



# GUIDE TO PLANNING YOUR MEATOUT WALK

## 1. INITIAL PLANNING

**Choosing a Location:** Look for easy access to parking and public transportation. Try to choose a route that will be easy to walk and that will be pleasant and fun for your walkers.

**Map your Route:** Locate an easy to find spot for your registration table and an ending location. Be sure to walk the route, at least once, before making a final decision. We recommend a route of between 2 and 5 miles.

**Visibility:** Look for a route that will provide good exposure to the public and good opportunities for positive press. An area that has friendly, health conscious, food related, public interest or similar populations will provide a positive environment for your Walk. Consider an area that will provide a good background for positive press and media activities.

**Permits:** Check with local authorities to see if a permit is needed for the route you have chosen. If you are not sure who to call, try your local police department/sheriff's office and ask for the officer assigned to community relations.

## 2. PROMOTING YOUR WALK

**Flyers/Posters:** Use our announcement form or create your own. Place flyers anywhere you think animal-friendly or health conscious people might see them. Stores, health food stores, health clubs and gyms, doctors offices, veterinarian offices, libraries, schools, video or music stores or on any bulletin board with a good traffic pattern. Key locations are any vegetarian or vegan friendly restaurants. You may wish to consider asking some of these to sponsor your event with a donation or perhaps coupons/discounts for goods or services. Don't forget your local college campus or even high schools, especially if you know a student that attends who can be liaison.

**E-mail:** Use our sample e-mail to solicit walkers. Post it to local internet groups, animal or environmentally friendly groups, runners & walkers groups, senior citizen groups or any public interest group that you think might be sympathetic.

**Local papers:** Use the calendar sections of local newspapers to post the details of your event and to advertise for walkers. Don't forget that many papers now have on-line versions that you can utilize. A week before your walk, send a press release to your local and regional newspapers. Repeat daily until day of walk.

**Personal Contacts:** Ask your family, friends and neighbors to spread the word. Always have flyers with you so that you can ask friends to hang on any bulletin boards they may have access to at work, school, church or clubhouse. Family and friends often enjoy being able to support something that you believe in so strongly.

**Host Sign-Up Party:** You can offer those interested light refreshments and the opportunity to learn more about the Great American Meatout and the Meatout Walk. This also promotes camaraderie and you can share ideas, distribute flyers and have a chance to develop a good working relationship with your team. Some may also be interested in helping you plan and organize your walk.

**Team Building:** Encourage walkers to form teams that will walk together. Teams can have some fun by dressing in a team color, representing a particular farm animal, challenging each other on fund raising goals or planning a team dinner after the walk. Use your imagination. If each walker you recruit, in turn recruits 3 friends to form a team, you will have a very successful walk... not to mention a great time!

**Tabling:** Consider hosting a table at a local health food store or vegetarian friendly restaurant for a few weekends before your walk. This is a wonderful way to spread the word and to promote vegetarianism, veganism and compassion for animals... not to mention a super way to meet potential walkers. When tabling always be friendly, warm and inviting. Make sure you keep a sign up sheet and blank registration forms to enroll walkers. If someone wants to argue with you, politely agree to disagree.

### **3. PREPARING FOR YOUR WALK:**

**Volunteers:** Recruit volunteers to arrive early to set up a registration tent or table and to register last minute walkers. Volunteers are also needed to distribute water or drinks to walkers. Don't forget to have some dog bowls or plastic containers in case some walkers bring a companion animal.

**Signs:** Encourage walkers to make their own signs or banners. Try to have some extra on hand in case anyone forgets to bring a poster.

**Pledge Sheets:** Collect Registration Forms and Pledge Sheets two weeks prior to your walk. Walkers should be encouraged to collect pledges when they are made. The minimum walk pledge total is \$20.00. Every walker registered with the \$20.00 minimum will receive a Meatout T-shirt. Be sure to ask for sizes. These will be mailed to you for distribution on the day of your walk. Walkers who submit pledge money after the deadline (including the day of the Walk or after) will receive their Meatout T-shirt by mail after the Walk.

**Walkers:** Encourage walkers to dress comfortably (preferably to wear their Meatout T-shirts) and to wear comfortable shoes.

**Group Photos:** Don't forget to take photos or recruit a photographer for group/event photos.

**Food/Entertainment:** A great way to encourage more walkers and a nice touch to celebrate the end of a successful Meatout Walk.

**Relax:** Small or large, we encourage all interested parties to host a Meatout Walk. Walks generally increase in size with time, and have the potential to become an annual event. Don't be shy... Walks are an excellent way to spread the Meatout message and to build community in your area.

**Thanks for your efforts!**