



Forget Me Not Farm Sanctuary, Inc

**2022-2023
Strategic Plan**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
HISTORY	3
STRUCTURE	3
MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES	4
MASTER PLAN	4
OBJECTIVES	5
Short Term Objectives	5
Long Term Objectives (2024 and beyond)	6
Future Revisions of Strategic Plan	6
METRICS OF SUCCESS	6
SIGNATURE PROGRAMS	7
Rescue Program	7
Volunteer Program	7
The Little Rascal Program	7
Outreach Program	8
The Responsible Rabbit Project	8
LOCATION	9
HOURS OF OPERATION	9
AUDIENCE AND SUPPORTERS	9
MARKET AND MARKET COMPETITION	10
PRIORITIES	11
Community Engagement	11
Animal Health	11
Facility Improvement	11
Staffing	11
What we DON'T do	11
OPERATIONAL AND CAPITAL NEEDS	11
FUNDRAISING PLAN	12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Forget Me Not Farm Sanctuary (FMNFS) is guided by the mission to protect farm animals through rescue and community education while upholding the values of compassion, respect, gratitude, and integrity. Currently, FMNFS provides a home for rescued chickens, turkeys, pigs, and rabbits on two acres of land in Eagle River, Alaska.

The guiding priorities for FMNFS are community engagement, animal health, facility improvement, and staffing. All operations are conducted in accordance with the Vision: working toward a future where farm animals are able to live happy and healthy lives without exploitation or abuse in Alaska.

FMNFS operations are primarily funded by donor support, which makes community engagement particularly important for sustainability. FMNFS short-term goals are to build capacity through staff and volunteers and to better connect with our supporters and the community as a whole through social media and in-person outreach. We will continue to improve resident facilities and our disaster preparedness. Long-term, FMNFS will expand operations, continuing to build capacity through staff and volunteer positions and ultimately opening a second location in the MatSu Valley area on already established farmland with buildings and facilities in place.

HISTORY

Forget Me Not Farm Sanctuary (FMNFS) was founded by Rachel Cummings and Michael Wight. After dedicating themselves to a vegan lifestyle in 2013, they both felt compelled to do hands-on work to help farm animals in the community and, in 2015, FMNFS began as a private sanctuary on an acre of land with just a handful of chickens.

They cared for and rescued exclusively chickens for the first three years. In 2018, they rescued three rabbits and two turkeys, making space by giving up half of their living room for a rabbit habitat and clearing out a shed for the turkeys. In early 2019, they rescued 10 pigs from a local meat farm and, later that summer, a one week old piglet.

Later in 2019, FMNFS made its big move from the one-acre plot to four acres of land purchased in Eagle River. We have now expanded and grown to care for four different farm animal species. In 2019, we applied for and received non-profit 501(c)3 status through the IRS.

STRUCTURE

Day-to-day FMNFS operations are overseen by Michael Wight, Sanctuary Manager, and Rachel Cummings, Executive Director, in a volunteer capacity. One part-time employee is responsible for daily animal chores. Two volunteer positions, Volunteer Coordinator and Outreach Director, are in recruitment. Other clean up is completed by volunteers from the community.

FMNFS' financial reviews and strategic planning are conducted by the Board of Directors which consists of five positions: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and assistant secretary and treasurer. One board member may hold up to two positions - except for the positions of president and secretary - with the board consisting of a minimum of three people.

We continuously look for opportunities to strengthen our board with a variety of expertise and experience through consistent outreach, recruitment, and board turnover.

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission

To protect farm animals through rescue and community education.

Vision

Working toward a future where farm animals are able to live happy and healthy lives without exploitation or abuse in Alaska.

Values

Compassion We take the perspective of and feel the emotions of others and have the desire to help.

Respect We hold high regard for the feelings, rights, and wishes of others.

Gratitude We show appreciation for even the smallest things and look to return the kindness shown to us.

Integrity Our actions are guided by honesty and ethics.

MASTER PLAN

FMNFS has access to four acres of land. Two acres are in use for pigs, chickens, turkeys, and rabbits. The remaining two acres will be developed and put to use as a ruminant area and medical barn.

To expand our operations, we will continue to build our capacity through staff and volunteer positions and will ultimately open a second location in the MatSu Valley area on already established farmland with buildings and facilities in place.

Through our ongoing and future policies and programs, we will better connect with our supporters and the community as a whole, which will help us fulfill our mission by connecting people with farm animals to inspire compassion.

OBJECTIVES

Short Term Objectives

In **2022**, we will improve our outreach, disaster preparedness, volunteer program, and resident facilities.

By the end of **2022**, we intend to achieve the following:

- › Have a volunteer fill the position of Volunteer Coordinator.
- › Have an Outreach Director (either a volunteer or part time employee) in place with a tour script and tour program.
- › Create a robust Outreach Program with outreach and educational materials
- › Design and distribute a direct mailer for the 2022 Holiday Season.
- › Create a robust fire evacuation policy that has been put into practice.
- › Create a written rescue policy.
- › Create a written animal care policy.
- › Create a “loose animal” policy.
- › Create a written code of conduct for volunteers and staff.
- › Create a written job description for current positions (animal caretaker, outreach coordinator, volunteer coordinator).
- › Improve current facilities with additional enrichment in the residents’ areas including covered areas and a pig scratching post.
- › Build a hay barn.

In **2023**, we will launch community programs, add new policies, expand our volunteer program, and expand facilities.

By the end of **2023**, we intend to achieve the following:

- › Write an environmental policy that includes a composting system.
- › Write a succession policy.
- › Develop The Little Rascal Program.
- › Develop The Responsible Rabbit Project.
- › Begin hosting annual events including the Spring Scavenger Hunt.
- › Build a volunteer training program.
- › Begin to develop classes to be offered to the public.
- › Build a medical barn.

During **2022** and **2023**, we will consider and assess the following projects:

- › Building a barn and pasture for ruminants.
- › Acquiring a trailer for fire evacuation purposes.

Long Term Objectives (2024 and beyond)

Expand to a second location by purchasing farmland that is already established. This new location would have barns, structures, and pastures already in place. To accommodate a higher rescue capacity and larger breed animals we seek a property with over 10 acres of usable land. It would include facilities such as an extensive visitors center, volunteer and employee break room, and restrooms. We will accomplish this within the next five years (by the end of 2026).

Future Revisions of Strategic Plan

This strategic plan will be updated and revised every two years. In Fall 2023, the board will review and update the strategic plan for the years of 2024 and 2025.

METRICS OF SUCCESS

In order to gauge, in a measurable way, how successfully we are executing our mission, we will:

- › track the number of visitors at tours
- › track the number of followers on social media
- › track the number of monthly donors
- › operate at capacity
- › track volunteer retention
- › provide a post-tour survey gauge any change in mindset or behavior towards farm animals and consumer choices
- › provide monthly health checks on all residents by staff

SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

Rescue Program

We provide a life-long home for farm animals in need with a focus on quality of care over quantity of rescue. We will operate at and not exceed capacity to ensure that we are able to provide proper care for all rescued animals. Our capacity is determined by physical space available, finances, and time constraints. We aim to provide a high standard of care, with habitats to meet all the animals' physical, mental, and emotional needs.

Our focus is on rescuing farm animals who are in dire situations (imminent death or facing neglect). Animals who are adoptable or whose situation can be remedied are not within our scope of rescue. We rescue those farm animals who have no other option. Animals who are outside of our rescue scope include dogs, cats, wildlife, fishes, and most animals considered to be pets, including pet birds. Our rescue program also excludes owner-surrender roosters.

Our rescue scope includes primarily pigs, chickens, turkeys, ruminants, and rabbits.

Volunteer Program

We will actively seek out and engage with volunteers to increase our effectiveness in carrying out our mission.

Volunteers must be 14 years or older. Those between the ages of 14 and 17 will need a guardian present and a guardian's signature on the liability waiver.

The Little Rascal Program

This program aims to help children who are part of a 4H or FFA animal raising project have an alternative to selling their animal to slaughter. We will support their efforts to either keep their animal, find a permanent safe home for the animal, or take the animal into our care at the sanctuary.

Outreach Program

We will encourage compassion for farm animals through tours, events, classes, tabling, and lesson plans.

- › **Tours** - educate the public on standard animal agricultural practices and connect the public to the animals as individuals.

- › **Events** - provide to families with children that coincide with the major holidays to inspire new holiday traditions centered on compassion for animals.
- › **Classes** - offer classes to the public covering animal care topics unique to Alaska's climate. These classes aim to improve the quality of life for farm animals in backyard settings in Alaska while also encouraging compassion for farm animals.
- › **Tabling** - attend community events to market our tours, events, classes, and lesson plans and gather supporters in the form of volunteers and donors.
- › **Lesson Plans** - develop a lesson plan that could be used by teachers and homeschool parents.

The Responsible Rabbit Project

This program is intended to address the rabbit overpopulation problem in our community, which leads to unwanted rabbits, dumped rabbits, overwhelmed shelters, accidents, and deaths. We understand that the best way to reduce overpopulation is by spaying or neutering rabbits. We also understand that these procedures can be cost prohibitive. To reduce the accidental breeding of rabbits, we will offer vouchers to individuals who apply and are approved to cover the cost of spaying or neutering their rabbit. Priority will be given to spay procedures, which reduce the risk of uterine cancer in female rabbits. We will work with Anchorage Animal Care and Control, Mat-Su Animal Shelter, and local veterinary offices to promote this program.

FMNFS not only serves animals directly, but also works tirelessly to educate the public about best practices in animal care. In the process of advertising for rabbit spay and neuter application submissions through social media posts, we will share data and information on why spaying and neutering is important. We will also share best practices, tips, and resources for rabbit ownership with the goal of decreasing the number of rabbits that are surrendered by unprepared owners.

LOCATION

We are perched at the base of the Eagle River valley which offers a uniquely rural location that is just twenty minutes from the heart of Alaska's major city. This location is convenient for volunteers and visitors alike and makes it easy to offer educational tours that further our mission and provide volunteer opportunities for the community. It also places us near the local farming communities in Palmer and Wasilla, so when rescue opportunities occur, we can jump quickly into action.

HOURS OF OPERATION

FMNFS is open to tours on Saturdays and Sundays between the hours of 12pm and 3pm throughout the summer season. Summer tours begin the first weekend of June and terminate the last weekend of September. Reservations for a private tour can be made through the website or via email. Private tours will be considered year-round to our monthly supporters (availability and weather conditions dependent).

AUDIENCE AND SUPPORTERS

Our supporters consist of local animal lovers who can access our organization through places like social media, Patreon, our website, Google, and by attending tours and events.

With an engaged following on Facebook and Instagram, we have acquired monthly recurring donors and we also receive one-time gifts throughout the year. We have a number of regular and recurring volunteers who participate on a weekly basis, a monthly basis, and others who attend work parties a few times a year.

MARKET AND MARKET COMPETITION

Our market is anyone in Anchorage, Eagle River, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and extended areas who want to engage with farm animals in a sanctuary setting and learn more about them as individuals.

The closest similar organization is the AK Potbelly Pig Rescue who rescues and adopts out pigs as companion animals. While there is some overlap in the work performed, our organization is unique because we are the only farm animal sanctuary in Alaska. We have a focus on education in order to change the way people perceive farm animals thereby improving the lives of farm animals in Alaska.

Strengths

- › Our proximity to a big city is ideal.
- › We offer a sanctuary setting as opposed to a farm setting. That means we are neat, clean, spacious, and have enriched habitats.
- › Our animal safety standards are high (hardware cloth fencing, netting to protect from birds of prey, electric fencing around all enclosures).

Opportunities

- › There is farmland in the Matanuska Valley area that would help us expand our acreage and provide facilities.
- › There are many people whose hearts we can change.
- › We can provide more community engagement through work parties, events, tabling, and tours.

Weaknesses

- › Alaska does not have a large vegan community for support.
- › We have limited acreage and cannot expand much further in the current location.
- › We have no visitor center and no caretaker facilities.

Threats

- › The Eagle River Valley has an abundance of predatory animals, including bears, lynx, foxes, coyotes, eagles, ermine, and hawks.
- › We are located in the Municipality of Anchorage, which has zoning limitations
- › In Alaska, there is a strong hunting, fishing, and farming culture, which is at odds with our mission and view of animals.
- › Alaska has long, hard winters that make animal caretaking work difficult.
- › There is a potential threat from nearby neighbors who may disagree with our work or be particular about land usage.

PRIORITIES

Community Engagement

Develop capacity for greater community engagement to increase awareness, connect with and grow donor and volunteer base, and provide education.

Animal Health

Establish care routines and policies to ensure each individual animal is healthy and thriving.

Facility Improvement

Add to current facilities to meet the needs of all animals and with an eye to future rescue.

Staffing

Develop job descriptions for paid and volunteer positions as well as standard staff policies and procedures.

What we DON'T do

X Adopt out

X Bring animals to events

X Rehome animals

X Board animals

X Force interactions between
people and animals

OPERATIONAL AND CAPITAL NEEDS

Per Year

- › \$10,000 minimum for annual operating costs.
- › \$2,000 for new animal rescue costs
- › \$2,000 for projects and programs
- › \$500 for fundraising
- › \$10,000 for facilities expansion and improvement
- › \$20,500 for staffing for 2022

One-Time

- › \$20,000 for a low-profile trailer with ramp (Exiss Mini Combo 615W)
 - › \$180,000 for future land purchase
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FUNDRAISING PLAN

Income Categories	Income Projections (2022/2023)
Sponsorships and Partnerships	\$30,000
Online Giving	\$10,000
Recurring Gifts	\$4,000
Board Member Contributions	\$4,000
Grants	\$1,000
Events	\$1,000
Direct Mail	\$1,000

Sponsorships and Partnerships

Lead: Rachel Cummings
Time Frame: Immediate and ongoing throughout the year.
Goal: 1 corporate sponsorship that covers personnel/staff/employee and Operations Costs.
Method: Personal solicitations via individual meetings. Prospective partnerships based on donor history and personal connections.

Online Giving

Lead: Rachel Cummings
Time Frame: Immediate and ongoing throughout the year.
Goal: Raise funds from our supporters and followers for animal care, campaigns, and special projects.
Method: Solicitations via email, website, social media, and other online sources

Recurring Gifts

Lead: Rachel Cummings
Time Frame: Immediate and ongoing throughout the year.
Goal: Increase monthly contributors to cover animal care costs.
Method: Solicitations via email, website, Patreon, social media, and direct mail.

Board Member Contributions

Lead: Sara Swimeley
Time Frame: Annually.
Goal: A minimum request of \$1,000 from Board Member Contributions throughout the year to contribute to Programs and Operations Costs.
Method: Personal contributions and/or Board led fundraising and events.

Grants

Lead: Janelle Wight
Time Frame: Immediate and ongoing throughout the year
Goal: 1 grant for \$1,000 that covers animal care and special projects
Method: Actively seeking out and applying for relevant grants. Notable relevant grants often available through A Well Fed World, The Microsanctuary Resource Center, and The Pollination Project.

Events

Lead: Rachel Cummings
Time Frame: 2023
Goal: Host 1 event that increases income by \$1,000.
Method: Marketing a ticketed event.

Direct Mail

Lead: Michelle Sinnott
Time Frame: Enacted during major holidays like Easter and Christmas.
Goal: \$1,000
Method: Sanctuary updates and solicitations via direct mail
