

VEGMICHIGAN

A green silhouette of the state of Michigan is positioned behind the right side of the 'VEGMICHIGAN' text.

Strategic Plan



2026

President's Message

VegMichigan has a proven track record of successfully encouraging individuals to move toward, or adopt, a plant-based diet through the more than 100 events we host or participate in each year. We bring a thoughtful, inclusive, and nonjudgmental approach to our work, opening new doors to a wider audience.

We are best known for our family-friendly **Plant-Based Festivals**, which are fun and educational events. Building upon a reputation of positivity and professionalism, we developed a partnership with Detroit's Eastern Market, one of Michigan's most iconic public venues. It is now home to our Spring VegFest, the largest plant-based festival in Michigan, drawing more than 8,000 attendees in each of the past three years. In 2025, we hosted a total of three festivals.

Our **Community Outreach** is rooted in the belief that lasting behavior change is supported by a sustained effort in a given area. We facilitate this change by offering a variety of local events that include learning opportunities, personal interactions, and delicious plant-based food.

The **30-Day Plant-Based Pledge** is often an add-on to our Community Outreach programs. Our pledge is unique in that individuals who commit to eating more plant-based for a month receive a free bag of popular plant-based food items along with weekly updates that offer recipes, information, and tips.

Our welcoming, inclusive approach was instrumental in securing a contract with the City of Ann Arbor. This collaboration has enabled us to offer our Community Outreach and 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge on a larger scale, as the City highlights to its 120,000 residents that plant-based meals are an integral part of its citywide goal to achieve carbon neutrality. VegMichigan's role is to offer free programs that invite residents, businesses, and organizations to learn about the connection between our food and climate, and to try delicious plant-based food.

VegMichigan is having a meaningful impact in the areas where we have a consistent presence, and we are ready to thoughtfully expand into new locations within the state to advance our vision of *a Michigan where plant-based eating is widely embraced*.



Tom Progar
Executive Director &
Board President

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Mission

Introduce Michiganders to plant-based eating through positive experiences and great-tasting food.



VegMichigan gives out free plant-based pizzas at University of Michigan football games, connecting positive experiences with great tasting food.

Vision

A Michigan where plant-based eating is widely embraced.

Theory of Change

VegMichigan seeks to create lasting cultural change around food by making plant-based eating familiar, enjoyable, and socially accepted. We believe change happens when people have positive experiences eating plant-based food, and they are invited to take small, achievable steps at the start rather than being asked to make dramatic or immediate lifestyle changes. Through festivals, community outreach, and the 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge we introduce Michiganders to great-tasting plant-based food in welcoming environments that emphasize curiosity, enjoyment, and a better choice. These experiences help shift perceptions of plant-based eating from niche or restrictive to normal, accessible, and appealing.

Our approach is grounded in well-established behavioral principles. When individuals take small actions—such as trying a plant-based sample, attending a festival, or supporting a plant-forward menu—they begin to see themselves as someone who makes these choices. Positive experiences build confidence, reinforce consistency, and increase the likelihood of continued engagement. By avoiding judgment and pressure, and by meeting people where they are, we keep individuals open and motivated to learn more and progress at their own pace.



Program 1: Plant-Based Festivals

We want to extend a heartfelt thank you for hosting, planning, and organizing another successful Vegfest. We are always honored and grateful when we can participate in this incredible event. The atmosphere created by the customers, vendors, and everyone involved is so kind, helpful, and friendly. The event is truly amazing, and we feel privileged to be part of it. Your meticulous attention to detail, from keeping us informed with paperwork to providing all the pertinent information, significantly contributes to the event's success. We deeply appreciate your hard work and dedication.

-Candace Maiden (VegFest Food Vendor)



Plant-Based Festivals

VegMichigan's Plant-Based Festivals have been a cornerstone of our public outreach for more than two decades, introducing tens of thousands of people to the joys and benefits of plant-based eating. These events combine a welcoming atmosphere with educational presentations, cooking demos, nonprofit partners, kids activities, and a wide variety of plant-based food to create a vibrant and engaging community experience.

Celebrity Guests

We have had many celebrity guests over the years, including Alicia Silverstone and Daryl Hannah. We have also had local sports stars from the Detroit Pistons, Lions, and Red Wings. The festivals have been held indoors and outdoors and in various cities.



We also increase our impact as we are able to promote our festivals and the benefits of plant-based eating on local TV, radio, and print media. Our press release goes out to over 100 media outlets.



The Impact of Our Plant-Based Festivals

- Major media coverage, including TV, radio, and newspapers
- Over 10,000 attendees annually across all festivals
- 80% of non-vegans say they will eat more plant-based food after attending
- Many vendors tell us that our festivals are their most profitable events
- Normalizes plant-based eating through large crowds & variety of food options
- Brings together the plant-based community
- Offers opportunities to become involved

For more information about VegFests, contact Tom Progar at tom@vegmichigan.org

Program 2: Community Outreach

VegMichigan's accessible, interactive content and welcoming, inclusive framework brings energy and enthusiasm to this work... Thank you, VegMichigan!

-Jennifer Wolf, St. Clare's Episcopal Church, Cathy Marshall, Temple Beth Emeth, and Tim Vaduva, Blue Ocean Church, Members of an Interfaith Coalition



Community Outreach

VegMichigan's Community Outreach consists of presentations, free food sampling, cooking demonstrations, tabling, library displays, restaurant Meetups, our monthly e-newsletter, and our social media engagement.

Priority Communities

Our Community Outreach engages Michiganders who are new to plant-based eating and have an interest in health and wellness, animal protection, or environmental ethics. We build partnerships with community organizations, such as libraries, faith-based groups, environmental organizations, animal adoption centers, and universities. We tailor our outreach to connect our mission with the interests of each group we serve.

Delicious Food = Great Activism

We include great-tasting, free food in our Community Outreach whenever possible because it encourages participation and supports lasting behavior change. When people discover how delicious plant-based options are, especially those available right in their own neighborhoods, they are more likely to continue exploring them. Offering someone a free sample of a plant-based taco, pizza, or burger for the first time often creates a positive experience they may never have sought out on their own, helping shift perceptions and opening the door to future choices.



Program 3: 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge

Many thanks for a fantastic presentation...that you delivered today to our students. They truly enjoyed your engaging, interactive, and highly informative talk. Every semester you enrich our students' educational experience by sharing your in-depth expertise in humane education. I am grateful that you expose them to plant-based foods by [your] generous FREE {30-Day Plant-Based Pledge} program.

-Andrew Domzalski, Ph.D. (University Professor)



30-Day Plant-Based Pledge

The 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge is like no other, enhancing our Community Outreach efforts, because individuals who sign up receive a free bag of food to take home, such as Beyond Burgers, Planet oatmilk, Miyoko's cheese, and other popular items. Participants are often shocked at the offer and excited to try these foods for the first time. Thousands of people have participated in the 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge since its inception in 2020. This year, we plan to work with a researcher from Stanford University to coordinate a randomized control group to gather more data on the impact of this program.

I appreciate that it emphasized trying your best over being perfect, as that is an obstacle to many people when there is pressure to do something 100% instead of switching habits gradually.

- Anonymous Pledge Participant

City of Ann Arbor Collaboration

VegMichigan has been an invaluable collaborator on A²ZERO, the City of Ann Arbor's plan to achieve a just transition to community-wide carbon neutrality by 2030. Thanks to their outreach efforts and technical support, we have been able to educate thousands of Ann Arbor residents and dozens of businesses on the importance of eating more plant-forward diets, while supporting those community members in adopting more sustainable food practices. This collaboration has been instrumental in moving us closer towards reaching our community sustainability goals!

-Azella Markgraf,

Sustainable Food Coordinator, Ann Arbor Office of Sustainability and Innovations

Through an unprecedented five-year collaboration, we have brought our Community Outreach and 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge to the City of Ann Arbor to support their A²ZERO plan. We successfully fulfilled a two-year contract, and now we are at the beginning of a new three-year contract.



Food Sampling

Over the first two years of our collaboration, VegMichigan distributed more than 4,300 free plant-based samples in partnership with local Ann Arbor restaurants and grocery stores to showcase their plant-based options. Most participants enjoyed the samples, and for many, simply trying a plant-based burger, pizza, or taco for the first time helped shift their perceptions of plant-based food.



30-Day Plant-Based Pledge

Over 1,500 Ann Arbor community members have participated in our 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge. 90% of survey respondents say they will eat more plant-based after participating.

Presentations

As part of our collaboration, we provide presentations to groups throughout Ann Arbor, focusing on the climate benefits of plant-based eating. We inform residents that eating more plant-based is one of the top actions they can take to reduce their carbon footprint. We often pair presentations with food sampling or our 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge. Combining compelling information with great-tasting food is a perfect recipe to inspire change.



Local Business Engagement

Working with local restaurants is part of our Community Outreach in Ann Arbor. In 2025, for example, we partnered with the famous Zingerman's Deli to spotlight plant-based eating with three sandwiches during the month of Veganuary! 2025 was a big success and the initiative is being repeated in 2026.



VegMichigan's collaboration with the City of Ann Arbor engages sustainability-minded residents who may not currently recognize plant-based eating as a climate solution. We evaluate our work using both quantitative and qualitative measures to track participation and behavior change. In the first two years, 6,572 individuals participated in one or more of our 125 events, with over 90% reporting they plan to eat more plant-based as a result. Impact is measured through post-program and follow-up surveys at 3, 6, and 12 months to assess engagement, learning, and sustained dietary change, along with reach metrics such as attendance, pledge bags distributed, and food samples served. Open-ended feedback and interviews with partner organizations adopting plant-forward policies inform ongoing program improvement.



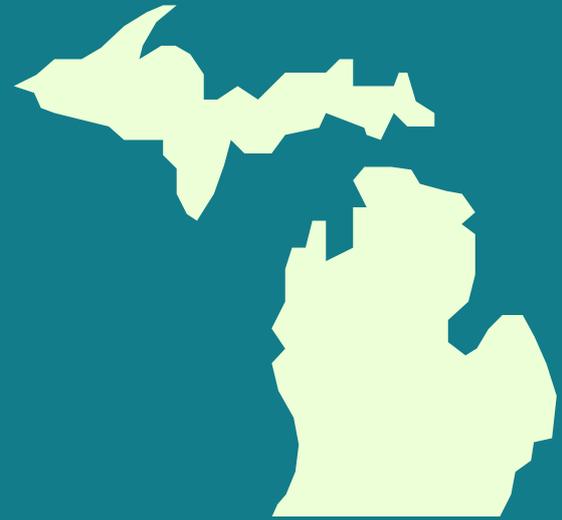
For more information about our Community Outreach and 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge, contact Kim Korona at kim@vegmichigan.org.

Kim Korona worked for nearly two decades as a humane educator, and brings the core elements of humane education to our Community Outreach and 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge programs, including critical thinking and fostering empathy and compassion.

Why Michigan?

Michigan is uniquely positioned for plant-based advocacy due to its environmental significance, agricultural landscape, and emerging threats within the state's food system.

With the longest freshwater coastline in the world and bordering four of the five Great Lakes, Michigan's identity is deeply tied to clean water and natural beauty—captured in the widely embraced “Pure Michigan” slogan. While residents take great pride in protecting these resources, many are unaware of the environmental harm caused by industrial animal agriculture. There are currently 290 concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in the state, with concerns that this number may grow due to Michigan's abundant water resources. Connecting everyday food choices to the health of Michigan's waterways and ecosystems creates a powerful opportunity for plant-based advocacy.

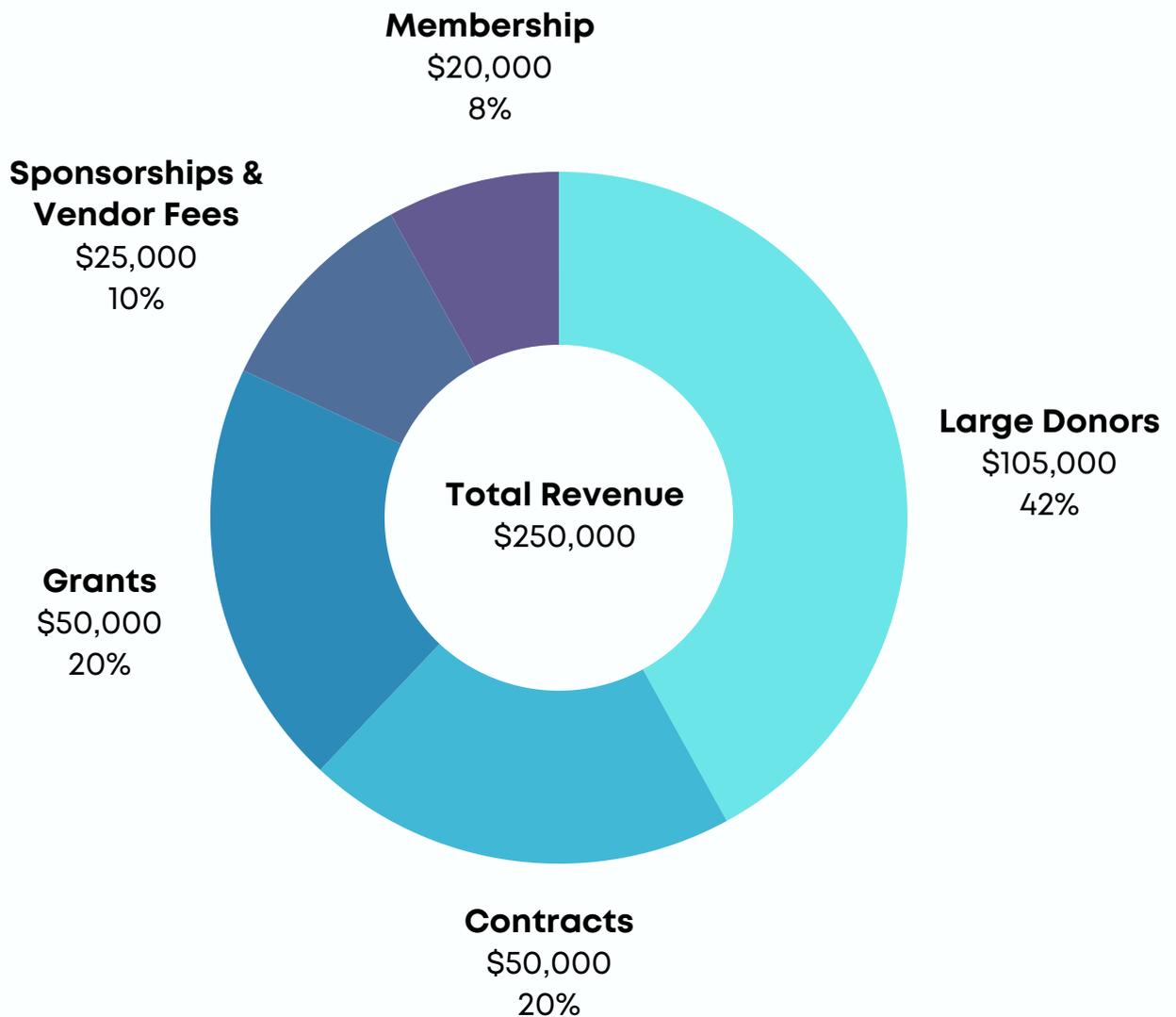


At the same time, Michigan's agricultural sector makes plant-based solutions both practical and compelling. Michigan leads in the production of numerous crops, including, fruits, vegetables, and a wide variety of beans. This enables Michigan to shift towards plant-based food systems that support local farmers, protect natural resources, and align with residents' environmental values. By elevating plant-based eating as a means to preserve Michigan's ecosystems, advocacy efforts can build on both state pride and existing agricultural strengths to drive meaningful change.

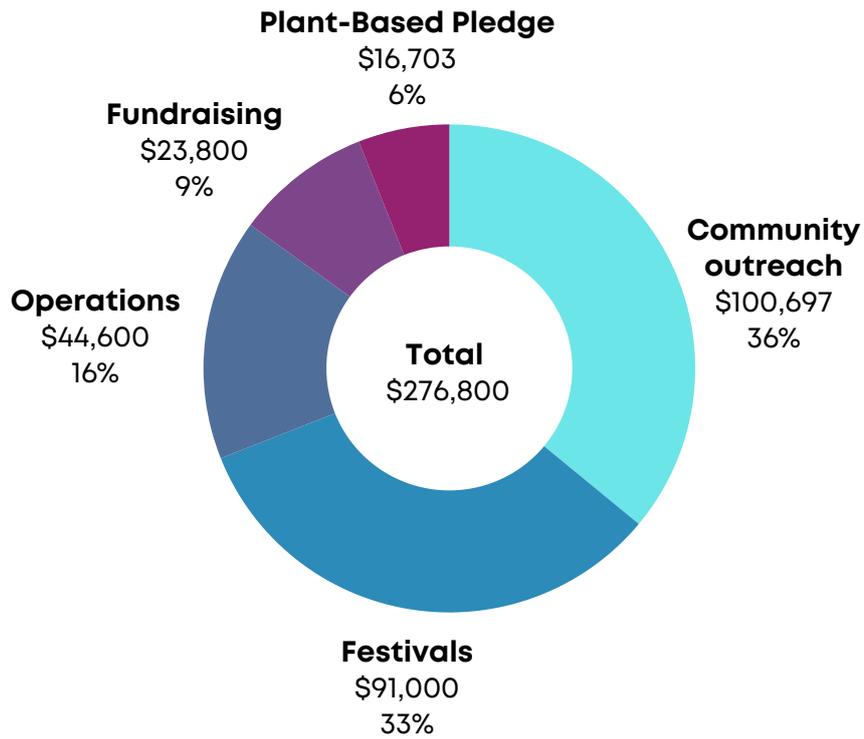
2026 Budget

VegMichigan has built a diverse mix of funding sources, including memberships, major donors, grants, contracts, and revenue from event sponsorships and vendor fees. In 2026, we will continue strengthening these revenue streams while placing an emphasis on growing our membership base through a year-long membership drive.

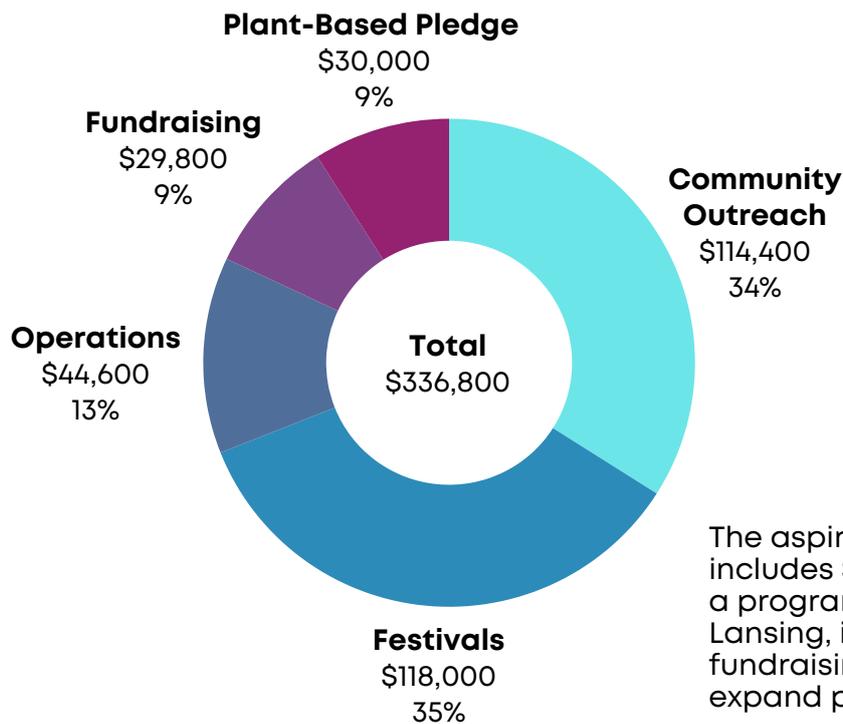
2025 Revenue Streams



2026 Operating Budget by Program



2026 Aspirational Budget by Program



The aspirational budget includes \$60,000 to hire a program manager in Lansing, increase fundraising efforts, and expand programming.

2026 Fundraising Strategy

VegMichigan's fundraising strategy centers on growing our membership base through a year-long membership drive that builds on our strong community reach and reputation as Michigan's leading plant-based nonprofit. The 2026 goal is to increase paid membership from 300 to 400 members while raising the average annual gift by 10%. VegMichigan already reaches tens of thousands of people each year through festivals, our monthly e-newsletter, social media, and media coverage. This campaign is designed to convert existing supporters into members while encouraging current members to deepen their commitment.

Key elements of the Membership Drive include:

1. Consistent year-round messaging through our monthly e-newsletter, social media platforms, and events
2. Compelling storytelling that shows how membership dollars directly support programs that help more Michiganders eat plant-based
3. Improved online and in-person membership signup experiences to make joining or renewing simple and convenient
4. Targeted outreach, including VegMichigan's first YouTube advertising campaign focused on Michigan residents
5. Exclusive member benefits such as event discounts, monthly gift card raffles, and invitations to quarterly members-only program updates
6. On-going updated tracker on our website and in the monthly newsletter to show progress toward the goal



By the end of 2026, VegMichigan aims to sign up 400 members and generate approximately \$30,000, strengthening financial sustainability while deepening relationships with supporters committed to a plant-friendly future for Michigan.

The VegMichigan Family

Our volunteers, staff, board, and supporters all come together to make this organization special.



Values



Adaptability: We embrace change as a chance to grow and better serve our mission. By staying flexible, creative, and solution-oriented, we adjust our strategies to meet the evolving needs of our community, partners, and the plant-based movement. We support one another through change, remain open to learning, and continuously adapt to maximize our impact.



Collaboration: We work together with trust, openness, and a shared purpose, valuing each team member's contributions and supporting one another to achieve our mission. We communicate honestly and embrace diverse perspectives to strengthen our work. We build respectful, inclusive partnerships with individuals, organizations, and communities, knowing that cooperation across differences amplifies our collective impact and drives lasting change.



Compassion: We cultivate kindness, empathy, and respect within our team, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and heard. We extend that same compassion to the communities we serve—approaching all interactions with understanding and care, and striving to promote a more just and humane world for people, animals, and the planet.



Sustainability: We are committed to practices that nurture the long-term health of our team, organization, and the planet. Sustainability means managing our resources thoughtfully, utilizing eco-friendly practices in our operations, promoting well-being, and maintaining balance to ensure enduring effectiveness, resilience, and conservation. It also means advocating for and modeling plant-based choices that reduce environmental impact, conserve resources, and support a thriving, equitable food system for current and future generations.



Optimism: We believe in the power of positive change and carry that hope into everything we do. For us, being optimistic means fostering a culture of encouragement, resilience, and belief in our collective potential—even in the face of challenges. We inspire others by sharing a vision of a more compassionate, sustainable future, and we empower individuals and communities to take steps toward that future through their food choices with confidence and support.

Respect in the Workplace

VegMichigan recognizes that the people who make up our team are integral to the success of our programs. We can only create a healthier, kinder, and more sustainable Michigan when our staff, volunteers, and board are treated with respect. Therefore, we believe it is essential that VegMichigan's Code of Conduct for a Respectful Workplace sets clear expectations for how we work together.



We communicate respectfully, listen actively, and provide feedback that supports growth and collaboration. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or harmful language of any kind. We actively share responsibility, participate equitably, and make decisions transparently, ensuring that all voices are included and valued. We address conflict constructively, seek understanding, and use mediation when needed to ensure fair resolutions. We protect confidentiality, respect one another's boundaries, and maintain professionalism in all internal and public interactions. As a team, we commit to advancing VegMichigan's mission with integrity and dedication, fostering an environment that motivates positive, systemic change in our food system. We review this policy regularly to ensure it continues to support the needs of our organization and the communities we serve.

Board of Directors



Tom Progar - President

Tom serves as Executive Director and Board President, overseeing VegMichigan's day-to-day operations. He holds a degree in finance and brings a diverse background in management to his role.

Paul Krause - Vice President/Treasurer

Paul serves as Vice President and Treasurer and has previously served as Board President. As a successful business owner, he brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the organization.



Val Schey - Secretary

Val serves as Secretary and heads our Traverse City Chapter. Val has an impressive blend of private and public sector experience including her current role as the Michigan Organizer for Food & Water Watch.

Angela Yuan - Director

Angela serves as a Director and brings experience in environmental policy and management. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies and Sustainability, graduating *summa cum laude*. She is a Schwarzman Scholar and Dow Fellow currently pursuing her master's degree.



Mark Jacobson - Director

Mark serves as a Director and is an active volunteer. Mark co-founded and helped run Great Lakes Rabbit Sanctuary with his wife Lake and brings this experience to VegMichigan.



Staff



Noelle Grain

Operations
Manager



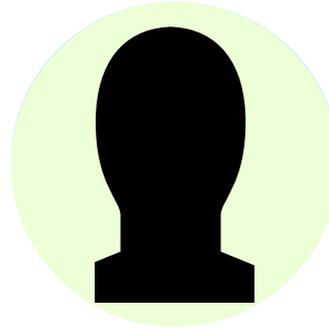
Olivia Gramprrie

Media
Manager



Kim Korona

Program
Manager



TBD

Program
Coordinator

We are currently hiring a Program Coordinator for the southeast region.

Volunteers

Volunteers are a critical component of VegMichigan’s organizational capacity and statewide impact. Our dedicated team of more than 100 volunteers supports program delivery, community outreach, and peer-to-peer education, helping us engage thousands of Michiganders each year. Through clear roles, training, and alignment with strategic priorities, VegMichigan will continue to cultivate a strong volunteer community that strengthens our programs.



Origin Story

Thank You to Our Founder & President Emeritus

VegMichigan was founded by Jim Corcoran, whose early concern for the environment—shaped by witnessing pollution like the Cuyahoga River fire—led him to activism and college outreach. Through this work, Jim discovered the profound impact of food choices on the planet and adopted a plant-based lifestyle. He learned about its profound benefits for health, animals, and the environment and wanted to dedicate his life to this work. In 1999, he and a small group of passionate Michiganders founded VegMichigan to make plant-based living accessible to people from all walks of life, beginning with community potlucks and tabling events. What started as an all-volunteer organization grew steadily, hiring the first part-time staff member in 2018 and expanding to a team of five by 2025.

With great appreciation and respect, we are honored to recognize Paul Krause as President Emeritus of VegMichigan. Paul has been the cornerstone of our work for nearly two decades, guiding us through periods of growth, change, and success. From his time as President to his continued leadership as Vice President and Treasurer, Paul's dedication to the mission of promoting a plant-based lifestyle has been unwavering. He has shown up not just in meetings and planning sessions, but on the ground—helping at events, mentoring team members, and contributing generously to support the financial stability of the organization.



In Memory

In 2025, VegMichigan lost a dear friend, a dedicated volunteer, and a deeply compassionate soul. Rob Butler touched everyone he met with his kindness, generosity, and unwavering commitment to creating a more humane world. His belief in extending care to all living beings and protecting the natural world continues to inspire our work. As we move forward, we carry Rob's spirit with us—striving to lead with the same kindness he embodied and to honor his vision through the impact we make each day.



Support VegMichigan

Help Us Reach More Michiganders

Thank you for taking the time to review VegMichigan's strategic plan and our vision for the future. Through effective programs and a welcoming, collaborative approach, VegMichigan has demonstrated what is possible across the state. To create lasting behavior change and normalize plant-based eating statewide, we must establish an ongoing presence in additional cities.

In addition to programming, our experienced Metro Detroit-based staff will continue to manage operations, communications, web development, and social media, allowing all future hires to focus fully on programming. This structure maximizes efficiency and our impact on the ground.

We are seeking funding to add one additional Program Manager in Lansing, Michigan. After careful research, we are confident Lansing is the ideal next location for expansion. Lansing is home to the state capital, Michigan State University, and the Greater Lansing area includes nearly 500,000 residents. Through the years, we have hosted events on and off campus in Lansing, worked with restaurant partners, and built a small volunteer base, which has laid the groundwork for this expansion. We are excited to bring our Plant-Based Festivals, Community Outreach, and 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge to this area.

By investing in this next phase of growth, you will help deepen our statewide impact. We invite you to partner with us to bring our programs to Lansing and take a critical step toward our vision of a *Michigan where plant-based eating is widely embraced*.

**Contact Tom Progar at tom@vegmichigan.org or at 248-867-2155.
Support us at VegMichigan.org/donate**