

Make no mistake about the goal of HSUS

MATT Kellogg learned something important a few months ago when he appeared on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" with HSUS head Wayne Pacelle.

The guy is powerful. He's willing to talk louder and longer and fancier than anyone else. He doesn't let the facts get in the way of his agenda. He's a vegan, and he wants you to be one, too.

Pacelle would've learned a few things, too, had he actually listened to Kellogg, who just happens to raise hogs for a living near Oswego. Kellogg farms with his dad, John, named a *Prairie Farmer* Master Farmer in 1984. Located near Chicago, their 1,500-sow farrowing operation has been visited by major news outlets and dozens of foreign dignitaries over the years, all wanting a look at modern pork production done right.

Fine print

Pacelle is the head of the Humane Society of the United States. HSUS is absolutely not affiliated in any way with your county Humane Society, but if you happen to think it is and care to send money their way, they sure aren't going to correct you. HSUS hides behind the banner of saving kittens and closing puppy mills, keeping chickens out of cages and sows out of crates. But it has a bigger goal: ending animal agriculture.

Don't look for it on the HSUS Web



My Generation
By HOLLY SPANGLER

site, at least not on the front page. Instead you'll read impassioned pleas to end dog fighting, regulate the number of hours animals can be hauled and end force-feeding of geese. These causes seem well and good. But the devil's in the details. In the fine print, you'll see HSUS' vision is to "focus our efforts on the protection of all creatures — not just companion animals, but farm animals and wildlife, both here and overseas." Protection. That means they don't want farm animals to die. That's a problem for those of us in animal agriculture.

Further, HSUS says its "work to encourage more enlightened social behavior toward animals to reform public policy and corporate practices has the potential to touch the lives of tens of millions of animals." Folks, they're not kidding about that.

Between 2006 and 2008, Pacelle and HSUS worked for the passage of more than 225 state laws relating to animal welfare. Following HSUS pressure, Maine became the sixth state to ban gestation crates. The *Los Angeles Times* reported last year, "Pacelle has retooled a venerable organization seen as a mild-man-

nered protector of dogs and cats into an aggressive interest group flexing muscle in state legislatures and courtrooms."

'But they seem OK.'

HSUS' bid for credibility is working remarkably well. Simply by arriving as head of HSUS in 2004, Pacelle gave the farm animal welfare movement "a sheen of respectability," wrote *The New York Times* in 2007. Most recently, they've pulled radio personality Rush Limbaugh into their ranks. Limbaugh recorded a handful of public service announcements on behalf of HSUS this spring, talking about being kind to our pets and ending dog fighting.

It's a mighty switch in gears for someone from the conservative movement to align himself with a radical animal rights organization. Either Limbaugh is ignorant as to HSUS' real agenda, or he's against meat eating, too. It's disingenuous to pick and choose issues within HSUS; in lending his voice to two pet issues, he's advancing the entire organization. Every ounce of credibility offered to HSUS edges it closer to the mainstream.

Bits of truth

When Matt Kellogg appeared on Oprah with Pacelle early last fall, it was to talk about California's Proposition 2. That proposition passed in November, outlawing sow gestation crates, egg-laying hen battery cages and veal crates. It was backed by HSUS and appeared on

the ballot as the question, "Shall certain farm animals be allowed, for the majority of every day, to fully extend their limbs or wings, lie down, stand up and turn around?" Well, really, who wouldn't vote for that?

And that is how HSUS works. Tell people just enough to get what you want. Don't tell them Proposition 2 will shut down the California egg industry, and instead their eggs will come from Mexico where even the most shallow food safety standards are unenforceable. Go on Oprah and raise millions of dollars talking about puppy mills, and then use that money to fight animal ag.

In some ways, it may have been easier to deal with PETA back in the days when they showed up at the state fair and staged all sorts of inane, wacky PR events. You never knew what they were going to do, but at least everyone knew what they stood for and that they had no credibility. HSUS succeeds by sharing as little of the truth as possible. You and I need to do our jobs as agriculturalists and share as much of that truth as we possibly can.

■ Comments? E-mail hspangler@farmprogress.com.

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By WILLIE VOGT

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Recently, the site has added a more comprehensive list of price information, including a wide range of contracts for key crops traded on more than the Chicago Board of Trade. From currencies to energy futures, you can find contract trade information on the site.

An overnight view

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