

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Supporters and Partners,

In 2024, the Better Food Foundation achieved a breakthrough: we demonstrated that strategic interventions at the institutional level can shift food norms for entire communities-creating the foundation for lasting, systemic change.

This report showcases how our three program areas delivered measurable impact across North America:

- 1. Transforming Food in Higher Education
- 2. Shaping Food Narratives in the Environmental Movement
- 3. The Plant-Based Defaults NGO Network (launched November 2024)

The Power of Our Moment

While political polarization makes federal food policy increasingly challenging, we've identified where real change happens: within institutions, businesses, and organizations where decision-makers can directly influence what millions of people eat every day. This institutional approach isn't just effective—it's scalable and replicable.

Our Plant-Based Defaults and Nudges strategy, refined since 2018, now operates in hundreds of universities and hospitals nationwide. What began as BFF's signature approach has evolved into a proven methodology adopted by dozens of advocacy organizations, creating a multiplier effect far beyond our direct reach.

From Proof of Concept to Movement Building

The evidence is clear: plant-based defaults work. The question now is how we scale this success. In 2024, we shifted our focus from asking "Do these strategies work?" to "How do we empower others to deploy them?"

This evolution reflects our deepest conviction: sustainable change requires a movement, not just an organization. By equipping employees, students, sustainability professionals, foodservice directors, NGO advocates, and policymakers with proven tools and training, we're building the infrastructure for widespread adoption of plant-forward food systems.

Looking Forward

Every student who experiences plant-based dining as the norm, every sustainability professional who implements our strategies, and every organization that joins our network represents progress toward our vision: a world where plantbased food is simply how we eat.

Thank you for believing in this vision and trusting us to take the bold steps necessary to make it reality. Your support enables us to continue innovating, scaling, and building the movement that will transform our food system from within.

With deepest gratitude,

Jehnifer Channin

BFF staff at our 2024 team retreat in Washington DC



Transforming Food in Higher Education

Creating Generational Change Through Higher Education



Our student mobilization program addresses a critical leverage point: the 20 million students in North American universities who will become tomorrow's leaders, policymakers, and consumers. By normalizing plant-based dining during these formative years, we're shaping lifelong food preferences and professional practices that will influence institutions for decades.

Our Vision: Transform university food systems across North America and beyond, ensuring that graduates enter the workforce having experienced plant-based meals as accessible, celebrated, and standard—not exceptional.

Dual-Track Strategy for Maximum Impact

We deploy a comprehensive approach that creates change from both directions:

- 1.Student-Led Advocacy: Training campus leaders to drive grassroots campaigns for plant-based defaults and behavioral nudges across their institutions.
- 2. Professional Development: Equipping university foodservice professionals—dining directors, sustainability coordinators, and facilities managers—with evidence-based tools and implementation strategies.

This two-pronged approach ensures that student-driven demand meets institutional capacity for sustainable change.

Record-Breaking Momentum in 2024

Our flagship **DefaultVeg Ambassador Program** reached unprecedented scale in its sixth year, demonstrating growing student appetite for food system transformation. We strategically enhanced the program to maximize both reach and impact, focusing on campaigns that deliver measurable policy changes rather than awareness alone.

2024 Achievements:

- Largest student cohort in program history
- Successful campaigns spanning campus coffeeshops, university events, academic departments, and student organizations
- Measurable implementation of plant-based defaults across diverse campus food environments

"The DefaultVeg Internship transformed me from a climateconcerned student to a strategic changemaker. Implementing an 'oat milk by default' policy on campus taught me how small, smart interventions drive significant climate impact. This experience proved that Gen Z doesn't just want change—we know how to create it."

- Hannah, student



Transforming Food in Higher Education

Equipping University Foodservice Professionals

Direct Impact Through Decision-Maker Engagement

While students create demand for change, institutional leaders control implementation. We strategically engage university sustainability staff and auxiliary service directors—the professionals who directly influence what millions of students eat daily.

In 2024, we reached 550 university foodservice professionals with evidence-based presentations demonstrating how plant-based defaults deliver multiple institutional benefits: healthier student outcomes, enhanced inclusivity, and improved cost-effectiveness. This direct-to-decision-maker approach accelerates adoption by addressing both mission alignment and operational concerns.

Strategic Partnership Amplifies Reach

Our collaboration with the University of San Diego's Center for Food Systems Transformation provides crucial academic credibility and research infrastructure. This partnership enables us to leverage university networks and faculty expertise to advance institutional food system transformation.

Key 2024 Launch: The Scope-3 Campus Network, an online community connecting North American university faculty and staff working on campus foodservice transformation. With 70 members already engaged, this platform facilitates peer-to-peer learning and coordinated implementation across institutions—creating sustainable change that extends far beyond our direct programming.



(Left) BFF and the University of San Diego teamed up to lead a networking session at the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education National Conference in Anaheim. (Right) BFF organized a panel on Plant-Powered Campus Dining for the National Association of College Auxiliary Services annual conference in Orlando.



Transforming Food in Higher Education

Here's the impact we served up in our higher education programs in 2024:











Universities in
North America
added plantbased nudges to
their dining
halls, as result of
changes made
by Sodexo

Students
received nudge
training via our
DefaultVeg
Ambassador
Program or inclass
presentations

Campaigns
were led by
student
ambassadors
to transform
campus food

Successful implement-ations of plant-based changes to campus food were achieved by students

University
foodservice
professionals
attended BFF
presentations
on plantbased defaults
and nudges

Shaping Food Narratives in the Environmental Movement

Embedding Diet Change in Climate Solutions

This program strategically targets the professional networks with greatest influence over food culture: sustainability directors, climate advocates, environmental media, and entertainment industry leaders. Rather than advocating for individual behavior change, we equip these professionals with proven tools to integrate plant-based defaults into their organizational practices and public messaging.

Our approach addresses a critical gap in climate action: while food systems generate nearly a quarter of global emissions, most environmental organizations lack concrete strategies for dietary intervention. By **demonstrating that plant-based defaults work**—and providing implementation frameworks—we transform abstract climate goals into actionable institutional practices.

Our primary impact channels are corporate sustainability teams, environmental media and creatives, entertainment industry influencers normalizing plant-based dining at events and productions, and higher education professionals integrating food system transformation into sustainability curricula.

Experiencing is believing! when climate professionals experience well-executed plant-based defaults themselves, they become advocates who can authentically promote these strategies within their own organizations and networks.

(top right): BFF presents a workshop on plant-based strategies during the first ever LA Climate Week; (Bottom left to right): Juli (who joined our team in Fall 2024) and Jennifer present during LA Food Day; A full-page ad in Variety Magazine promotes plant-based defaults for Earth Month; (Next page): Our signage was on each food table during Hollywood Climate Summit;



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A LOW CARBON FOOD SYSTEN IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

Please join us at this virtual workshop to learn how to create a low carbon food system to meet your sustainability goals.

(WHEN

) Thursday, 9/12 at 4:00pm P

(WHE

) Zoom

HOSTED BY:

Better Food Foundation
Plant Based Treaty

REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT AT LACLIMATEWEEK.COM



Shaping Food Narratives in the Environmental Movement

Here's the impact we served up in the environmental movement in 2024:



Climate
advocates
received plantbased nudge
education at
climate events
like the
Hollywood
Climate Summit



Sustainability professionals participated in online webinars about plant-based nudges led by BFF team members



Sustainability
Guides added
plant-based
defaults as a
recommended
strategy for their
industry



Plant-Based Defaults NGO Network

Creating Infrastructure for Movement-Wide Impact

The Plant-Based Defaults NGO Network addresses a critical bottleneck in food system advocacy: the lack of coordination among organizations pursuing similar goals. By training and empowering animal and environmental nonprofits to deploy proven strategies, we multiply our impact across institutions, industries, and cultural contexts far beyond BFF's direct reach.

Rapid Growth Demonstrates Sector Demand: Launched in November 2024, the Network has already engaged 120+ individuals from 70+ organizations, validating the urgent need for collaborative infrastructure in this space.

From Resource Scarcity to Strategic Coordination

Rather than competing for limited resources, Network members share proven methodologies, research, and implementation strategies. Instead of each organization developing plant-based programming independently, we leverage our collective expertise and evidence.

Key Network Output: Our partnership with Faunalytics produced a comprehensive research summary consolidating dozens of plant-based nudge studies (right). This resource enables any advocate, media outlet, or policymaker to quickly access compelling data for their initiatives—removing a major barrier to program adoption.

The Network represents a fundamental shift from single-organization impact to movement-wide transformation in the scaling of successful diet-shift solutions, creating sustainable infrastructure that will continue generating results long our after initial investment.



Plant-Based Food by Default leans on the science of behavioral nudges and choice architecture to influence diet shifts. In collaboration with Faunalytics, we present this overview of research addressing the effectiveness of these strategies.

What Are Nudges and Defaults, and How Do They Work?

As much as we might like to think otherwise, many of our daily decisions aren't the result of purposeful thought or deep consideration, but choices that emerge from our hater.com/habits, psychological biases, and social and physical environments. Nudge theory, posits that by changing the choice architecture of our decisions, we can promote better behaviors at a large scale.

Influencing the Media

Shifting Food System Narratives at Scale

BFF's media strategy transforms how millions of people encounter plant-based food stories. In 2024, our work generated 55 media placements across diverse outlets—from financial media (Bloomberg) to mainstream platforms (Vox) to specialized trade publications (Foodservice Director)—reaching audiences that traditional advocacy rarely accesses.

Strategic Narrative Shift: Rather than promoting our organization, we advance a new media framework that positions plant-based solutions as practical, popular, and economically viable. This approach moves beyond niche advocacy to mainstream discourse, normalizing plant-forward dining in business, policy, and cultural conversations.

By providing journalists with compelling success stories, concrete data, and accessible experts, we help reshape food coverage from problem-focused to solution-oriented—creating media narratives that make institutional adoption of plant-based defaults feel inevitable rather than aspirational.





newsfile

Sodexo Launches Massive Expansion of DefaultVeg Pilot, Making Plant-Based Meal Service a Norm at Campus Eateries Across USA



Movement Building

Through fiscal sponsorship, regranting and fundraising, we were able to support several community-based organizations doing excellent work to promote plant-based food norms.

In 2024 we supported the **Center for Jewish Food Ethics** (bottom left), **The Cypher** (bottom right), **Vegans of LA Food Bank** (center right), and **Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministries** (top right).

If you are interested in supporting these organizations, or would like to discuss BFF's services as a regrantor, please reach out to Director of Movement Building, Unny Nambudiripad.

JEWISH JOURNAL

Center for Jewish Food Ethics Launches "Shalom Begins on Your Plate"

Through its inaugural video initiative, "Shalom Begins on Your Plate," the organization is highlighting the ways in which plant-based eating better aligns with Jewish values.







Thank you to the generous donors who made our work in 2024 possible!

Aceso Foundation

Eric Arellano

Bobak Bakhtiari

Nicole Brodeur & Alex Payne

Kenzie Bushman

Monica Chen

Megan Cusack

Wenyong Deng & Ya-Jyun

Wang

Educational Foundation of

America

Adam Feild

Greenbaum Foundation

Nicole Gross-Camp

GSLW Fund

Mercy for Animals

Ann Merrill

Unny Nambudiripad

Dave Rolsky

Dave Swartz

Stray Dog Institute

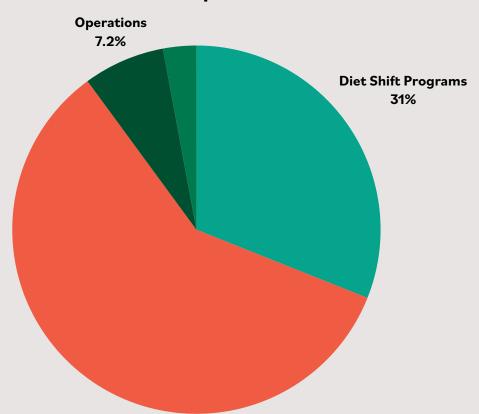
Narendra Tarikere

And several anonymous

donors

Financial Summary

2024 Expenses



Movement Building (Fiscal Sponsorship & Grants) 58.9%

Diet Shift Programs	\$564,000
Movement Building (fiscal sponsorships, grants)	\$1,070,000
Operations	\$130,000
Fundraising	\$53,000
Total	\$1,817,000

2025 Program Highlights

How BFF is Evolving to Scale our Impact

Enhanced DefaultVeg Ambassador Program

- Semester-long internship model with structured online community and video-based curriculum increases student engagement and skill development
- Service Learning Course Module enables professors to integrate plant-based defaults training directly into academic coursework, reaching students at scale
- Train the Trainers program extends our methodology to post-graduate professionals, creating certified advocates who can implement these strategies in companies and NGOs globally

Strategic Climate Movement Engagement

 Oatmilk by Default Pop-Up Bars at premier climate events (Hollywood Climate Summit, LA Climate Week) demonstrate plant-based solutions to influential climate leaders while creating memorable experiential advocacy

Aquaculture Accountability Project

- New initiative led by veteran ocean advocate Laura Cascada addresses a critical gap in institutional food transparency around fish and sea animal products
- Leverages decades of specialized expertise to provide foodservice professionals with comprehensive data for informed purchasing decisions
- Strengthens BFF's capacity to address the full spectrum of institutional protein sourcing

