



Contact: Cassie King, (510) 507-8075, cassie@directactioneverywhere.com

Berkeley Becomes First U.S. City to Ban Factory Farms

The animal rights and environmental activists who got the measure on the ballot hope it will spread to other cities



Supporters of Measure DD rally at Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park in Berkeley on September 22, 2024. (Credit: Michelle Del Cueto)

[MEASURE TEXT](#)

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(Credit: Direct Action Everywhere)

November 12, 2024, Berkeley, CA - The City of Berkeley has [released the latest results](#) for the vote on [Measure DD](#), a citizen-initiated ballot measure to ban factory farms, formally called Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), in Berkeley. With over half the expected votes counted, the first-of-its-kind measure currently has 60% of the vote, and will go into effect

immediately once the official vote is certified, making Berkeley the first city in the nation to ban factory farms. Overwhelming scientific evidence shows that factory farms harm [animals](#), [the environment](#), [workers](#), and [public health](#).

A coalition of groups, including the Berkeley-based animal rights network [Direct Action Everywhere](#) (DxE) and [Compassionate Bay](#), led the effort to gather the signatures to get this CAFO ban on the ballot.

Berkeley's only CAFO, the Golden Gate Fields (GGF) horse racing facility, officially closed in June 2024 following years of protests over horse deaths. The stables at GGF [confined up to 1,400 horses at a time](#), and [thousands of young horses died](#) there over the years. DxE says the adoption of Measure DD ensures that no facility like it opens in Berkeley in the future, and it helps pave the way for other municipalities, the state and even the country to transition away from intensive animal operations.

Measure DD is the latest step in Berkeley's history of leading the way on social justice issues, including protecting animals and the environment.

- Berkeley became the first U.S. city to formally commit to [divestment from fossil fuel companies](#) in 2013.
- In 2017, [Berkeley became the second U.S. city to ban fur sales](#), which helped lead to California banning fur sales and fur farming in 2019.
- In 2019, Berkeley passed a "right to rescue" [resolution](#) supporting nonviolent activists facing prosecution for rescuing animals from factory farms.
- In 2021, Berkeley passed a [resolution](#) committing to divest city funds from animal agriculture.

"Residents of Berkeley have just taken a historic stand for animals and the planet we all share," said Almira Tanner, a Berkeley resident and Lead Organizer of Direct Action Everywhere. "The extreme heat, hurricanes, and flooding we're seeing today will only get worse if we don't act quickly to stop the biggest contributors to climate change, including animal agriculture. We hope this factory farm ban will inspire similar legislation across the country."

"I've investigated factory farms across the country and seen the horrors that these animals suffer up close," said Paul Darwin Picklesimer, the proponent of Measure DD and a factory farm investigator with DxE. "I'm proud of my city for speaking up against this system of injustice. The people of Berkeley have done the right thing. Hopefully other areas follow suit as they have, historically."

"Factory farms create the perfect breeding ground for new animal diseases to spread and mutate, increasing the likelihood that these diseases will spread to the human population. We're currently witnessing this with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, which is ravaging poultry and dairy farms in California and has already infected humans who work with these animals," said Berkeley resident Brian K. Nagai, MD, who also holds a master's degree in public health from UC Berkeley.

Measure DD was supported by the Green Party of Alameda County, Wellstone Club, East Bay Animal PAC, and other local organizations.

The full text of Measure DD can be read [here](#).

Election results are available on Alameda County's website at:
<https://alamedacountyca.gov/rovresults/252/>

[Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#) is an international network of animal rights activists working to achieve revolutionary social and political change for animals in one generation. DxE investigators enter farms, slaughterhouses, and other facilities to document abuses, and to rescue sick and injured animals. DxE's investigatory work has been featured in [The New York Times](#), [WIRED](#), and a [brutal mass pig killing exposé](#). DxE activists have been [subjected to FBI raids](#) and [felony prosecutions](#) for their investigative work. In 2022, DxE activists won the first [acquittal](#) in an open rescue case. DxE led the 2019 grassroots effort to [ban fur products in California](#). Visit DxE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and at directactioneverywhere.com.

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