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**Vigilance in your hiring process**

Are the employees working on your farm there to help care for your animals? Do their goals align with your business? Unfortunately, it’s a common strategy for some animal rights activist organizations to have individuals go “undercover” on farms to record videos that can be taken out of context, stage scenes of animal mistreatment or encourage abuse to record it without doing anything to stop it.

The Animal Ag Alliance, a non-profit dedicated to bridging the communication gap between farm and fork for more than thirty years, monitors animal rights activists and offers these tips regarding hiring:

* It is vital to thoroughly screen applicants, verify information and check all references.
* Be cautious of individuals who try to use a college ID, have out of state license plates or are looking for short-term work.
* During the interview, look for answers that seem overly rehearsed or include incorrect use of farm terminology.
* Search for all applicants online to see if they have public social media profiles or websites/blogs. Look for any questionable content or connections to activist organizations.
* Require all employees to sign your animal care policy. Provide training and updates on proper animal handling training.
* Require employees to report any mishandling to management immediately.
* Watch out for red flags, such as coming to work unusually early or staying late and going into areas of the farm not required for their job.

Always trust your gut – if something doesn’t seem right, explore it further. Be vigilant and never cut corners on your hiring process, even if you need to hire someone quickly. Doing your homework on every job applicant may be time-consuming, but it can ultimately save your business’ reputation. As always, it is important to work with local legal counsel to ensure compliance with federal and state laws for your hiring process.

You can find farm security resources and background information on animal rights activist organizations at [www.AnimalAgAlliance.org](http://www.AnimalAgAlliance.org) or reach out to the Alliance at Info@AnimalAgAlliance.org or 703-562-5160. As members of the Animal Ag Alliance, we have access to more detailed resources on hiring and farm security. If you have suspicious applicants on your farm, contact us to verify if the individuals have connections to animal rights activism.