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## Berkeley Becomes First U.S. City to Commit to Exclusively Plant-Based Food Purchases

*Advocates behind initiative also working towards similar legislation in Chicago, San Francisco, and more*

[\(RESOLUTION HERE\)](#)



*Direct Action Everywhere activists outside Berkeley City Hall Tuesday evening (Credit: Direct Action Everywhere)*

JULY 28, 2021, BERKELEY, CA - Berkeley City Council passed a resolution late Tuesday to switch 50% of city expenditures on meat, dairy, eggs and all other animal-based foods to plant-based by 2024, and commit to a long-term goal of 100% plant-based. The first-of-its-kind policy is the result of a 16-month advocacy effort by the Berkeley-based grassroots animal rights network [Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#), which included community outreach, demonstrations, and assisting with research on implementation of the measure.

DxE was joined in the effort by a coalition of groups, including Extinction Rebellion Oakland, The Animal Save Movement, East Bay Animal PAC, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, and The Suitcase Clinic.

DxE cites the negative impacts of animal agriculture -- describing the industry as a [leading source of greenhouse gas emissions](#) and deforestation. The industry also cruelly confines billions of animals in facilities that are [breeding grounds for pandemic disease](#).

During Tuesday's Berkeley City Council meeting, Mayor Jesse Arreguín said of the measure, "This is a very important step for the city to take as part of our broader climate efforts, as well as building on our long tradition promoting the humane treatment of animals here in the city of Berkeley."

It's just the latest step in Berkeley's trailblazing environmentalist history.

- The city was among the first to have a recycling program, [taking the lead](#) in US environmental organizing around 1970.
- Berkeley became the first U.S. city to formally commit to [divestment from fossil fuel companies](#) in 2013.
- In 2019, it became the [first to ban natural gas appliances](#) in new homes.
- Then this past April, it became the first US city to [request that its public employees' retirement system](#) divest from animal agriculture companies.

With DxE activists undertaking similar divestment efforts in [Chicago](#) and elsewhere -- and a [partial shift to plant-based food purchasing](#) already passed in San Francisco last year -- the group hopes to spur a ripple effect of similar legislation across the nation and globally. As a further proof-of-concept, DxE touts its advocacy efforts which led to city-wide bans on the sale of fur in [Berkeley](#) (2017) and [San Francisco](#) (2018), as well as a [statewide ban](#) signed by California Governor Gavin Newsom in 2019.

"The public is rising up and taking action against the destructiveness of animal agriculture," said Almira Tanner, a Berkeley resident and DxE's Lead Organizer. "We're hopeful this historic step can spur a wave of legislation to protect all life on Earth while we still have time."

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Investigators with [Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#) enter farms, slaughterhouses, and other agricultural facilities to document abuses and rescue sick and injured animals. DxE's investigatory work has been featured in [The New York Times](#), [ABC Nightline](#), and a [mass pig killing Glenn Greenwald exposé](#). DxE activists have been [subjected to FBI raids](#) and [felony prosecutions](#) for their investigative work. The group also led the 2019 grassroots effort to [ban fur products in California](#). Visit DxE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and at [directactioneverywhere.com](#).

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