FOOD EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

2019

YEAR IN REVIEW

FOOD EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

FOODISPOWER.ORG

INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends,

Much has happened since our last annual report—both in the world and here at Food Empowerment Project (F.E.P.). Regardless—or perhaps because of—major world events, F.E.P. continues to connect the various systems of oppression and expose how they affect human and non-human animals. It is thanks to supporters like you that we are able to accomplish this vital work. This year, nearly 82% of our budget went toward F.E.P.'s programs.

The following pages detail some of the most important achievements of 2019 with an emphasis on the four main areas of F.E.P.'s work: veganism, farm worker rights, access to healthy food, and chocolate. Several highlights from the year include the growth of our Shame on Safeway campaign, a groundbreaking meeting at Senator Kamala Harris' office, and three annual events that continue to grow in popularity: our school supply drive for the children of farm workers, our Fight for the Ocean Day, and our Vallejo Healthy Food Fest. We also updated our website, foodispower.org, and expanded our Chocolate List app to allow users to post directly to social media. And, of course, you could find us at many conferences, vegfests, and panels, as well as on podcasts and news media.

It was a very busy year for us, and we could never do so much without your support.

With much appreciation,

Photo Credit: In Her Image Photography

lauren Ornelas
Founder/President

Sharanya Krishna Prasad
Executive Director

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

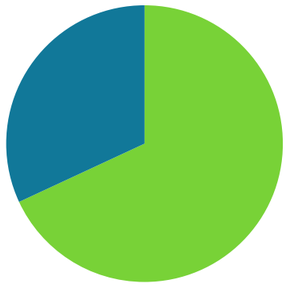
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

EXPENSES

PROGRAMS	$224,433.84
G&A	$24,289.26
FUNDRAISING	$26,056.35
TOTAL	$274,779.45

REVENUE

DONATIONS	$217,871.00
GRANTS	$100,000.00
TOTAL	$317,871.00



Note: As a small non-profit organization, it's crucial for us to maintain financial stability and to ensure that our work can continue to thrive in the years ahead; therefore, we allocate money for the upcoming year's budget and beyond.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2019

VEGANISM

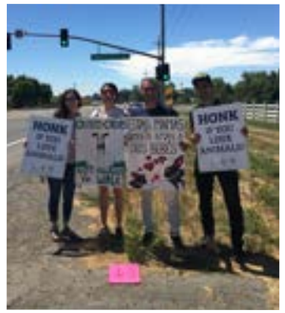
VALLEJO HEALTHY FOOD FEST

On September 22, F.E.P. hosted its fourth-annual Vallejo Healthy Food Fest. It was not only an opportunity for Vallejo residents to experience free vegan food and cooking demonstrations—it was a celebration of the city's vibrant culture, with music, folkloric dance performances, and local vendors representing the area's remarkable diversity. More than 300 people attended this free event, which featured delicious foods from Chef Chew and Chef Evangelina and Vegan Cooking Mom teaching attendees how to make delicious pancit—a Filipino favorite.

Check out this short video from the event, which was created by Tom Cohen of Animal Welfare Media: http://bit.ly/VHFF2019.

ANTI-DAIRY CAMPAIGN

In 2019, we continued our effort to increase awareness about how animals are raised and killed for food by doing outreach outside a dairy operation in Sonoma County, Calif., which the dairy industry often refers to as "happy cow" country. In addition to distributing leaflets to commuters to help them understand the inherent cruelty of dairy foods, we handed out free vegan ice cream on warm days. The public loved us, but dairy apologists resented our presence. Not only did the dairy farm turn their manure-laden sprinkler system on us, but one employee drove over our ice cream cooler with a farm vehicle. On another occasion, the driver of a large watering truck soaked us as he drove by. These dairy defenders realize they can't challenge our arguments against animal cruelty, so they resort to physically attacking us.



VEGAN MEXICAN FOOD & VEGAN FILIPINO FOOD

Speaking of Filipino cuisine, 2019 saw the launch of another exciting resource for vegans: veganfilipinofood.com! Like F.E.P.'s veganmexicanfood.com, this new site was inspired by our commitment to provide vegan resources that reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of our community. The site offers delicious vegan recipes familiar to those in the Filipinx community and helps us honor food traditions without the suffering of non-human animals. We hope that Filipinx folks will enjoy trying vegan versions of their favorite traditional foods and that those new to Filipinx foods will delight in expanding their culinary repertoires. We also placed ads for our Vegan Mexican Food recipe booklet in Spanish-language newspapers, including *El Observador.*

FIGHT FOR THE OCEAN

This was a remarkable year for our annual Fight for the Ocean effort, which was created to help make a difference for our ocean and for those who call it home. Fifteen locations participated in cleanups on August 30 (in honor of Dr. Sylvia Earle's birthday), doubling what we accomplished in 2018! Ocean advocates as far away as Auckland, New Zealand, spent part of their day picking up trash. We also printed colorful, wallet-sized cards that you can leave at restaurants, co-ops, and grocery stores; these cards explain how litter and fishing gear affect marine life. It's all part of our work to help others see the connection between their love of "seafood" and the destruction of the seas.

Visit http://bit.ly/fight4theocean to order some free cards or to learn more about F.E.P.'s Fight for the Ocean effort.

FARM WORKER RIGHTS

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

One of the efforts that is closest to our hearts, our annual school supply drive for the children of farm workers, continues to be a unique way to thank hundreds of families for the hard work they do planting, growing, and harvesting the fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes we all eat. These essential workers are victims of an unjust system that benefits corporations over workers, often leaving parents and grandparents unable to afford school supplies for their children or grandchildren. One way we give back is through our annual school supply drive for the children of farm workers. In 2019, we distributed 653 backpacks—nearly 100 more than the year before—filled with pencils, paper, and other necessities to farm worker children in the Central Valley, Watsonville, Salinas, and Sonoma County, California. We are so grateful to our many supporters who donate funds and school supplies every year for this important project.

ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

SHAME ON SAFEWAY (S.O.S.) CAMPAIGN

Believe it or not, some grocery store companies put greed before a community's well-being by placing restrictive deeds on former properties when they move, meaning another grocery store is not allowed to move into the building—sometimes for 20 years or more. Safeway/Albertsons is one such company, and F.E.P. continues to bring attention to this practice, which blocks access to healthy foods and puts an even greater burden on communities of color and low-income communities. We were in Napa for Safeway's Open Concert series in September, and we showed up for their World Championship Pumpkin Weigh-Off in Half Moon Bay, handing out leaflets and educating the public at both events. Our sincere thanks to everyone who wrote to Safeway/Albertsons CEO Vivek Sankaran on December 10, International Human Rights Day, to tell him that you do not approve of his company's unjust policy. And thanks to everyone who spread the word about our Shame on Safeway campaign and petition, which now has more than 40,000 signatures!

You can add your name here: bit.ly/ShameOnSafeway.

SEN. KAMALA HARRIS'S OFFICE READS OUR REPORTS

Whenever a community invites F.E.P. to comprehensively survey its access to healthy foods, we follow up with a detailed report of our findings, and we always send these reports to federal and local legislators. We were very encouraged when, for the first time, a federal legislator contacted us about our reports. In January of 2019, we had a productive discussion with an aide at the office of Senator Kamala Harris regarding the restrictive deeds some grocery stores (like Safeway/Albertsons) put on former properties. We also discussed other areas of our food justice work. We take access to healthy food very seriously, and we were thrilled to have our expertise on food access issues valued by policymakers. It's an important step to changing the status quo!

SHAME ON SAFEWAY

CHOCOLATE

CHOCOLATE NEWS

Since we were founded in 2007, F.E.P. has been raising awareness about child labor and slavery in the chocolate industry. Among our efforts is the longstanding assertion that the certification process for "fair trade" chocolate is not working—a position that is controversial to say the least. A June 3 article in *The Washington Post* titled "Cocoa's Child Laborers," however, stated what we have been saying all along: "[The chocolate industry's] most prominent effort—buying cocoa that has been 'certified' for ethical business practices by third-party groups such as Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance, has been weakened by a lack of rigorous enforcement of child labor rules." The shocking lack of progress and transparency in the chocolate industry is why F.E.P. works so hard to hold corporations accountable. Indeed, F.E.P.'s founder, lauren Ornelas, was retained this year as an expert witness to give evidence in a chocolate-related class action case in Canada! And in an effort to make our Chocolate List app even more user-friendly, we've updated it so that you can post directly to social media. It's a great way to let others know about the vegan chocolates we do and do not recommend!

The Washington Post

COCOA'S CHILD LABORERS

MARS, NESTLÉ AND HERSHEY PLEDGED NEARLY TWO DECADES AGO TO STOP USING COCOA HARVESTED BY CHILDREN. YET MUCH OF THE CHOCOLATE YOU BUY STILL STARTS WITH CHILD LABOR.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

RECOGNITION: LAUREN RECEIVES WOODSTOCK WARRIOR AWARD

In November, Woodstock Farm Sanctuary honored our founder, lauren Ornelas, with a Woodstock Warrior Award at their ThanksLiving gala in High Falls, New York. The award was in recognition of lauren's many years of work on behalf of farmed animals.

RECOGNITION: AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY HONORS LAUREN ORNELAS

lauren has started many groups over the years, but one of her first was an animal rights organization in Austin, Texas, where she attended St. Edward's University. In fact, that group—Action for Animals Austin—is still going strong under new leadership. As a way to recognize lauren for her advocacy, the Austin Public Library hung a banner with her picture as part of their exhibit highlighting activists who have impacted the city.

ACTIVITIES, EVENTS, AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Throughout the year, we connected with supporters coast to coast!

TABLING & SPEAKING EVENTS:

Lewis and Clark 8th Annual Symposium (Portland, OR)

Empowering Women of Color Conference: Rooted & Rising (Berkeley, CA)

Indy VegFest (Indiana)

Santa Cruz Vegfest (California)

Great Seattle Vegan Chocolate Meltdown (Washington)

Vegan Tech Panel (San Francisco, CA)

Cinco de Mayo Celebration (Seattle, WA)

Oakland VegFest (California)

Cherry City VegFest (Salem, OR)

VegFest Calgary (Alberta, Canada)

Animal Rights National Conference (Washington, DC)

Sonoma County VegFest (Santa Rosa, CA)

Petaluma Progressive Festival (California)

Vallejo Healthy Food Fest (California)

El Dia de los Muertos (Petaluma, CA)

Syracuse VegFest (New York)

SF World VegFest (San Francisco, CA)

The Kerulos Center's Living One Webinar (online)

Ceiba College Prep's 2nd Annual Health Fair (Watsonville, CA)

Woodstock Sanctuary's ThanksLiving (New York)

Food for Thought Summit (online)

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS

Our online social media presence grew by 10% on Facebook, 11% on Twitter, and 33% on Instagram in 2019 when compared to the previous year.

ONLINE ANALYTICS

Our website had an increase of 11.5% in bandwidth consumed & a 117% increase in pages viewed in 2019 when compared to the previous year.

+117% INCREASE IN PAGE VIEWS

+11.5% INCREASE IN BANDWIDTH

MEDIA

F.E.P.'s work was featured this year in the following articles and interviews.

Social, animal, and environmental justice through food choices with lauren Ornelas of Food Empowerment Project

The Air & Earth podcast interviewed lauren Ornelas to learn the story behind F.E.P.'s founding, why we do the work we do, lauren's advice to new activists, and much more.
Date: April 2019 | **Source:** Air & Earth (https://bit.ly/3b0wC70)

Everything You Need to Know About Food Deserts

Redbook magazine used our information on lack of access to healthy foods in their piece on food deserts.
Date: April 2019 | **Source:** Redbook (https://bit.ly/2EDo3TB)

The Fight Against Climate Change Needs To Address Environmental Racism

MTV News quoted lauren Ornelas in their piece on climate change and environmental racism.
Date: April 2019 | **Source:** MTV News (https://on.mtv.com/34L7MHf)

As Plant-Based Eating Continues to Take off, Mexican Cuisine Returns to Its Vegan Roots

Well + Good used our work on Vegan Mexican Food and access to healthy foods for their piece on vegan Mexican cuisine.
Date: July 2019 | **Source:** Well + Good (https://bit.ly/2QuTNNp)

The bittersweet truth behind World Chocolate Day

The National News used our information on Child Labor and Slavery in the Chocolate Industry in their article for World Chocolate Day.
Date: July 2019 | **Source:** The National News (https://bit.ly/36zo2dm)

New Recipe Collection Brings Rich Filipino Food Traditions to the Vegan World

Vegan Magazine did a wonderful write-up about our new VeganFilipinoFood.com website.
Date: October 2019 | **Source:** Vegan Magazine (https://bit.ly/3f6Iuq3)

No, You Don't Have to Apologize for Being Vegan

Bustle sought lauren Ornelas's expertise for their piece offering advice to vegans of color.
Date: October 2019 | **Source:** Bustle (https://bit.ly/3gBbFAG)

Syracuse Vegfest 2019 featured vendors offering plant-based fare

The Daily Orange interviewed lauren Ornelas and F.E.P.'s Programs and Marketing Manager Erika Galera about our farm worker advocacy as part of their coverage of the Syracuse VegFest.
Date: October 2019 | **Source:** The Daily Orange (https://bit.ly/3b1QGpm)

Eat Your Ethics

An in-depth interview with lauren Ornelas on veganism, capitalism, colonization, access to healthy foods, the importance of supporting Black and Brown communities, the changing nature of the animal rights movement, and much more.
Date: November 2019 | **Source:** T.O.F.U. Magazine (https://bit.ly/32LRDib)

FOOD EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

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HELP US IN THE FIGHT TO BRING FOOD JUSTICE TO ALL

By recognizing and making informed food choices, we can prevent injustices against people, the environment, and animals. Your support will help Food Empowerment Project get one step closer to a more just and sustainable world.

DONATE TODAY

foodispower.org/donate/

We appreciate your support of our programs.
We are a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and all donations are tax deductible.

Keep up with all the latest F.E.P. news on our social media platforms!

/foodempowermentproject @foodispower @foodempowermentproject bit.ly/FEPYouTube