

Micio Mambo

A new boutique for the leather-free, cruelty-free and environmentally aware consumer

- ♥ shoes
- ♥ accessories
- ♥ jewelry
- ♥ skincare and much more

474 Santa Clara Ave.
Oakland, CA 94610
510.836.4246

(Across from the Grand Lake Theater)

miciomambo.com

Vegan Divine Gift Baskets

organic ♥ eco-friendly ♥ fair trade

“Exotic Luv” gift basket contains:

chocolate truffles,
a cinnamon soy candle,
rose petal soaps,
caramelized pecans,
chocolate
body butter
& more



Choose from
50+ themes

We use recycled packaging, natural raffia, reusable fabric bows, and 100% biodegradable cellophane

vegandivine.us ♥ 206-529-4406

Your premier source for Conscious Gift Giving

Taking the Initiative

A California ballot measure could end the three worst factory-farming abuses in the nation's top agricultural state. *By Mat Thomas*

IN NOVEMBER 2008, AS THE NATION ELECTS a new president, California voters may also choose to ban three of agribusiness' most controversial confinement systems—veal crates for calves, gestation crates for pregnant pigs, and battery cages for egg-laying hens—in their state by 2015. If the Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act makes it onto the ballot and wins more than 50 percent of the vote, it will set a new precedent for animal protection by improving the lives of more farmed animals than any voter initiative in US history, while making California the first state to outlaw battery cages.

Every year, factory farms in California confine nearly 20,000 breeding sows in two-foot-wide gestation crates that prevent them from even turning around during their four-month-long pregnancies. They also condemn approximately 19 million egg-laying hens for their entire lives to battery cages that provide less area for each chicken than an

8½-by-11-inch sheet of paper. Proponents of the initiative maintain that these standard agricultural practices are not only inhumane, but also out of step with the sentiments held by most Americans.

To prove this, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)—which, along with Farm Sanctuary, is leading the effort to put this proposition before the voters—conducted extensive public opinion polling before commencing with the campaign. **The organization's research found that about seven out of 10 California voters support banning veal crates, gestation crates, and battery cages in their state.** Paul Shapiro, senior director of HSUS' Factory Farming Campaign, believes the measure will pass because “The vast majority of Californians—vegan, vegetarian, or meat-eater—agree that giving animals raised for food enough room to turn around and extend their limbs is a very modest request. There's

sure to be a well-funded misinformation campaign from animal agribusiness, but voters are not going to be fooled, especially as they learn more about these abuses.”

California currently has no veal producers, but a number of farms in the state already produce cage-free eggs and raise breeding sows without gestation crates for the burgeoning niche market of “compassionate omnivores.” Hens raised in cageless conditions typically live entirely indoors, but have two to three times as much space per bird as their intensively confined counterparts, and can engage in natural behaviors that are denied to battery-cage

factory farming based on previous successes in other states. **Using the ballot initiative strategy, animal advocates banned gestation crates in Florida in 2002, and gestation and veal crates in Arizona in 2006.** Within months of the Arizona victory, the nation’s top pork producers announced they would phase out their use of gestation crates, and the American Veal Association advised its members to stop using veal crates. In addition, the Oregon legislature recently banned gestation crates in its state, and restaurant industry leaders—from fast food franchises like Burger King to gourmet standard-bearer Wolfgang Puck—are now also

Standard agricultural practices are not only inhumane, but also out of step with the sentiments held by most Americans.

chickens (like walking, spreading their wings, and laying their eggs in nests). Pork producers who eschew gestation crates generally use a group housing system for pregnant pigs, allowing them at least enough space to turn around and walk.

However, not every animal advocate is convinced that improving conditions for farmed animals is necessarily in their best long-term interests. Lee Hall, legal director for Friends of Animals and author of *Dining With Friends: The Art of North American Vegan Cuisine*, questions whether husbandry campaigns truly cultivate respect for animals or merely reinforce their status as commodities. “Across the planet, animal agribusiness is on the rise,” Hall says. “If not from vegetarian activists, where can global society find a coherent message? Steadfast support for the movement to opt out of animal agribusiness would cultivate and strengthen genuine respect for animals and the ecology.”

In contrast, Shapiro contends that, “Abolishing the worst factory-farming cruelties gains animals legal protections that they would not otherwise have and sets an important precedent. We know with certainty that billions of animals will be used for food production for some time to come, but we can reduce their suffering by banning the most intensive confinement practices.”

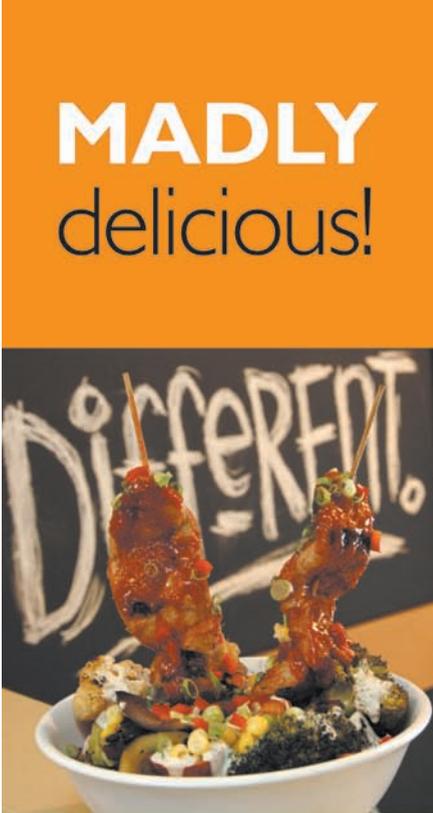
Californians for Humane Farms, the broad-based coalition behind the initiative, strategically chose the Golden State as the next front in the national battle against

moving away from crated pork, as well as eggs from chickens in battery cages.

Judging from the apparent aftershocks of the Florida and Arizona landslides, the repercussions of the Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act will probably be felt well beyond California if it passes. “These historic initiatives tend to have a tailwind effect,” observes Shapiro, “banning cruelty not only in that particular state, but also creating ripples throughout the nation and the industry.” There are 23 other states that allow citizens to put ballot initiatives before the voters, so it seems likely that more of these animal protection measures will be introduced, particularly if the California proposition scores.

And, of course, there is no guarantee that it will. Before the electorate gets to decide the matter, Californians for Humane Farms has to gather 650,000 signatures from registered California voters by late February to even get the initiative on the ballot. At press time, with just about three months to go before the submission deadline, they are well on their way toward reaching that goal with more than 50,000 petition signatures, but many more are needed. Those who wish to support the Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act by gathering signatures or otherwise volunteering for the campaign can sign up and learn more at HumaneCalifornia.org. **VN**

Mat Thomas pens *NewsBeet* in every edition of *VegNews*. Read more of his writing at animalrighter.org.



MADLY
delicious!

The MAD CowBoY

They're going crazy for it on the ranch!
Barbeque sauce-marinated "beefy" skewers,
grilled vegetables, baked potato, topped
with Ranch dressing and green onions.
A Texas favorite. YEEEEEEEEEEEE
HAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

NATIVE FOODS
CALIFORNIA VEGAN

| | |
|---|---|
| PALM SPRINGS 1775 E. PALM CANYON SMOKETREE VILLAGE 760.416.0070 | COSTA MESA 2937 BRISTOL ST. THE CAMP 714.751.2151 |
| PALM DESERT 73-890 EL PASEO 760.836.9396 | WESTWOOD, LA 1110 1/2 GAYLEY AVE. 310.209.1055 |

www.nativefoods.com