



Councillor Kirk Master  
Assistant Mayor – Neighbourhood Services

8 June 2020

Dear Mr Master,

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) with a *timely* request: we'd like to pay to place an eye-catching temporary banner on the Leicester clock tower that reads, "It's High Time We Went Vegan."

It's time to *face* the facts: the COVID-19 outbreak is believed to have originated in a Chinese "wet market" that sold sea animals, live birds, and exotic animals for human consumption. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 75% of recently emerged infectious diseases in humans came from other species. SARS, which originated in bats, claimed 774 lives. Swine flu, or H1N1 – which originated in pigs – killed as many as 575,400 people. And the COVID-19 death toll has already surpassed 400,000.

Zoonotic diseases aren't limited to a single country or to wet markets – wherever animals are bred, intensively confined in their own filth, and slaughtered, humans risk causing another pandemic. In a paper published in 2018, Belgian spatial epidemiologist Marius Gilbert found that more "conversion events" for bird flu – in which a not very pathogenic strain of the virus becomes more dangerous – had occurred in Australia, Europe, and the US than in China, where it originated.

We can't *turn back the clock*, but anyone worried about the COVID-19 outbreak can adopt a vegan lifestyle to help prevent the next global pandemic. Consuming meat, eggs, and dairy has long been known to be unhealthy and completely unnecessary, and the current coronavirus crisis is just one more reason that we, as a society, need to *ring* the alarm. We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Elisa Allen  
Director  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

PO Box 70315  
London N1P 2RG  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0) 20 7837 6327  
+44 (0) 20 7923 6242 (fax)

Info@peta.org.uk

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS (PETA)  
FOUNDATION – a charitable  
company limited by guarantee,  
with its registered office at  
Cannon Place, 78 Cannon Street,  
London EC4N 6AF.  
Registered in England and Wales  
as charity number 1056453,  
company number 3135903.

**Affiliates**

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