LOOKING FORWARD



2023 2028

A FIVE YEAR STRATEGY TO BUILD A MORE HUMANE CANADA

HUMANE CANADA®



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INTRODUCTION

In 1957, organizations and individuals came together to build a national voice for SPCAs and humane societies in Canada. Stakeholders ranging from politicians concerned about the link between animal violence and human violence, to veterinarians, to SPCA and humane society officials seeking to improve standards of animal care and animal protection joined forces to promote and secure a more humane country.

This was the founding of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS). Today, 65 years later, CFHS has transformed into Humane Canada – leading with our collective vision every time our name is invoked. We are the national voice of SPCAs and humane societies from St. John's to Haida Gwaii, from Niagara to Yellowknife. We are the voice of animal welfare in Canada representing the organizations that care for animals in our communities.

Background

In 2017, we set out on a five-year strategic plan which articulated our "Theory of Change" to answer the question – if our vision is a humane Canada, then what do we have to do to get there? We determined that in order to achieve a humane Canada we needed a strong, professional sector, an active and engaged government and a committed public. We worked through education, research and advocacy to advance those priorities.

Since then, Humane Canada has moved from strength to strength: increasing membership, revenue and staff, leading multiple updates to the *Criminal Code of Canada* and adding animal protection to several other legislative and policy frameworks. We launched the Canadian Violence Coalition with more than 40 organizations from more than 10 sectors, launched the Canadian Violence Link Conference and secured the largest federal government grant in history for an animal welfare organization. We further defined what a humane Canada means and launched the *Indicators of a Humane Canada* project to measure our collective progress toward that goal. We continued to offer

training and support to sector leaders, prosecutors and police, hosted Canada's largest animal welfare conference and launched the first Accreditation program for animal shelters. We also developed a national humane education strategy and Canada's first National Pet Food Bank strategy. Furthermore, we responded to COVID, providing rapid support to our members and education to the public, and advocated to government about the needs of animal shelters throughout the pandemic.

The Next Strategic Plan

In 2021, the Board of Directors launched our next strategic planning process. We reviewed the existing plan and concluded that the Theory of Change and strategic directions still provided the appropriate long-term guidance for the organization; however, it needed to be updated to reflect the learning and changes over the previous 5 years.

We conducted stakeholder consultations with all of our Members, Directors, staff and key external stakeholders. The feedback was unanimous: our Theory of Change remains valid, our work is valued and necessary, and we need to keep doing what we are doing but evolve to include some key additions:



ABOUT HUMANE CANADA

Humane Canada is the federation of SPCAs and humane societies. As Canada's voice for animal welfare, we drive positive, progressive change to end animal cruelty, improve animal protection and promote the humane treatment of all animals.

The Guiding Principles of the organization are:

Humane Canada believes that each animal possesses intrinsic value, remarkable complexity and inherent dignity and, as such, is deserving of respect and moral concern.

Humane Canada advocates universal humane treatment, care and protection of all animals.

Humane Canada insists that all animals used by humans be provided with high levels of care to ensure their health, comfort and behavioural needs.

Humane Canada advocates habitat protection and enhancement for the well-being of animals in the wild.

Furthermore, Humane Canada has enunciated its philosophy on humaneness:

Humaneness means the treatment of an animal in a manner that ensures its welfare and well-being in circumstances where a human is or should be exercising care, custody, control or use of an animal. A person responsible for an animal must provide living conditions, necessities of life and care suitable to the circumstances and in accordance with the normal psychological and physical needs of the animal.

Humane treatment of an animal precludes cruelty and involves every possible effort to avoid or reduce pain, suffering or injury.

Humaneness involves sensitivity toward all life in compliance with ethical, moral and legal principles. Human members of the animal kingdom have the responsibility to be humane in the ways they act or fail to act with respect to other animals. Humans who have care, custody, control or use of animals must be diligent in exercising this responsibility.



VISION

A humane Canada

MISSION

To drive positive progressive change to end animal cruelty, improve animal protection and promote the humane treatment of all animals.

As the convener and representative of the largest animal welfare community in Canada, we advance and elevate animal welfare with a strong national voice promoting the interests and concerns of animal welfare to government, policy makers, industry and the public.

OUR VALUES

ANIMAL WELFARE

We believe that each animal possesses intrinsic value, remarkable complexity and inherent dignity, and as such is deserving of respect, moral concern, humane treatment and protection.

ONE HEALTH / ONE WELFARE

We recognize that the health and welfare of animals is inextricably linked to human health and well-being and environmental integrity. We embrace a One Health / One Welfare approach that considers the essential interconnectedness among these domains and relies on co-operation and partnership across disciplines.

COLLABORATION

We are a federation of organizations that recognizes we have more influence to impact key national animal welfare issues as a collective than as individuals. We work collaboratively and co-operatively with members, associates and diverse stakeholders based on the premise that we have greater impact creating positive change by being a part of the process.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We believe our movement is stronger when individuals of different racialized, ethnic, linguistic, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds; abilities; worldviews; geographical origins; genders; and sexual orientations bring together their knowledge, lived experiences, interests and approaches for the benefit of animals in Canada.

POSITIVE, PROGRESSIVE CHANGE

We are FOR animals. We engage in constructive dialogue and processes with diverse stakeholders that result in improvements for animal welfare in line with societal expectations and advancing knowledge.

EVIDENCE-BASED, STRATEGIC THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

We are an evidenced-based organization that supports and promotes innovative and anticipatory thinking to address animal welfare issues and secure lasting change. We build integrated, strategic, professional teams that utilize systems thinking to create an effective organization and lasting change.

A HUMANE CANADA

All animals have a life worth living. They are recognized as sentient beings by a society that embraces its responsibilities with regard to their interests.

LAWFUL INTERACTIONS WITH ANIMALS

HUMANE USE

For animals under direct human responsibility (e.g. companion animals, animals used for human purposes, such as farm animals, animals in science, working dogs)

- Standards of care are in use that meet their welfare
- Options are provided to allow them to choose positive affective states
- Ethical considerations are used to guide decision-making about use

HUMANE CONSIDERATION

For wild animals (for whom we don't have direct responsibility for care)

- We recognize our ethical responsibility to respect their needs and interests
- Their resources are not removed, their habitat is not degraded
- We don't harm them for exploitative purposes (e.g. luxury, fashion, sport, entertainment)

LEGAL SYSTEM

- To address unlawful situations

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

Universal humane education that teaches empathy, respect and compassion for others, and relies on ethics, mindfulness and emotional intelligence

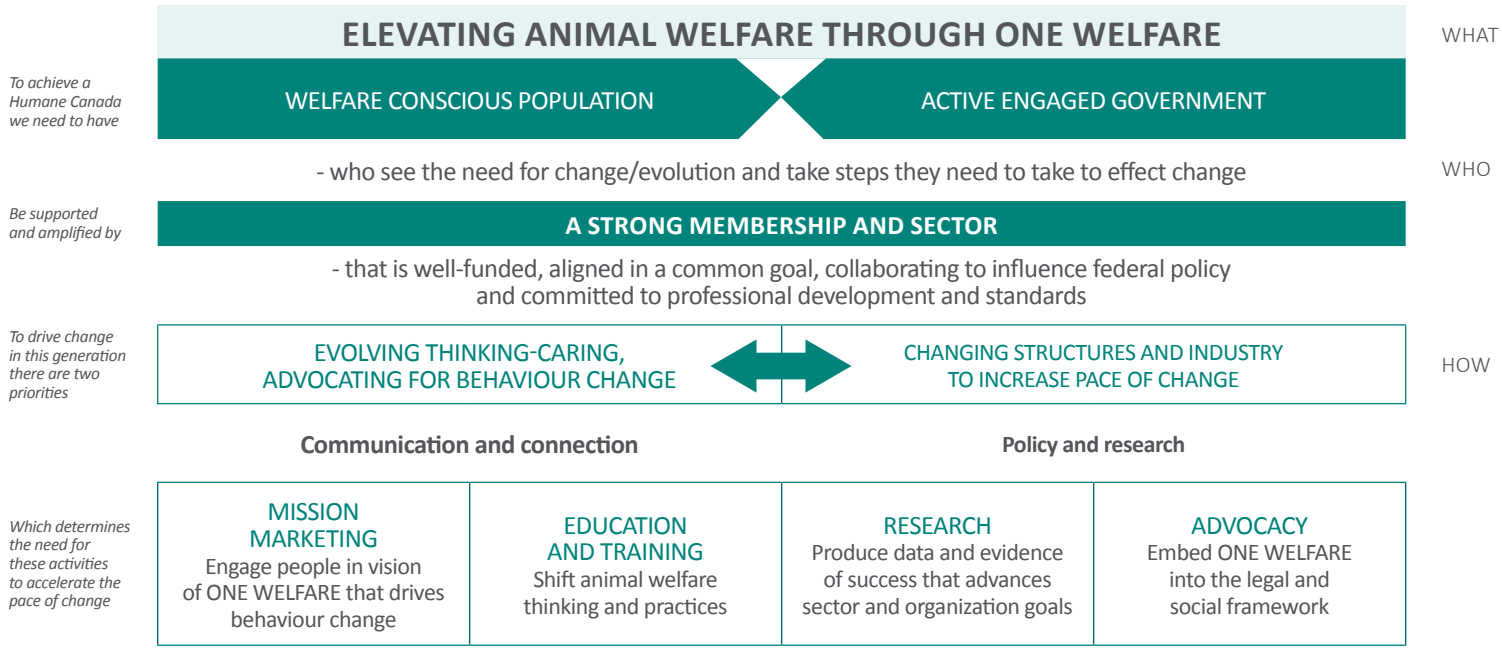


WHAT IS A HUMANE COUNTRY? WHAT WOULD A HUMANE CANADA LOOK LIKE?

In a humane country, there is an understanding that all animals have a life worth living, and they are recognized as sentient beings by a society that embraces its responsibilities with regard to their interests. This is expressed in the legal framework for animals, which determines the lawful interactions with animals. With respect to animals who are kept and used for human purposes, such as companion animals, farm animals, animals in science, and working dogs, lawful use means that standards of care for the animals are applied that ensure good welfare and allow the animals options, so they have some agency to choose positive affective states. As well, ethical considerations are used to guide decision-making about animal use.

With regard to wild animals for whom we don't have direct responsibility for care, but for whom we nonetheless have responsibility to respect their needs and interests, in a humane country, the law protects their resources and habitats and restricts us from harming them for exploitative purposes. For both animals used by humans and for wild animals, where unlawful situations arise, there is accountability within the justice system. The extensive level of social change required to make real progress toward this vision will only be achieved through widespread universal humane education that teaches empathy, respect and compassion for others, and relies on ethics, mindfulness and emotional intelligence.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE: HUMANE CANADA'S THEORY OF CHANGE



To create the Humane Canada we collectively seek in a reasonable time-frame requires the cohesion of a welfare-conscious public and an active, engaged government supported by a strong membership and animal welfare sector.

A **welfare-conscious public** is supportive of the humane movement and understands what actions it can take to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a humane Canada. We will use our expertise, evidence and national voice to engage more Canadians to change the way they think about animal lives and inspire them to make the changes necessary.

An **active, engaged government** is responsive, recognizes animal welfare issues as an important part of public policy and prioritizes animal protection in all relevant legal frameworks. We will continue to lead the thinking and communication that will result in change to legislation and consumer behaviour. We will situate the organization and One Health/One Welfare in new conversations and at new fora to integrate animal welfare into areas of health, social care, justice and environment, including the biodiversity and climate crises.

A s**trong membership and sector** is one that is well-funded, aligned toward a common goal and committed to professional development and standards. We will support our members' development, growth, connection and resources while collaborating to influence federal policy change.

In order to advance these levers of change, Humane Canada will elevate animal welfare using a One Health/One Welfare lens when engaging the public, government and our sector. We will employ research, education, mission marketing and advocacy addressed to the target audiences of humane societies and SPCAs, governments, and the public.



Over this next strategic period, we will continue the excellent work and programs that have been developed over the previous 5 years, and we will grow and develop in ways that move us to our vision, guided by the Theory of Change.

2023 – 2028 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



OBJECTIVE 1

Strong membership, engaged in advancing the animal welfare movement and collaborating to influence federal policy.

STRATEGIES

- Convene and activate organizations to engage in the federation
- Promote Accreditation and Community Centred Animal Sheltering approaches
- Provide resources to improve practices and support local efforts
- Build a collective, powerful voice rallied in support of national issues



OBJECTIVE 2

Engaged government that understands the One Health/One Welfare framework and employs it to direct legal framework and policy positions.

STRATEGIES

- Develop strong relationships with federal policy makers
- Gather evidence of the benefits of a One Health/One Welfare approach to influence policy
- Integrate animal welfare and protection into the legal and social framework
- Create a strong, clear, consistent harmonized ONE WELFARE legislative framework



OBJECTIVE 3

Change the way Canadians think about animal lives and be inspired to make the necessary changes to create a humane Canada.

STRATEGIES

- Launch a revolutionary digital presence that engages people through emotive content fostering empathy and hope
- Provide tools for Members, Government and Public to shift perspective
- Public-focused Mission Marketing
- Implement a National Humane Education Strategy
- Support and encourage behaviour change



OBJECTIVE 4

Strong, vibrant, influential organization with the resources to deliver high performance relative to the strategic plan.

STRATEGIES

- Evolve our systems and operations while building our capacity to achieve the objectives of the strategic plan
- Develop our remote systems to increase effectiveness and operational resilience
- Invest in team growth and development
- Grow our current revenue to fuel the strategic plan and support future mission-driven operations



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