Rancher Advocacy Program

Summit Program

JULY 24, 2021
10 AM EST • 12PM CST • 1PM EST
The Rancher Advocacy Program (RAP) Summit is a convergence of trailblazers interested in creating solutions for farmers and ranchers. RAP has spent the last six years supporting ranchers and their families as they come to grips with the devastating reality of animal agriculture; concurrently, we have been developing key relationships with organizations, entrepreneurs, academics, and investors keen on transitioning animal farms away from traditional methods. How can farmers thrive on their land without using animals? We will have critical conversations with expert panelists and farmers in transition from all over the world—and together we will push the needle ever further in the direction of solving this question. The imminent concerns around food, the economy, the animals, and climate will take all of us working together to reframe the vegan proposition and bring farmers and ranchers to the marketplace of ideas.

**WHAT IS THE RAP SUMMIT?**

Jane Velez-Mitchell, JaneUnChained.com

Jane Velez-Mitchell is a television and social media journalist and author. She is the founder of #JaneUnChained, a digital news network for animal rights and the vegan lifestyle which uses more than 60 volunteer contributors from around the world to showcase vegan festivals, animal rights conferences, organizations, vegan restaurants and cooking. The videos originate on the Velez-Mitchell’s Facebook page, which has 16.5 million video views in 2017. The network is a 501(c)(3) non profit based in Marina del Rey, California.

Reneé King-Sonnen, Rowdy Girl Sanctuary

Reneé King-Sonnen is the Founder and President of Rowdy Girl Sanctuary, a 501(c)(3) non-profit with pioneering initiatives: The Rancher Advocacy Program supports cattle ranchers and animal farmers wanting out of animal agribusiness. Families Choosing Compassion is a compassionate alternative to Future Farmers of America and 4-H. Since going vegan on October 31, 2014 Reneé has converted Rowdy Girl Sanctuary from a cattle ranch to a 501c3 sanctuary for over 120 animals—the first documented beef cattle ranch vegan conversion in history. The RAP Summit was created to further her mission of transitioning animal farms.

Laurence Candy, Northwood Farm

Laurence Candy of Northwood Farm is a farmer who is transitioning from dairy/beef production to veganic cereal production.

“\[I\ remember I had some beef animals to sell, but I couldn’t do it; this was probably the first time I had to fight with my conscience.\]"
PANELISTS

Rebecca Knowles, Farmers For Stock-Free Farming
Rebecca is the founding director of FFSFF, a Scottish-based grassroots movement established to support farmers in transitioning out of environmentally burdensome livestock agriculture and discover a fairer, greener livelihood that boosts rural economies, mitigates climate change, improves food security, supports biodiversity, enhances human health, AND saves animal lives.

Dominick Thompson, Eat What Elephants Eat
Dominick is a leader in the vegan and health and wellness community. He is the founder of multiple start-ups including Eat What Elephants Eat, a successful food and nutrition company making plant-based eating accessible and affordable for everyone worldwide. Dominick has received global recognition and has been featured numerous news stories.

Helen Atthowe, Woodleaf Farm
Helen has been described as “Goddess of the soil,” a pioneer of organic agriculture methods that intentionally takes all animal aspects out of the picture. Veganic gardening (also called “stock free” agriculture) restores ancient with recent farming wisdom. Helen of Woodleaf Farm is going to help dispel a thousand myths about agriculture (well, at least a few!)

Judie Mancuso, Social Compassion in Legislation
Judie is founder, CEO & president of Social Compassion in Legislation. SCIL has spearheaded over 50 state bills – including 18 that have been signed into state law. She has also successfully led organized opposition against some of the world’s largest special interest groups to stop harmful and exploitative legislation that would negatively impact animals.

Nicole Rosmarino, Southern Plains Land Trust
Nicole Rosmarino, Ph.D. helped found the Southern Plains Land Trust and is currently its Executive Director, based in rural southeastern Colorado. Nicole received her Ph.D. in policy science/political science, and her academic focus was on biodiversity preservation. She has been actively involved in efforts to protect prairie wildlife since 1994.

Tiffany Washington, Dobbin-Kauv Garden Farm
Also known by her alter ego Nancy Farm Fancy, Tiffany operates the only black owned farm within Austin’s city limits. She is a descendant of Black Freedman Farmers, whose agricultural traditions have been depended upon since the inception of Austin. Tiffany is a food justice warrior, revitalizing her community with sustainable urban agricultural practices.

Gabriel Cousens, Tree of Life Foundation
Dr. Cousens is the director of the Tree of Life Rejuvenation Center and Tree of Life Foundation. Recognized worldwide as the leading medical authority on live-food nutrition and as a spiritual teacher, Dr. Cousens is a holistic physician, family therapist, international lecturer, medical researcher, acupuncturist, and the author of several books.

Dr. Sailesh Rao
Dr. Sailesh Rao is the Founder & Executive Director of Climate Healers, a non-profit dedicated towards healing the Earth’s climate. He authored “Carbon Dharma: The Occupation of Butterflies” and “Carbon Yoga: The Vegan Metamorphosis” and Co-Executive Produced The Human Experiment, Cowspiracy, What The Health, and The Compassion Project.
THE SECOND RAP SUMMIT ON FEBRUARY 6, 2021, WAS A HUGE SUCCESS WITH ATTENDEES FROM OVER 20 COUNTRIES

Over 400 people from all over the registered, and 22 countries were represented. RAP brought the following types of folks to the table: entrepreneurs, business leaders, vegan investors, filmmakers, authors, plant-based food companies, veganic farmers, permaculturists, academics, cell-based meat companies, animal and social justice activists, environmentalists, the media, animal rights lawyers, city and state officials, non-profits, cattle ranchers, and other animal farmers!

- A CONVERGENCE OF TRAILBLAZERS INTERESTED IN CREATING SOLUTIONS FOR FARMERS AND RANCHERS
- ORGANIZATIONS, ENTREPRENEURS, ACADEMICS, AND INVESTORS KEEN ON TRANSITIONING ANIMAL FARMS AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL METHODS
- CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS WITH EXPERTS AND FARMERS IN TRANSITION ADDRESSING CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT - RANCHERADVOCACY.ORG/SUMMIT
MILK PLANTS. HUG COWS.

World Changing Cheese & Butter Crafted From Plant Milk.

Animals are beings. Plants are food. The future is ours to savor.
What is RAP?
The Rancher Advocacy Program is a global resource that will accelerate farm transitions by bringing resources, academics, film makers, authors, attorneys, lobbyists, and other plant-based and manufacturing experts to the table. Together, we can transition the archaic traditions and culture of animal agriculture into a new normal that will look back on this generation and be proud of the difference we all made for the future.

A unique niche began to develop in the animal rights movement because of these conversations that led me to realize that I was more than an animal rights activist, I was also a Rancher Advocate.

The heartbeat of RAP is the connections I’ve made with ranchers and animal farmers. I’m able to reach that place deep inside where we have common ground. Where we:
• Love animals and kill them
• Love the land, and we destroy it too
• Love our families yet pass down generations of suffering through devastating animal agriculture.

RAP programming began after the Rowdy Girl story went viral on the CBS Evening News in 2016. Ranchers and their families consistently sought me out about their feelings regarding their cows, their traditions, other family members etc.

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VegFund empowers vegan activists worldwide by funding and supporting effective outreach activities that inspire people to choose and maintain a vegan lifestyle.

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How does RAP do it?

RAP is a conduit—a bridge that brings folks from all occupations together to create a network of relationships for buyers, end users and companies within the plant-based sector for potential partnership and coalition building.

We are building a scaffolding blueprint of innovation, ideas, business models, and solutions that is resulting in a new vision for the plant-based economy, farmers, their families, and the land we all love.

We are becoming a central Clearing House for Farm Transition technology and are committed to the evolution of animal agriculture.
The RAP Team

Our core team consists of Reneé King-Sonnen, Tommy Sonnen, Paul Magee Berry, Jane Velez-Mitchell, Jody Rasch, and Greg Litus. Together we consult regarding rancher transition, business planning, media relations, financial consulting, and veganic farm expertise. We also have a Rancher Coalition that consists of a multitude of professional volunteers that help with technology, research, clerical, social media, and other needs as RAP deems necessary to advance our mission and objectives.

“Ranchers and their families are the salt of the earth.”

“The vegan community needs to go to the Government and say, ‘we’ve got an agricultural system that is sustainable, is sequestering carbon, and it works; let’s run with this!’ If we’re going to eat differently it only makes sense to do it veganically. It’s not a niche, hippy system; veganics does tick all the boxes. The more I look into it, the more I learn; it does solve all the problems.”

- Laurence Candy

Dorset, Great Britain

Death informs our relationship to life. Between 2017 and 2019, Laurence Candy of Northwood Farm in Dorset experienced numerous catastrophic events. It began by the loss of almost the entire dairy herd to bovine tuberculosis. Life-threatening family illnesses followed, and then the tragic loss of his brother-in-law. Seeing his own father in ICU was devastating for Laurence; at that point, an internal shift occurred.

“I remember I had some beef animals to sell, but I couldn’t do it; this was probably the first time I had to fight with my conscience.”

The experience stayed with Laurence and became the starting point in his journey to stock-free farming. In January of 2021, Laurence contacted Farmers For Stock-Free Farming. Laurence Candy will certify Northwood Farm with the Biocyclic Vegan Standard on September 2, 2021. He will be the first BVS certified farmer in the UK.
“We were very impressed with the way that Reneé and Tommy came into our home and talked to us about the Rancher Advocacy Program. We had no intention of inviting them in, but once they were in the kitchen we had a candid conversation. That conversation led us to enroll in RAP where we are now on a path to save our small herd from slaughter, and to recreate the land of the Traylor heritage. We are enjoying our transition and learning so much.”

While in their kitchen Richard said, “I’m a hypocrite! I can’t be an environmentalist and be a cattle rancher. Y’all are walking the walk!”

- Richard and Cindy Traylor
Huntsville, Texas
Rowdy Girl Sanctuary is the evolution of and the very special story of two native Texans—one a multigenerational cattle rancher and former hunter and the other, his wife, an ex-rodeo lover and former leather cowboy boot collector.

In 2015, Reneé raised the money to transition her husband’s Texas beef cattle ranch to the first ever vegan farm animal sanctuary conversion. After watching countless vegan documentaries, her husband Tommy also went vegan and is now the number one contributor and supporter of Rowdy Girl Sanctuary, home to over 108 rescued farm animals.

The Rancher Advocacy Program (RAP) is Rowdy Girl’s primary initiative that resulted when farmer and rancher families began reaching out to consult with Reneé about the ethical difficulties they also faced when sending their animals to slaughter. The RAP initiative has grown into a quarterly Summit and is becoming known for having the global resources and networking capabilities to inform the space of farm transitions.

“Whether somebody’s transitioning in Spain, the U.K., California, Texas or Florida—wherever they’re at—we just want to be able to have the resources people need that they can tap into.”

- Reneé King-Sonnen
INFORMATION

Contact RENEE@ROWDYGIRLSANCTUARY.ORG to become a sponsor.
Or VISIT RANCHERADVOCACY.ORG/SUMMIT-SPONSOR