

Toolkit: Get noisy for animals!



Read on for our tips on how to use your powerful voice to lobby your MP and change the lives of animals.



Learn more about the issues



Learn how to get a meeting with your representative and what to say



Learn other ways to get noisy at debates or in the media



**Together, we
CAN make a
difference!**

We must find better
ways to protect
animals.

Canada has a role to
play to halt this cruelty
and so do you!

World Animal Protection is an animal welfare non-profit organization with local reach and global influence. Our Canadian office is in Toronto and staff work alongside our country offices that are active in over 50 countries around the world.

For more than 50 years, World Animal Protection has been preventing animal cruelty and inspiring people to change animals' lives for the better. Today we're working on projects with local partners, governments, and businesses to find practical ways to prevent animal suffering worldwide. We also collaborate with the UN and other international bodies to make sure animals are on the global agenda because animal protection is a fundamental part of a sustainable future.

Every day, billions of animals experience unbearable suffering. At World Animal Protection, we move the world to protect animals because the life of every animal counts.

World Animal Protection is working hard to put the two of the biggest animal welfare problems of our time on the Canadian Government's agenda: ending intensive animal agriculture and the commercial wildlife trade.

There is no question that the way we raise animals for food in overcrowded, cruel, barren conditions contributes to the suffering of billions of animals worldwide. And millions of wild animals suffer at every stage of the wildlife trade whether they are captured from the wild or bred in cruel, crowded conditions.

This is our moment

COVID-19 has revealed the links between the commercial wildlife trade and deadly pandemics.

While scientists are still investigating the origins of COVID-19, it is widely believed that this deadly coronavirus was transmitted from bats to people through animals caught up in the wildlife trade.

This isn't the first major disease outbreak linked to the wildlife trade – SARS was transmitted to humans from palm civets sold at wildlife markets.

Recent UN reports revealed that the wildlife trade, intensive animal agriculture and rising unsustainable animal protein consumption are the top drivers of pandemic risk.



75% of new or emerging infectious diseases over the past decade originated from animals, mainly wildlife.





This is our moment

The 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report states, “without drastic changes in global land use, agriculture and human diets, efforts to reduce carbon emissions will fall short.” It describes plant-based diets as a major opportunity for mitigating and adapting to climate change and recommends reducing meat consumption.

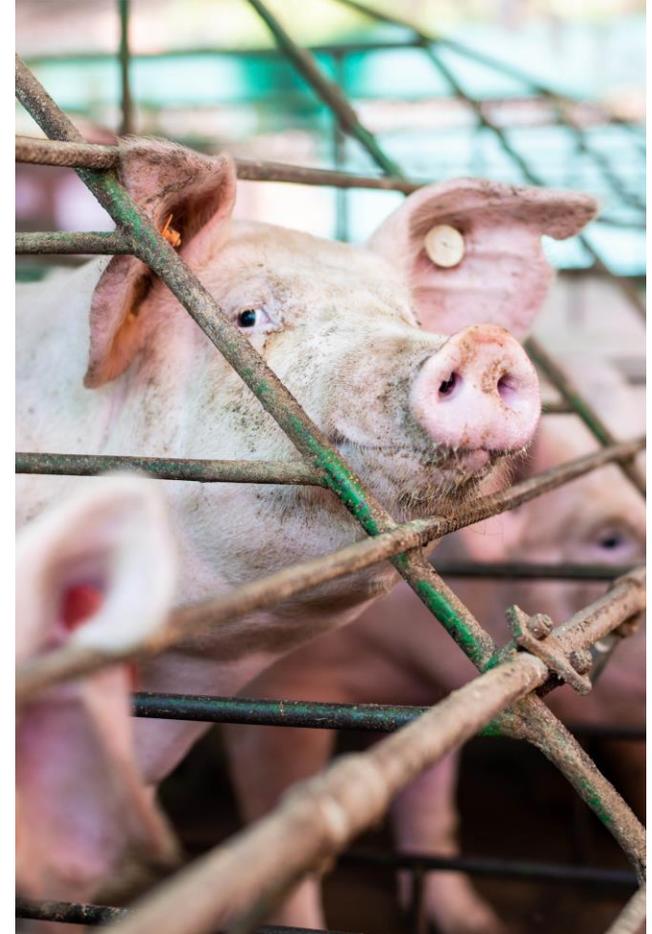
Our policy solutions to encourage a transition to more humane and sustainable agriculture will also help the Canadian government protect the health of Canadians, and meet its climate change and biodiversity targets, in line with its own food policy as laid out in the Canada Food Guide.

Improving animal welfare helps us achieve these other pressing Canadian and global priorities. And this message is resonating with Members of Parliament (MPs).

Over the last several months, World Animal Protection has been meeting with MPs and building cross-party support for our campaigns. Now’s the time for a commitment to action.



Approximately 75% of the world’s antibiotics are used for farm animals, and anti-microbial resistance (AMR) is a growing public health threat.



The next federal election is our opportunity for action



With a potential federal election looming, political parties are busy developing their election platforms.

This the best opportunity we have to secure commitments for animals. World Animal Protection has submitted proposals to four main national parties: Liberals, Conservatives, NDP and Greens for consideration.

We are asking parties to:

- support global initiatives to ban wildlife markets and curb the global and domestic commercial trade in wild animals, products and derivatives that could contribute to the spread of zoonotic diseases and biodiversity loss;
- phase out the prophylactic use of antibiotics in animal farming;
- support initiatives to increase consumption of plant-based foods; and
- promote initiatives to reduce animal protein consumption.



View and download our platform proposals [here](#) and send them to your Member of Parliament (MP).



Your support is critical



While World Animal Protection staff meet with many MPs on a regular basis, **MPs pay the most attention to those who live in their community.** These voices are even more influential in the lead up to an election.

This is also the period when parties are drafting their platforms. For whichever party wins the next election, this will be the most influential document in setting the agenda for the next Parliament.

Online petitions and letters are useful tools for moving governments and changing public opinion, but personalized letters, calls and meetings have much more influence on MPs. Your MP interprets the time you take on a personalized letter as a reflection of your level of interest and support for an issue. In fact, some MPs have told us they only read and respond to personalized letters.



What are we asking the individual MPs to do?

We need them to talk to the people who are drafting their party's platform, and advocate to include a commitment on the animal welfare issues detailed in our proposals.





Tips for achieving your MP's support



1. Finding your Member of Parliament

You can find out who your MP is and their contact info by your postal code here: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/members/en>



2. Requesting a meeting

Send an email or phone their constituency office. The constituency office is the one that deals with local residents' issues.

It is important that you identify yourself as a constituent. You may wish to provide your address as proof.

Briefly outline the issue, and politely say that you would appreciate a brief meeting or phone call to discuss why this is important. If you don't hear back within a week of sending in your request, you should call the constituency office and politely ask when you can expect to hear back.

Here is a sample meeting request:

Dear MP [Last Name]

I am a constituent and care deeply about protecting animals. I am also a supporter of World Animal Protection, an international animal welfare charity with an office in Canada. They have submitted proposals for consideration in the party's election platform that have support from MPs in your caucus. These proposals would not only reduce animal suffering but also help prevent future pandemic risk and biodiversity loss and help achieve Canada's climate change targets.

I would very much appreciate a brief meeting or phone call to discuss this with you. Please let me know when this could be arranged.

*Sincerely,
[Name, address, phone number]*

Tips for achieving your MP's support



3. You got a meeting! Now what?

Be succinct, polite and respectful of their time.

Let them know what you would like them to do and why, in the fewest words. Feel free to share our platform proposals with them and ask if they would support them and speak with their platform leads about including them in their party platform.

You may wish to prepare for the meeting with a few brief talking points with key issues outlined in the proposals.

Feel free to make it personal.

Explain why these issues matter to you. If you had a positive interaction with them in the past, remind them. They meet hundreds of people every month so hard to remember them all. If you are active in the community, let them know your role and the work you do. You may wish to let them know that you donate to World Animal Protection and other organizations.





Tips for achieving your MP's support



4. Don't let them forget! Follow-up

If you don't hear from your MP's staff within two weeks, politely follow-up by phone or email and let them know that you would still appreciate a response. If your MP agrees to express support for the platform proposals, follow-up in a couple of weeks to ask about the outcome.

Positive encouragement is always best. If they did something that you liked, let them know. Let us know if and how your MP responds by emailing campaigns@worldanimalprotection.ca. If your MP has questions, we would be happy to follow-up with them.



5. Gather more support in your community

If you can demonstrate that there is additional support for these animal welfare commitments from more people who live in your federal riding, this will have more influence on your MP.



6. You can continue being a voice for animals during the election

- by asking your local electoral candidates what they will do for animals if elected.
 - by attending and asking questions about federal animal welfare issues at local all-candidate debates.
 - by writing and submitting letters to the editor to national or local newspapers.
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Our Top Talking Points

Read on for more detailed information about the impacts of the global wildlife trade, pandemic prevention, biodiversity loss, the true costs of factory farming and why every Party needs to put animal protection on their agenda



Top talking points



Why these issues?

- **Scientists recognize the wildlife trade, intensive animal agriculture and unsustainable animal protein consumption as top drivers of pandemic risk and biodiversity loss.**
- **When animals are kept in crowded, unsanitary, and stressful conditions it is the ideal environment for spreading infectious diseases. These conditions exist throughout the wildlife trade and intensive animal agriculture.**
- **The health and welfare of animals, our environment and people are deeply interconnected. A holistic One Health, One Welfare approach can help prevent pandemics, antimicrobial resistance, climate change and biodiversity loss.**

Why Canada should curb the commercial wildlife trade

- **Canadian demand for wild animals and wild animal products fuels the global trade which contributes to disease and biodiversity loss.**
 - World Animal Protection’s research found that more than 1.8 million wild animals were imported into Canada between 2014-2019 and the vast majority (93%) were not subject to any permits or pathogen screening.
- **Scientists say the commercial wildlife trade is a top driver of pandemics and biodiversity loss.**
 - Reports by the UN Environment Program and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) recognize the wildlife trade as a top driver of pandemic risk and biodiversity loss.
 - It is widely acknowledged that wildlife markets, breeding farms, and the trade supplying them played a significant role in COVID-19 and 75% of new or emerging infectious diseases come from animals, mainly from wildlife (eg: Ebola, SARS, MERS, HIV/AIDS, Bird flu).



Top talking points



Why Canada should curb the commercial wildlife trade (cont'd)

- **We are concerned about the growing, *legal*, commercial trade in wild animals (and products made from them) for non-essential purposes, that is underregulated and unsustainable.**
 - It is immaterial how the animals are acquired (legal or illegal, captive bred or wild caught) or the purpose of the trade. Pathogens don't discriminate between animals that are acquired legally vs illegally.
 - We are concerned about the trade in non-essential wildlife use such as exotic pets, entertainment, trinkets, luxury meat – not subsistence community use.
 - **It is far cheaper to prevent pandemics than to respond to them.**
 - Research shows the costs of preventing zoonotic disease outbreaks by preventing deforestation and regulating the wildlife trade could cost as little as 2% of the economic costs of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - **Other countries are taking action to curb the commercial wildlife trade to prevent pandemics.**
 - The US and Australia have urged the closure of wildlife markets globally.
 - Germany, Netherlands, China and Italy (which holds the G20 Presidency) are taking important steps to curb the domestic trade in wild animals and wild animal products.
 - **75% of Canadians support a permanent ban on wild animal markets and 70% support stronger laws to reduce the trade in wild animals in Canada**
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Top talking points



Why Canada should phase-out intensive animal agriculture systems

- **It is a primary contributor to climate change, antibiotic resistance, and the rise of noncommunicable diseases.**
 - The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommends a drastic reduction in animal protein consumption to meet climate change targets.
 - 78% of all antibiotics sold and distributed in Canada were for farm animals, giving rise to antimicrobial resistant superbugs.
 - Agricultural intensification is responsible for over 50% of infectious diseases from animals since 1940.
 - **Scientists are concerned about the increasing antibiotic resistance arising from overuse and misuse in farming.**
 - Antibiotics are routinely given to healthy animals to prevent illness (these are called prophylactic or preventative antibiotics).
 - The UN and World Health Organization (WHO) consider antibiotic resistant bacteria ("superbugs") one of the biggest global health concerns of this century
 - Currently, 700,000 people die annually due to antibiotic resistance. By 2050, that number is estimate to be 10,000,000.
 - **Other countries have banned the prophylactic use of antibiotics in farming.**
 - The EU is banning prophylactic antibiotics in farming in 2022
 - Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland and The Netherlands have already banned the prophylactic use of antibiotics in farming.
 - **Poor welfare conditions and overuse of antibiotics go hand-in-hand.**
 - Farmers often apply antibiotics not merely to treat infections, but to help prevent infections that are facilitated by over-crowding the animals in tight spaces. Ending the prophylactic use of antibiotics will necessitate keeping animals in better.
 - The federal government should join with other countries in the world that are phasing out the over-use of antibiotics in agriculture.
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Top talking points



Why Canada should phase-out intensive animal agriculture systems (cont'd)

- **The high demand for animal products is fueling the impacts of animal agriculture on public health and the environment**
 - Meat and dairy do not provide nutrition in an efficient or sustainable way. While meat and dairy provide just 18% of calories and 37% of protein, they use 83% of farmland and produce 60% of agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Meat and dairy has a far greater impact on climate change than plant-based protein.
 - The federal government should implement the objectives set out in the new Canada Food Guide by encouraging Canadians to eat more plant-based proteins.
 - **Canadians support government action on this issue.**
 - 89% of Canadians believe the overuse of antibiotics in farm animals is wrong.
 - 82% believe antibiotics should only be used to treat sick animals.
 - 88% believe governments should increase farm animal welfare laws.
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