# New Roots Institute Strategic Plan FY2024

## Long-term Strategy

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<th>MISSION: Why do we exist?</th>
<th>To empower the next generation with knowledge and training to end factory farming.</th>
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| KEY PROBLEMS: What are we trying to solve? | 1. Animal protection organizations are confronted with a lack of well-trained and motivated people to hire.  
2. Most advocates do not recognize key principles of social change and are therefore limiting their potential impact.  
   a. Most organizations fail to focus on shifting the attitudes and behaviors of smaller, concentrated groups in smaller, concentrated communities, where change, faced with fewer countervailing social forces, can take hold and spread more easily to the broader population.  
   b. Most organizations focus either on changing individual attitudes or on structural interventions but do not coordinate them internally or with other organizations to maximize impact.  
3. Environmental and social justice organizations lack people who are effectively connecting their cause to factory farming.  
4. While plant-based eating and veganism are becoming more normalized, there are still major social challenges that hinder the shift, namely uncomplicated positive associations with animal-based foods and choice architecture that overwhelmingly favors animal over plant-based options. |
| CORE STRATEGY: How will we solve the key problems? | New Roots Institute builds capacity for the movement to end factory farming by (1) educating the general population of high school and college students, (2) recruiting and training the most motivated to promote structural changes in their communities, and (3) positioning them to advocate in mission-aligned and -adjacent organizations, governmental bodies, and corporate spaces. |
| VISION: Where will we be in five years? | What We Will Do by 2028:  
- New Roots Institute’s Leadership Program  
  o Provides support for thousands of well-trained fellows and alumni to normalize plant-based eating, increase social disapproval around supporting factory farms, and institute structural changes that shift consumer choice away from animal-based foods. |
● Provides animal advocacy organizations in the US and abroad with a vetted talent pool to source motivated and well-prepared entry-level workers.
● Guides some members to join mission-adjacent organizations to connect factory farming to environmental, social justice, and public health platforms.
● Guides some members to join or lobby governmental entities to advocate against factory farming and for plant-based and cultivated alternatives.

● **New Roots Institute Educational Outreach**
  ○ Educates over 100,000 students each year in high schools and colleges in at least 10 regions, raising awareness in school communities about the impacts of factory farming and shifting attitudes and behaviors towards plant-based and cultivated alternatives.
  ○ Recruits hundreds of high school and college students each year into our fellowships.
  ○ Fosters a fertile training ground in schools for our Leadership Program fellows to succeed in escalating social disapproval around animal-based products and shifting choice architecture toward plant-based options.

**State of the Movement by 2028:**

● Animal advocacy organizations are able to easily source from a strong, young applicant pool to more effectively work toward a world without factory farming.
● Despite a growing number of effective organizations, there are more highly talented and motivated individuals than positions in the movement, increasing the presence of anti-factory farming advocacy in corporate and governmental bodies as well as mission-adjacent work.
● Significant progress is being made in the attitudes and behaviors of school-based Gen Z and Gen Alpha social networks, including a shift toward plant-based foods and greater anti-speciesist awareness.
1. Educational Outreach teaches high school and college students the impacts of factory farming.
2. We recruit some of these students into the Leadership Program, where they gain a deeper understanding of the impacts as well as strategies to become successful advocates.
3. During the Leadership Program, fellows work in conjunction with our educational outreach program to increase disapproval around the consumption of animal products while increasing plant-based options—or even making them the default—at their schools and organizations.
4. As supporting factory farms becomes increasingly stigmatized and plant-based eating normalized in their schools, peer groups, and families, the ability of Leadership Program fellows and alumni to enact change strengthens, which continues to educate the community and feeds back into the loop.
5. Leadership Program alumni apply their advocacy outside of schools, creating attitudinal, behavioral, and systemic change in their other communities.
6. They are often members of other movements and organizations tied to social justice as well as environmental and public health. They bring awareness of the connection between factory farming and those causes. They also increase capacity for the movement by working at mission-aligned organizations.
7. They connect the impacts of factory farming to the values of their other communities.
8. This educates those communities (e.g. businesses, government, faith-communities) about the impacts of factory farming.
The education allows for institutional changes that shift behaviors, norms, and systems in those communities, which continues to mobilize the culture in opposition to factory farming.

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<th>SUCCESS INDICATORS:</th>
<th>Objective 1: Shift social norms in high schools and colleges to increase disapproval of factory farming.</th>
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<td>a. <strong>Grow our hubs into densely connected, thriving advocacy ecosystems.</strong></td>
<td>a. <strong>Continuousy evolve our programming and amplify our impact</strong></td>
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<td>i. Gather and maintain up-to-date contact information for 100% fellows and 80% alumni.</td>
<td>i. Educate and activate fellows to shift the cultural mindset and increase plant-based options.</td>
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<td>ii. Launch and lead within highly networked, multiscalar advocacy ecosystems.</td>
<td>ii. Gather and maintain the requisite data to evaluate and demonstrate our impact.</td>
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<td>b. <strong>Extend the reach of our programming farther than ever before, making it available to tens of thousands of students across the world.</strong></td>
<td>iii. Amplify our impact by sharing wins and other student achievements with our audiences.</td>
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<td>i. Deliver lessons to 50,000 students across the US and 50 lessons internationally.</td>
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<td>ii. Recruit 500 applicants to our largest, most diverse fellowship class ever.</td>
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<td>iii. Establish 2 formal partnerships in each of our priority hubs and regions.</td>
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<td>iv. Export our expertise to international partner organizations who can translate and run our program.</td>
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Objective 2: Alter choice architecture in students’ communities to favor plant-based foods.

a. **Create unparalleled professional development and career opportunities.**

i. Match fellows and alumni with high-quality mentors from within the movement.

ii. Provide a range of career services to support our graduates in pursuing and attaining positions of influence.

iii. Provide employment opportunities at New Roots and our partner organizations.
## UNCHOSEN STRATEGIES:
What strategies did we consider and not select and why?

- **We maintained in-person lessons (with virtual lessons available upon request) over switching exclusively virtual.**
  - Virtual lessons can’t provide the level of interaction necessary to facilitate strong connections between students’ values and their consumption of animal products, creating more effective and lasting attitudinal change.
  - In-person lessons allow for educators to pinpoint and encourage qualified and motivated students to become New Roots Institute fellows, supporting our high engagement school strategy, i.e. a school where New Roots Institute is speaking to multiple classes and has one or more Leadership Program fellows/alumni.
- **We decided to focus on high school and college classes rather than any interested groups.**
  - High school and college classes were the vast majority of our lessons already.
  - We are concentrating our resources toward our high engagement school strategy.
- **We decided to focus on fewer regions rather than reaching as many as possible wherever possible.**
  - As we optimize our model’s effectiveness, we plan to build out other regions.
  - The criteria we use for expansion will include established infrastructure for educational outreach (e.g. existing school contacts), connectedness of city to both veganism and other cities with greater openness to veganism, and local access to plant-based options, among others.
- **New Roots Institute used to send volunteers into classrooms and to speak to other groups. This seemed cost-effective at the time. We no longer send volunteers and have chosen to send only trained educators.**
  - Volunteers are unreliable in their availability, their execution, and their retention. We believe establishing credibility with our audiences is vital. Our educators need to serve as more than mere presenters of information. They need to:
    - Be able to be held accountable for reaching organizational metrics. This is incredibly difficult to enforce with volunteers.
    - Be able to facilitate discussions that effectively undermine normative assumptions around consuming animal products while not raising audiences’ defenses
    - Be effective recruiters of new fellows.
    - Function as trained coaches for our fellows and alumni.
We are opting to create partnerships with other organizations rather than expanding under our own name.

- Collaboration and training others are core *modi operandi* for New Roots Institute. Our mission is to empower the next generation with knowledge and training to end factory farming. Where we can train others, especially internationally where others understand the culture better, we pursue partnerships.