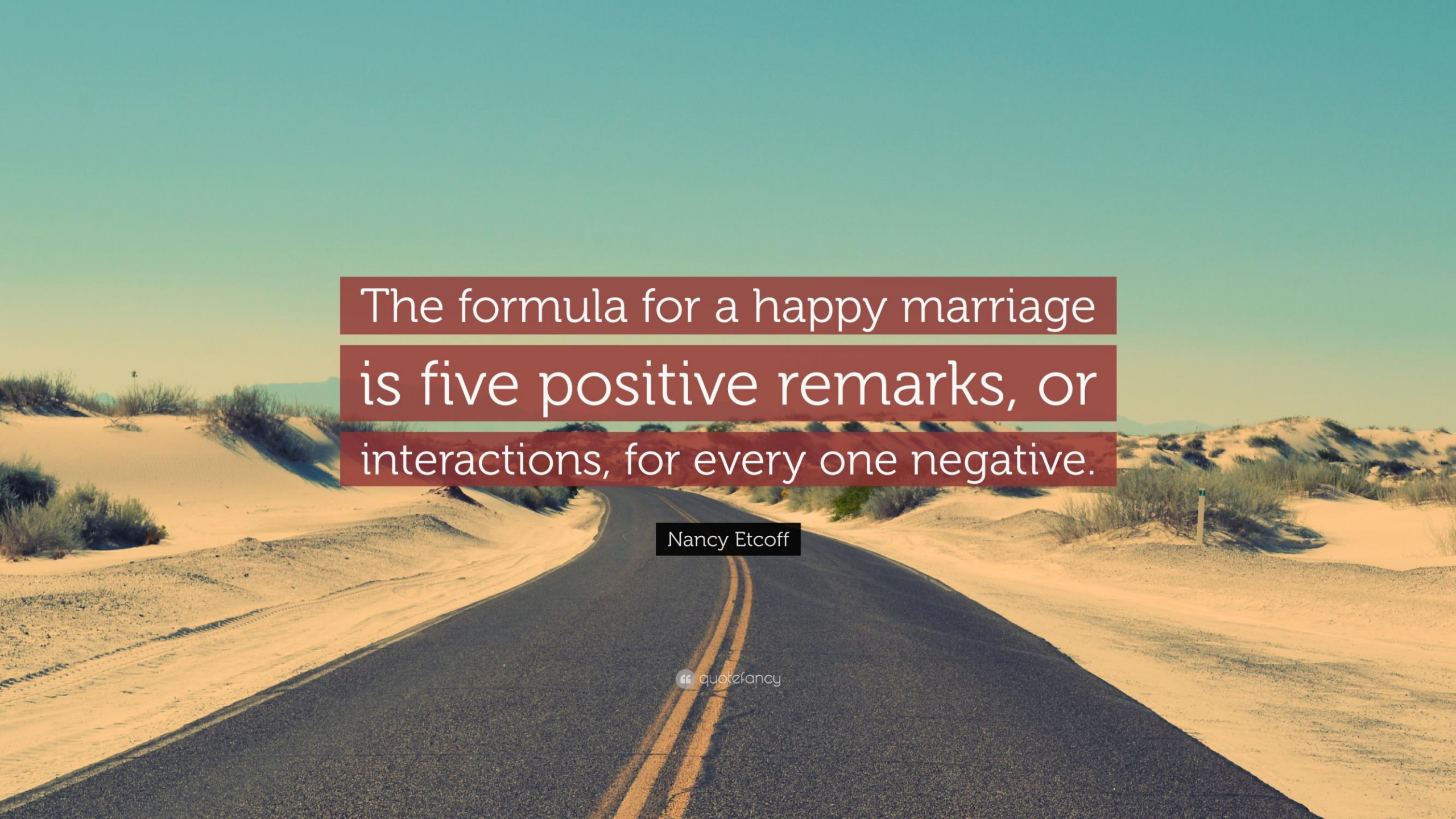
It's great to share facts, but more importantly, share yourself.

BY JESSICA PETERS, PENNSYLVANIA DAIRY FARMER



We need to stop preaching.

When I first started advocating online and people asked why I was doing it, I'd say, "To educate consumers." If you were to ask me the same question today, I'd reply, "To share my life with anyone who will listen."



The formula for a happy marriage
is five positive remarks, or
interactions, for every one negative.

Nancy Etcoff

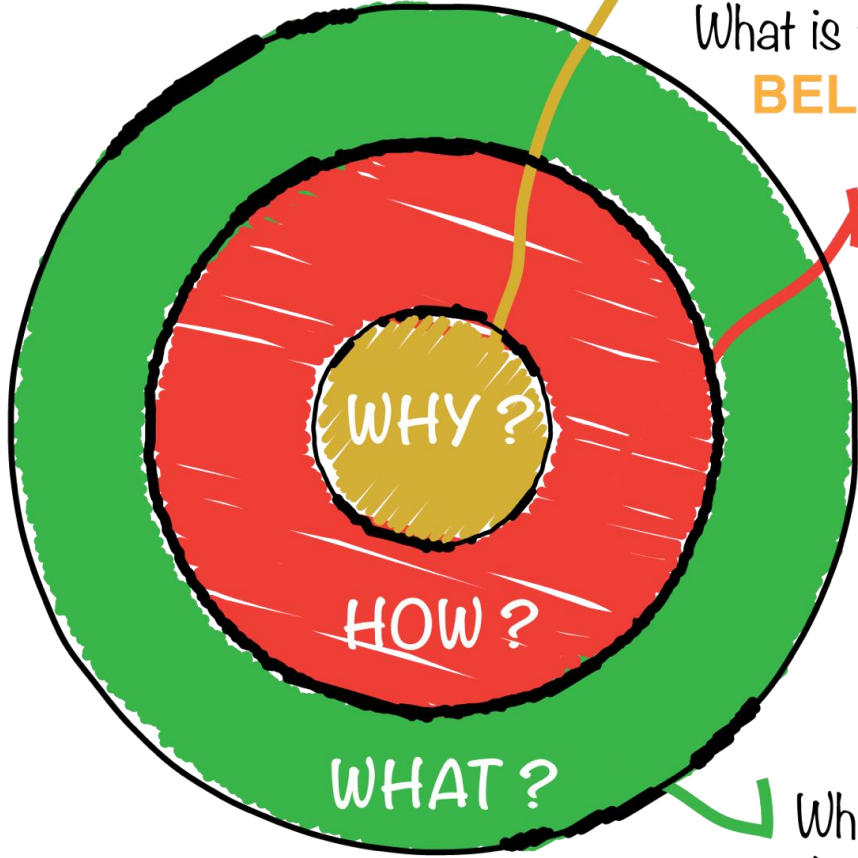
quote fancy

YOU CAN'T LIVE A
POSITIVE LIFE
WITH A
NEGATIVE MIND.



Be Consumer Focused. Not
Me Focused.

GOLDEN CIRCLE



Why: Do you do what you do?
What is the purpose?
BELIEFS

How: Do you do what you do?
PROCESS

What: do you do?
RESULTS



Me- Focused

We have 300 head. We crop about 2,000 acres. We are a 4th-generation farm. Our livelihood depends on producing milk we sell to our cooperative. I farm with my two sons. We just went through an expansion and are thinking about starting a corn maze next year.

Personalizing Messaging

- Look at your farm from a consumer's point-of-view. Think about how you are going to explain things in consumer-friendly terms.
 - Instead of using lots of numbers and statistics, use comparisons they can relate to (i.e., cows drink about a bathtub full of water every day; our cows produce XX gallons {not pounds} of milk per day)

WORDS MATTER.

WHAT YOU SAY,

WHEN YOU SAY IT

AND **HOW**

YOUR MESSAGE IS DELIVERED

DRIVES RESULTS

How to Handle Difficult Questions

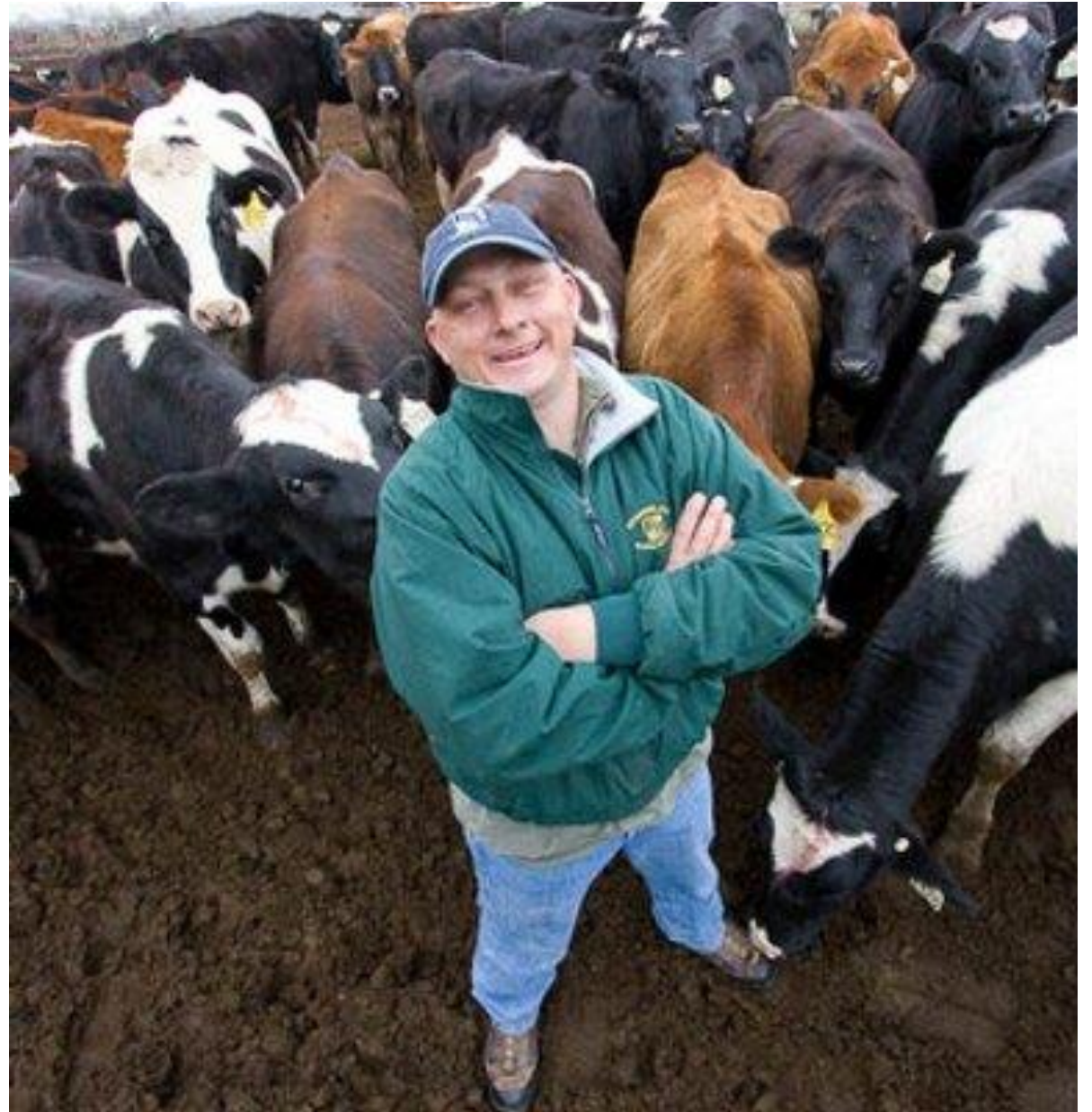
- Listen before you talk
- Gain clarity on the real question
- Find common ground
- Do not argue or become critical
- Keep your sense of humor
- Break the rhythm
- Keep your composure



Think about your audience ...and
customize your approach

Meet | where
people | they
are

Don't write off a relationship with someone just because they have different beliefs – *Ray Prock, Dairy Farmer*



Sometimes a Question is Just a Question!

- Do brown cows make chocolate milk?
- Can I pet your cow?
- Why do you take the babies away from the mother?
- Does it hurt the cows when you milk them?
- Why do you have so many cows?

The list goes on...





Questions Don't Mean..

- a consumer is dumb
- your neighbor is against your farm
- a mom is questioning how you raise food
- your friend assumes you hurt your cows

A question means the person is opening the doorway for a conversation.

Will you slam that door shut by being defensive? Or will you take the time to listen and engage?





So if you get asked “Do brown cows give chocolate milk?”

Would you say?

Boy that's a stupid question! You should be nicer to me and other farmers, because without us you wouldn't have any food and you'd starve to death!

Or...

That would be great, wouldn't it? Many people are used to seeing black-and-white cows, this girl is a (breed) and I like them (because reasons)





Earning the Right to Share Your Knowledge

We'll never be able to earn the right to share if we only defend. Take the time to listen and engage – then you'll be able to share far more effectively to help people know how deeply you care.

Step One: Listen

Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.”

— [Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*](#)

Remember:

- We have **two** ears and **one** mouth for a reason!
- Give your full attention
- Do not interrupt
- Look them in the eye

Step Two: Ask (or Engage)

- Conversation
 - The informal exchange of ideas by spoken words

Remember:

 - Answer a question with a question



Step Three: Share your Knowledge



- After you listen then you can share
- Remember:*
- Diffuses the situation
 - Leads to more communication
 - Look for commonalities
 - Value differences

“People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care”

— Theodore Roosevelt

I don't know ...



Admit when you don't know

eat FARM Love

HOME FARM LOVE GOOD EATS CONTACT ABOUT ME

Doctors Appointments vs. Vet Visits

September 12, 2016



Search... SEARCH

About Me



Hello! I am Renée, blogger at Eat Farm Love. But I am also a dairy farmer, farm wife, home cook, lover of food, graphic designer and mother of two. Welcome to our farm life and follow along on our journey as we farm, eat and cook, and raise our farm children.



Earlier this week as I waited in the doctor's office for one of my last prenatal appointments I began to realize just how nice Telegram, cow #120 has it! I may be feeling like I'm the size of the cow but it's nothing the same!

While I wait hours to see the doctor she gets visits at the farm from her doctor (aka our veterinarian) and



Emily McFerrin There's a huge difference between local dairy farmers and commercial dairy farmers. Commercial dairy farmers really don't give a damn. Small town dairy farmers do. I would bet money that the cows of a small town farmer are treated like pets.

Someone said something about taking their babies away from them. I can guarantee that if anyone who said that had a dog or cat that had babies they'd be getting rid of them, so just stop with the nonsense.

Like · Reply · 1w



Stacey Phillips 97% of all farms are family owned and operated. Activists and others spreading misinformation are



Lauren Siemers

June 9 at 9:40 PM

Today, I received a slew of private messages from animal rights activists telling me that dairy farmers lack morals, empathy, respect for life, and passion. That dairy farmers farm purely for profit, and have no love for the cattle that reside in their barns. And while I found it easy to get worked up and emotional over the untrue and unkind statements, it was okay.

It was okay because as a young woman in agriculture, I live this life because I love it. I need no thanks for the time spent in the barn, because like so many others, I am blessed to wake up and do what I love to do.

Sadly, because many will not listen to a farmer, hear their story, and find it within themselves to change their mindset on the people that produce their food (and would rather believe that a beverage made of crushed up almonds and water is a healthier, more environmentally friendly version of milk) an industry that I've grown up in faces daily scrutiny and slander. Worse yet, the hard working individuals that breed, raise, and care for the dairy cow are tormented with ridiculous and insensitive comments from animal rights activists, many of which have never been to a farm.

If my favorite girl in the barn could talk, I'm confident that she would tell a very different story about the modern day dairy farmer than a member of PETA would. She would tell you about the talented, hardworking, passionate team of people that care for her each day. She would tell you about the beautiful barn she lives in, with a fan on her when it gets hot. She would tell you about the love that she feels coming from her caretakers when they work with her, and she would tell you that above all else, she is a respected animal who has never felt abuse or negligence in any way.

For the sake of the dairy industry, go above, beyond, and out of your way to shed a positive light on dairy farming this June Dairy Month. God knows that we need it. ❤️

#JuneDairyMonth



Examples

TROLL MAKE INTERNET MAD.

TROLL LIKE ANGER.

TROLL WANT PEOPLE AS

MISERABLE AS TROLL.



HELP





FIND YOUR
TRIBE
LOVE THEM HARD



Establish	Establish your own platform for conversation
Share	Share your farm story
Talk about	Talk about animal care, environmental stewardship, and milk quality and safety
Welcome	Welcome questions and conversations from consumers
Build	Build trust



KEEP
CALM
AND
AGVOCATE
ON

- Be proud!
- Do the right thing
- Tell your story
- Engage in conversations
- Show them you care
- Be respectful
- Earn their trust
- Utilize teammates
- Don't feed the vegans!