

## Eating for a Better World

A smarter diet benefits animals—and our health



Sarah (at right)

**A pig. A hen. A bull.** Just three among the nearly 10 billion land animals who suffer each year on U.S. factory farms. All were nameless “production units” bound for slaughter—until they escaped, and came into their own.

The pig was headed to her death in a two-level truck crammed with several hundred animals. Fresh from several months of “finishing,” when young pigs are packed in pens and fed as much as they



Scarlett

can eat, she weighed 220 pounds, stocky and thick-legged. A tattoo over her rib cage identified her as one of more than 1,000 animals raised on an Ohio factory farm, the offspring of a sow kept tightly confined in a gestation crate—a mother the pig had known only during the few weeks she was allowed to nurse.

The young pig’s existence might have ended as an entry on a company ledger. Except that she tumbled out of the truck and onto the pavement. When volunteers from the Happy Trails Farm Animal Sanctuary came to her aid, she got a name, Scarlett, along with the recognition that she was more than bacon.

Adopted by former Happy Trails employee Olivia Schlosser-Hogue, Scarlett became a mother to three smaller rescued pigs. And when the neighbor’s 3-year-old boy visited, she watched over him too, making sure he was all right if he fell. Every morning, she has a special greeting for Schlosser-Hogue and her husband, pushing her nose close to their faces and making a loud huffing sound pigs reserve for individuals above them in the social hierarchy. In winter, she lies in the straw, waiting for people to join her there. “There’s something really calming about her,” says Schlosser-Hogue. “She has always been the sweetest pig ever.”

### The High-Flying Hen

The hen’s chance came as she listened to the panicked uproar of 80,000 birds housed five to a cage in a California warehouse.

At one end of the building, workers were ripping hens from cages to send them to slaughter; the property on which the farm operated was being sold. Torn from the wire mesh, some lost wings and some feet. At the other end of the building, rescuers from a nearby farm animal sanctuary were gently lifting 2,000 chickens from their cages. The 1½-year-old hen, who was past peak egg production and would normally have been killed for low-grade meat, fell among the fortunates.

Named Sarah, she was placed in a flock of 50 rescued birds at Animal Place sanctuary. For the first time, she could revel in sunshine and grass. After living in a cramped cage, it took Sarah a few moments to realize she could walk. Then, “she would stand up and fluff up her feathers and run as fast as she could and take to the air,” recalls education manager Marji Beach. “She got the other birds doing it.”

When her atrophied muscles recovered, Sarah roosted on the top perch. Now 9 years old, Sarah is a happy, healthy bird.

## The Ebullient Bull

The bull made his break when a semi hauling 34 cattle on an Indiana interstate slammed into another truck and burst into flames. Fifteen surviving cattle were rounded up. But the bull, though severely burned, refused to be recaptured. The 2-year-old Holstein led police and others on a 12-hour chase before being taken to the local animal shelter.

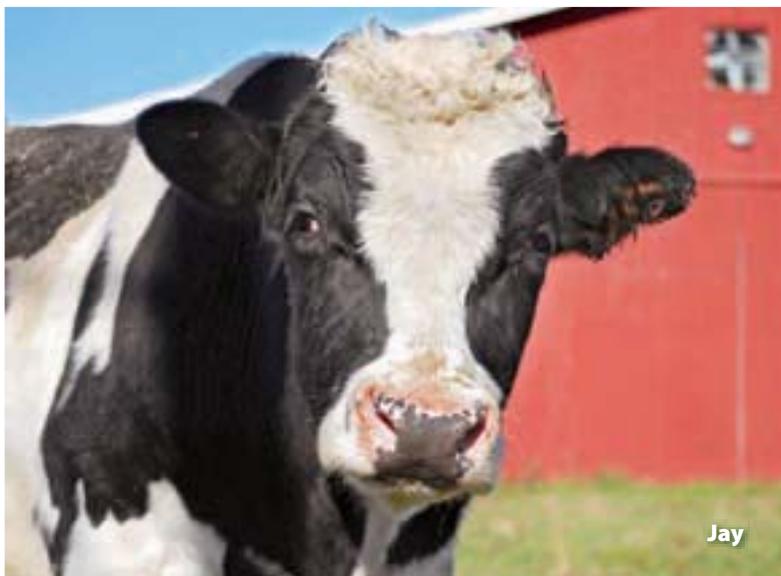
Jay ended up at Farm Sanctuary in New York. When he arrived, staff removed his rope and halter. He wasn't yet fully recovered, but he could move about in his spacious stall and touch noses with other cattle.

“Giving him that freedom really sealed the deal,” says Farm Sanctuary's Susie Coston. “He's blossomed. He licks your leg in greeting. We call him and he comes. We don't even have to corral him.”

Before, the bull was kept penned indoors. Now he runs about, kicking up his legs.

“You look into any farm and there are thousands of animals,” says Coston. “But if you pull any one of those animals out, they are who they are.”

— Karen E. Lange



## Flex Appeal

Food writer embraces creative diet strategy

**The acclaimed author** of *How to Cook Everything*, Mark Bittman was suddenly being told to cut back on the “everything.”

“Look,” he remembers his doctor telling him, “you're overweight, your cholesterol's higher than it used to be, your blood sugar's higher than it used to be, you have sleep apnea, you have a couple other problems. You should probably become a vegan.”

Bittman resisted.

“Well, figure something out,” his doctor added. “Figure something out in that direction.”

And so Bittman devised an approach he called Vegan Before 6: avoiding meat and other animal products until dinnertime each day.

Fortunately, he had plenty of recipes to draw on. Concerned about the environmental impacts of mass meat production, and sensing shifting diets in the general public, the *New York Times* columnist had already written *How to Cook Everything Vegetarian*.

And for nearly five years now, his own flexitarian routine has stuck.

“The first thing is ... eliminate the processed food, eliminate the fast food, eliminate the junk,” says Bittman, 61, who lost 30 pounds and resumed running marathons.

“But the second thing is just to remember that any time that you choose an unprocessed plant over anything else, you're moving in the right direction. And whether that's once a day or twice a day or five times a day, that's the direction to move in.”

— Michael Sharp



## Spreading the Health

**Dense, technical, and notoriously dry,** medical research studies aren't popular reading for most of us. But for Dr. Michael Greger, a graduate of Tufts University School of Medicine and HSUS director of public health and animal agriculture, the medical libraries at Harvard and the National Institutes of Health make him feel "like a kid in a candy store."

Greger spends his workdays researching factory farming's impacts on public health. In his leisure time, the self-described "research geek" scours the world's scholarly literature on clinical nutrition research. His ultimate goal: to share the best science-based advice with the masses.

Greger's enthusiasm for the subject matter is infectious. In game show-style presentations where he shares his findings, he has the audience laughing, groaning, and gasping at the answers to questions on antioxidants, cholesterol, and bowel movements. He brings the same energy and irreverent humor to his DVD series and the more than 300 short videos he recorded for the recently launched *nutritionfacts.org*. In this interview with associate editor Arna Cohen, Greger discusses his fascination with food facts.

### What inspired you to go into medicine?

I think the spark for kids to want to be a doctor is seeing a grandparent get sick or die, but for me it was my grandma getting better. She had multiple coronary artery bypass grafts. The medical profession just sent her home to die, confined to a wheelchair at age 65. She heard about the Pritikin Center. Nathan Pritikin was one of the early lifestyle medical pioneers who started using a plant-based diet to reverse heart disease. When she came out, she was walking 10 miles a day. She lived another

31 years—no drugs, no surgery—thanks to the power of lifestyle changes.

### So now you focus on nutrition and education.

I didn't adopt a vegetarian diet until 1990 with the publication of Dr. Dean Ornish's work, which proved that you could indeed reverse heart disease. We've had that cure for 20 years now, but every year since then, hundreds of thousands of Americans have died from heart disease—totally unnecessary deaths. What induced me to drop my

clinical practice and do medicine on a broader scale is this realization that we really need to reach people by the thousands and millions.

### Do you read all 13,000 studies that come out?

I look at the titles and abstracts of 13,000, and I end up downloading about 3,000 every year that I actually read. Out of the 3,000, I come up with 365 videos.

If there were nothing new in nutrition, life would be boring. We're reversing heart disease with the same vegetarian diet that's preventing heart disease. What can we do for some of these other diseases? Ornish is trying to reverse cancer now with a plant-based diet, and he's getting some remarkable results. It's this very fluid, exciting field; that's why I have to stay on top of it.

### What's the wackiest study you've ever come across?

"Effect of an Orally Ingested Mugwort and Mushroom Extract Mixture on Urine Odor from Aged Mice." What! Who cares?

### Research clearly shows plant-based diets can prevent and even reverse chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. What's your advice for someone who hates vegetables?

It would be the same advice for sneaking vegetables into our children's diet. Blend spinach into a spaghetti sauce—you won't even know it's there. For a diet to be sustainable, you have to enjoy it. It's all about leaning into it. It's not about perfection. That's why I love this flexitarian thing, like Meatless Mondays. You "healthify" things you love. You like meat chili—try bean chili. The next step is exploring things you've never tried.

➔ **TO READ MORE from Greger, order his *Latest in Clinical Nutrition* DVDs, and watch a video exploring the Meatless Mondays concept, visit [humanesociety.org/meatfree](http://humanesociety.org/meatfree).**



## Ready to incorporate more animal-friendly dishes into your diet?

The HSUS's *Guide to Meat-Free Meals*—previewed on the preceding pages—covers everything from flexitarian eating to vegan desserts, with sample meal plans, dining out tips, nutritional advice, and inspirational stories from people who have reduced or eliminated the meat in their diets. Learn

how humane, healthy, and eco-friendly go hand-in-hand, and try out some novel recipes—like this creamy corn chowder, pictured on the cover, by world-famous chef Tal Ronnen. To order or download a copy, go to [humanesociety.org/meatfree](http://humanesociety.org/meatfree).

*Bon appétit!*

## Corn Chowder SERVES 6

### INGREDIENTS

Sea salt

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 cups diced Vidalia onions

2 large carrots, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice

1 celery stalk, cut into ¼-inch dice

1 red bell pepper, deribbed and cut into ¼-inch dice

1 dried chipotle pepper

5 cups faux chicken stock

1½ cups thick cashew cream (see recipe on right)

2 large Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice

2 fresh thyme sprigs

Kernels from 6 ears of corn, plus 2 ears roasted or grilled corn

Freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons minced chives

½ cup diced tomato

1. Place a large stockpot over medium heat. Sprinkle the bottom with a pinch of salt and heat for 1 minute. Add the oil and heat for 30 seconds, being careful not to let it smoke.

2. Add onions, carrots, celery, bell pepper, and chipotle pepper. Sauté for 10 minutes, stirring often. Add stock, potatoes, and thyme; bring to boil, reduce heat, and simmer until potatoes are tender, 15 to 20 minutes.

3. With the back of a spoon, smash some of the potatoes against the side of the pot and stir. Add raw corn and cashew cream, season with salt and pepper to taste, and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove chipotle pepper and thyme sprigs. Garnish with chives, tomato, and roasted corn kernels.

### Cashew Cream YIELDS 2¼ CUPS

1. Rinse 2 cups whole raw cashews (not pieces) thoroughly under cold water.
2. Put cashews in a bowl and add cold water to cover them. Cover the bowl and refrigerate overnight.
3. Drain cashews and rinse under cold water.
4. Place nuts in blender with enough fresh cold water to just cover them. Blend on high for several minutes until very smooth.

↑ FOR MORE RECIPES, visit [humanesociety.org/recipes](http://humanesociety.org/recipes).

Excerpted from *The Conscious Cook* by Tal Ronnen, compliments of William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.





**After her elderly terrier died,** Jill Abramson wasn't sure she would ever share her life with another dog. But while she was recovering from a near-fatal accident, Abramson's husband decided a golden retriever puppy was the tonic she needed. In *The Puppy Diaries: Raising a Dog Named Scout*, the best-selling author and *New York Times* executive editor chronicles the ensuing challenges, from infiltrating dog park cliques to creating no-chew zones throughout her home. In this edited interview with The HSUS's Frank Loftus, Abramson describes how her muse has enriched her life.

### You began writing about Scout in a *NYTimes.com* blog?

We had just gotten Scout. I was pretty sleep-deprived at that point, and I just began regaling my colleagues with both the foibles and fun of having a puppy, and making observations about what about it reminded me of new motherhood. The more I talked, the more my colleagues felt that I would be the perfect writer to inaugurate the pet coverage column.

### How did readers respond?

The first column that I wrote zoomed up our most-emailed list. When we invited readers to share pictures of their dogs, so many people flooded our website with pictures that our website briefly crashed. I got so much input from readers, and I loved hearing their stories because it made me feel part of a real community, not only of dog lovers but of responsible pet owners.

### Scout was a lot of work; what were the benefits?

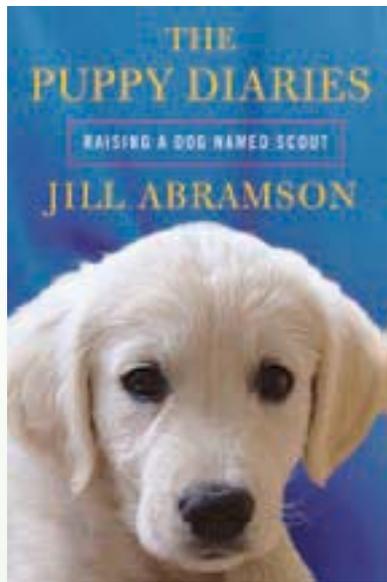
She can snap me out of any small funk. I think everyone who has a dog and who works knows the immensely gratifying and loving experience of being greeted at the door as if it's your first entrance in weeks. Our world, especially on the weekends, can revolve around Scout. But that's been tremendously healthy for us because that usually means that we head to a state park or the beach and take a lot of brisk walks with her.

### How would you advise someone who wants to get a puppy?

I would encourage them but also caution them to not ever get a puppy or any pet impulsively. Those dogs sometimes end up in a shelter because people are not really equipped for all the care they need to provide. It's a serious job having a new puppy. It's exhilarating, but it's also definitely exhausting.

### What do you hope readers gain from *The Puppy Diaries*?

The book is kind of a memoir, but it also has some good advice about training and feeding and all the things you have to make choices about when you have a new puppy. So I hope it's both helpful and enjoyable.



**In 2005, a Staten Island** office manager began driving to Pennsylvania's farm country on weekends to rescue spent breeding dogs from the area's numerous puppy mills. The award-winning documentary *Madonna of the Mills* follows Laura Flynn-Amato in her quest to save thousands of dogs from lives of caged misery and death at the hands of commercial breeders who have no more use for them. Though the subject matter is harsh, there are plenty of bright spots as the film takes viewers through the rescue, rehabilitation, and placement into loving homes of four rescued dogs. In poignant closing scenes, singer Patti Page transforms her 1950s hit "(How Much Is That) Doggie in the Window" to a more humane rendition: "Do You See That Doggie in the Shelter."



***Madonna of the Mills* premiered on HBO in August 2011; order the DVD at [madonnaofthemills.com](http://madonnaofthemills.com).**



**It's not just about Big Gulps, Slurpees, and 24-hour service at 7-Eleven.** In 2008, the nationwide chain responded to growing consumer demand by offering vegan meals in several Philadelphia stores. The move caught the eye of The HSUS's Josh Balk, who worked with the convenience store giant to expand the innovative concept. Now select stores in New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts have added meat-free instant entrées with great success: pad thai, vegetable lo mein, tikka masala, and artichoke spinach noodles among them. And HSUS Facebook fans couldn't be more pleased, says Balk, with only one complaint. "People who don't live in those cities are saying, 'Please bring it to where I live!'"