

By Congressman Steve King

Farmers and ranchers across the country have long known what many Americans are just now learning. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is a political machine masquerading as an umbrella organization for local humane societies.

While most local humane societies perform a much-needed service in their local communities, the national organization is run by vegetarians with an extreme anti-meat agenda. The HSUS markets itself as an animal care organization but spends less than 1 percent of its \$100 million annual budget in hands-on pet shelters.

The watchdog website [www.humanewatch.org](http://www.humanewatch.org) reports that in 2008, HSUS "paid less than one-half of one percent" of the money it raised to "organizations that do hands-on dog and cat sheltering," the functions HSUS says are the organization's focus. HSUS solicits money from well-intentioned but often uninformed animal lovers and uses these donations to lobby Congress for an anti-meat, anti-animal-agriculture agenda.

Leaders of this organization have made statements indicating they would like to see animal agriculture end. John "J.P." Goodwin, the manager of Animal Fighting Issues at HSUS, told AR-Views, an animal rights Internet discussion group, that his "goal is the abolition of all animal agriculture." Wayne Pacelle, president of the Humane Society of the United States, told Animal People News his stated goal is to create "a National Rifle Association of the animal rights movement."

Paul Shapiro, senior director of HSUS' factory farming campaign, told a Colorado audience in 2003 that "eating meat causes animal cruelty." HSUS has given funding to the notorious anti-meat organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

HSUS is a radical, activist group committed to working against livestock production and American farmers. It is this commitment that troubled many in the agriculture industry when HSUS was invited to lead a March 23 session titled "Animal Instincts: Service Learning and Animal Welfare" at the 2010 National 4-H

Conference in Chevy Chase.

4-H has a rich history of livestock care and production. 4-H members work hard and long hours raising and training animals for county fairs across the country. Local 4-H programs teach young men and women how to make their own contributions to animal agriculture in our communities and country.

To invite an organization committed to the eradication of animal agriculture to its national conference is at best a mistake by 4-H and at worst a troubling concession to anti-meat liberals working for the Obama administration at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. There is no excuse for 4-H allowing an organization actively working against a staple component of 4-H programs and our diets to present at its national conference.

Thankfully, many local and state 4-H organizations, including the 4-H program in my state of Iowa, have renounced HSUS' presence at the national 4-H conference. Local and state 4-H groups understand the negative ramifications of inviting HSUS to indoctrinate 4-H youth into an anti-animal-agriculture agenda.

National 4-H has yet to apologize for its decision to invite HSUS to present its program at its national conference. The group's attempts to explain the presence of HSUS have led many Americans to reconsider supporting national 4-H programs.

Now would be a good time for the young leaders of 4-H to present and pass a resolution through national 4-H that formally refuses to grant a forum to organizations that are anathema to the grand traditions of 4-H. National 4-H needs to fully understand the consequences of partnering with an organization committed to ending the American livestock industry.