

Dream Jobs: Animal rights activist

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Gene Baur and his Farm Sanctuary friend, Fanny the Cow. Farm Sanctuary rescued Fanny from a dairy farm. She was treated very badly there. Now, she lives a safe, happy life at Farm Sanctuary's farm in Watkins Glen, New York. Photo: Courtesy Farm Sanctuary.

Gene Baur is an activist. He started a charity group. It is called Farm Sanctuary.

Activists are people who work for a cause. They fight for something they believe in. Gene's cause is protecting animals. Farm Sanctuary runs special farms. The group rescues animals from big factory farms. Then it cares for them.

Gene shares Farm Sanctuary's message around the world. He teaches people about factory farms. At factory farms, the animals live indoors. They are squeezed into cramped spaces. Some are put in tiny cages. Gene believes these farms are very harmful. They hurt animals, people and the planet, too.

Newsela asked Gene a few questions about his work.

Where are you from? Where do you live and work?

I grew up in Los Angeles, California. Now I live near Washington, D.C. I travel a lot, though. I speak to groups about how we get our food. I explain why we should treat animals better. To do

this, we need to think about what we eat. It is important to know where your food comes from.

How did you end up in that line of work?

I felt strongly that our food system is cruel to animals. I started learning about factory farms. They treat animals cruelly, I learned. They also harm the environment.

I visited many farms. I saw how much the animals suffered. My friends and I had to do something. We started rescuing the animals. That is how Farm Sanctuary started.

Could you talk about an ordinary day at the Farm Sanctuary?

Each morning, we let the animals out. We get them ready for their day. The animals have breakfast. If they are sick, they get medicine, too.

These days, I am not at the farm much. I travel a lot. I go to different places to teach people about factory farms. I talk about why it's better to eat plants than meat. That way, you are not supporting factory farms.

I also spend time writing. I feel lucky that I can do this work. I am doing something I believe in.

Why do you think it is important to do work that you believe in?

We spend so much time in our jobs! It is sad when people don't feel good about the work they do.

When you travel, what do you talk to people about?

I talk about doing the right thing. Most of us want to be kind to animals. Factory farms are not kind. They cause animals to suffer terribly.

Caring for the Earth is also important. Factory farms cause a lot of pollution. These farms produce tons of animal waste. It pollutes the air. It also ends up in our water. This is unhealthy for us. And it is unhealthy for Earth.

What advice would you give kids about choosing a career?

Find things that inspire you. Then follow those things! Choose a career that gets you excited.





Quiz

- 1 What is the article MAINLY about?
- (A) a safe place for animals
 - (B) helping farmers farm
 - (C) finding a job on a farm
 - (D) teaching people about animals
- 2 What is the section "When you travel, what do you talk to people about?" MAINLY about?
- (A) how to find a job you love
 - (B) what animals need to be happy
 - (C) why factory farms are bad
 - (D) where Farm Sanctuary is
- 3 What happened because Gene Bauer learned about factory farms?
- (A) He helped others find jobs.
 - (B) He created Farm Sanctuary.
 - (C) He helped people feel good.
 - (D) He decided eating plants is best.
- 4 How is Farm Sanctuary different from factory farms?
- (A) The animals can go outside at Farm Sanctuary.
 - (B) Factory farms are always kind to animals.
 - (C) Farm Sanctuary causes animals a lot of pain.
 - (D) Factory farms are good for the Earth.