

VEGAN VIEWS

A forum for vegan opinion
in memory of Harry Mather

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Blue footed boobies on the Galapagos islands - see Teresa Bergen's article pages 4-5

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www.veganviews.org.uk

VEGAN VIEWS

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Vegan Views, which started in 1975, is an informal forum for vegan news and discussion, produced by unpaid volunteers on a non-profit-making basis. Our emphasis is on debating issues amongst vegans and vegan sympathisers. We are independent but support the work of other vegan groups and publications.

We rely on readers' contributions, and try to publish all that is relevant and of interest. We welcome letters, articles, news, events, recipes, reviews, photos, drawings, cartoons, etc - by email if possible, with articles preferably as Word attachments. If you write to us but don't want your letter published please make this clear. Please include email and/or phone number in case we need to contact you - we will not pass on any personal information we receive. More details are on our website.

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In memory of Harry Mather (1924-2010)



Harry became editor of Vegan Views in 1985, and edited no less than 82 issues (numbers 35-116) until retiring in 2008. Harry was a true pioneer of the vegan movement, and an inspiration to many people throughout his lifetime. See our website for an extensive memorial with more photos.



OUR FINAL PRINTED ISSUE



Welcome! Once again we've tried to bring you a variety of topics in this issue, covering veganism in the UK and internationally. Our front cover shows blue footed boobies in the Galapagos islands, one of more than 2,000 photos Teresa Bergen took on her recent visit there. See more on pages 4-5 (and it's well worth looking on YouTube to see the mating dance of these attractive and unusual birds).

Our main interview (pages 10-12) is with vegan dietitians Jack Norris and Ginny Messina who, we think, make a number of helpful and very sensible comments about the health aspects of the vegan diet.

Sadly this issue of Vegan Views will be our final printed issue. Times have changed and most people now prefer to go online rather than read printed magazines. What happens next is still to be decided - we're planning to take a break for a few months, but after that we're considering adding articles and news to the website as and when ready, rather than producing a magazine as such. But another possibility is a smaller but regular online publication, possibly bi-monthly or quarterly.

Printed magazines are a lot of work, and unfortunately we no longer have enough subscribers to make printing worthwhile. Up to now the emphasis has been on the printed magazine (with the website, for the most part, consisting of pdf versions of the printed issues). Dropping the printed version will give us more time to develop the website, and to make some of the content more visible than it is at present. Individual articles and interviews arguably tend to get 'buried' within the 20-page pdf versions of the magazine that are on the website.

However, to have a significant online profile and readership we really need to find one or two people (who like what we're doing, and don't want to change the content or style too much) to help or advise us in areas that we aren't so knowledgeable about - blogging, Facebook, Twitter, website development, etc, etc. There is also the question of the extent to which we're different from other vegan groups and websites, as we don't just want to duplicate what others are doing (also how many people want to read longer articles online?).

If we have an email address for you we'll let you know later on about our plans and progress, otherwise please check our website (or let us know your email address so we can keep you informed). If you're a subscriber to the printed magazine you should have received a letter enclosed with this issue, or else an email, regarding refunds etc.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue, as always! And please let us know if you have any constructive thoughts or suggestions. Although Vegan Views itself is less relevant than it was in pre internet days, it's fantastic that (although there's still a very long way to go) the idea of veganism is nowadays spreading everywhere and making progress.

Sarah & Malcolm

Sell Vegan Views to friends, or at local shops, or meetings or festivals. If you order five or more copies of the current issue each copy costs £1 inc UK post.

BACK ISSUES

*Printed back issues (in colour from 124 onwards) cost £1.50 inc UK post
Also available free in pdf form on our website*

- V.V.126** (John Davis IVU interview, Vegan Asia, Vegan Café 4 the day)
- V.V.125** (Gentle World interview, Dan Piraro cartoons, Drimlabarra Herb Farm)
- V.V.124** (David Irving interview, Vegans in the ancient world, How many vegans?)
- V.V.123** (VON interview with David Graham, Vegans against suspenders)
- V.V.122** (Lee Hall interview, Vegan and transgendered, Critical Society)
- V.V.121** (Veggies interview, Speaking in schools, Fox hunting and eating meat, etc)

See www.veganviews.org.uk for an archive of many older issues and articles

**** The Vegan Press ****

The International Vegetarian Union (IVU) publishes a monthly summary of vegetarian/vegan news and reviews from around the world (<http://worldvegfest.org/index.php/blogs/ivu-online-news>).

One item **Can you be veg in Mongolia?** from the December 2012 issue caught my eye (and ties in with our Vegan Asia feature in Vegan Views 126).

The poster here (by PETA Asia-Pacific) shows Nominjin, a Mongolian singer-songwriter and vegan, urging other Mongolians to join her in moving towards a plant based diet.

There are links to a few articles, including one from a Mongolian newspaper (<http://ubpost.mongolnews.mn/?p=1698>) where both sides of the argument are presented: "The Mongolian nomadic culture and animal husbandry has helped Mongols survive through many centuries. Since the Mongol lands are hard and brittle, it was difficult to sustain plantation without modern technology and chemical fertilizers. Hence the main source for food and sustenance has always been largely based on meat and dairy products." However "vegetarianism and veganism is a growing trend in the world at large ... more and more vegetarian and vegan restaurants are popping up in Mongolia ... there are currently an estimated 2,500 vegans in Mongolia". Nevertheless "it would be close to impossible to make it through the harsh winters of Mongolia in the rural areas without meat".

Another link is to an article by Melanie Wilson (<http://www.vegfamily.com/articles/lessons-from-mongolia.htm>), an American vegan living in Mongolia: "Being vegan overseas has sometimes been a challenge, but we love travelling, living in foreign countries, and exposing our children to other cultures and languages ... Mongolia is a big dairy country. When we first moved here, there was no soymilk to be found, though it's sold in many other Asian countries. We started asking for it everywhere we went, and several stores began ordering it for us. We spread the word in the small vegetarian community, and soon others joined us in making requests. Initially it meant a lower chance of getting our share, but eventually supply met demand, and soymilk is now widely available."

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The Veggie People www.facebook.com/veggiepeople ("a community of vegans and veggie lovers from all around the world") is an active and very popular Facebook group.

One article posted there attracted many enthusiastic comments: "Best article on veganism I have read yet!!", and "I thought this was a really fab article about veganism as a movement with lots of diverse views".

You can find it by scrolling down to the entry for 5 February 2013. A few excerpts: "It is important to remember, especially if you are transitioning over to a vegan lifestyle, that there is no one 'correct' way to be vegan ... Although for many of us, veganism represents a lifestyle or a philosophy, it is not a religion, nor does it come with a set of rules or precepts that any one person is required to adhere to ... Every time you meet a person and say 'I'm vegan' you are making a

powerful, but quiet statement in favour of a particular vision of the world."

Another excellent article is **A Hand Through the Window** by Sarah Maguire <http://craftivist-collective.com/2013/01/22/a-hand-through-the-window-by-craftivist-sarah-maguire>

At the age of 18 Sarah travelled in Indonesia where she witnessed great poverty, something she describes very vividly.

Now, ten years later: "I am a staunch supporter of human, animal and gender rights and make a daily effort to be an ethical consumer ... Three years ago I made the decision to go vegan and I was absolutely amazed to learn that what I choose to put on my own plate will indirectly affect the starving faces I had once met in Indonesia."

Growing Green International (the Vegan Organic Network's magazine) has a new editor, Rob Jackson: "My interest in vegan-organics started when I was fresh out of university, evaluating my life and plans. I'd already been vegan for about five years by then and I'd started to realise there was something of a conflict between veganism and organic production. Discovering that organic farmers were using manure from animals and slaughterhouse products was a revelation. People I spoke with thought it was just one of those compromises we have to make living in the real (ie non-vegan) world. But that wasn't good enough for me ..."

Rob's first issue (No.30, Winter 2012) includes articles not only from gardeners, growers, and activists in the UK but also the USA, Canada, France, Spain, Portugal, and India. The magazine isn't available online, but there is more information about VON on our back page, and on their website www.veganorganic.net

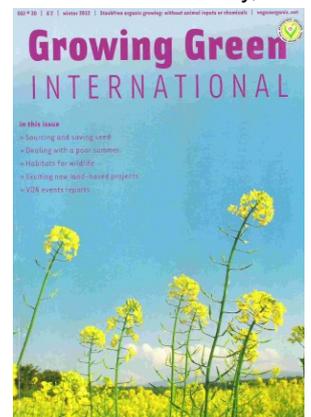
Is it Ethical to Eat Eggs from Home Grown Chickens?

This is the title of a thought-provoking article by Sivan Pardo on **The Vegan Woman** website www.theveganwoman.com/is-it-ethical-to-eat-eggs-from-home-grown-chickens

"Assuming that the chickens are home grown, laying eggs, and living in good conditions, are there any ethical problems with consuming their eggs?" - Sivan discusses the reasons why it might still not be acceptable, and there's a link to the "passionate discussion that followed" on The Vegan Woman's Facebook page.

The photo shows Gimp and Rio, residents on the farm sanctuary at **Bed & Broccoli** (www.bedandbroccoli.com.au), Australia's first all-vegan B&B. They sell leftover eggs to people who would otherwise buy eggs from the egg and chicken industry. Sivan points out in her article that while selling eggs to people has its problems ("as it might seem to normalize the consumption of eggs"), there are nevertheless some good reasons for doing this.

Malcolm Horne



Getting close to wildlife in the Galapagos

Teresa Bergen spent a week in the Galapagos Islands in January/February 2013

The hawk sits on a post, feathers ruffling in the wind, sea lions doing back bends in the sand below. I snap a photo of the hawk, who looks thoroughly unimpressed. I come a little closer. And closer. Wondering if the hawk will take off.



When I get about six feet away, close enough to thoroughly examine its talons, I start to get nervous. Why did I assume the hawk would fly away? If I disrespect it by getting even closer, perhaps it will fly straight at me, talons first.

I'd heard you could get remarkably close to animals. Sea lions and marine iguanas lounge in the paths, causing visitors to walk around or step over them. They own the place, and they know it. But despite doing my research, it's hard to prepare for standing that close to the magnificent talons of the Galapagos hawk, the islands' top predator.

Visitors can choose between two ways to visit these volcanic islands 1,000 kilometres off the coast of Ecuador. You can take a cruise, sleeping on the boat every night for a week or two, or you can stay in one of the few inhabited parts of the islands, making day trips to various sites. Either way, guides are mandatory. Since Galapagos National Park was established in 1959, officials are serious about visitors following rules. If you're somebody who defies authority at every turn, don't visit the Galapagos. Just ask the German man who's facing four years in prison for trying to smuggle out two iguanas last year.

I took a seven-day cruise on the Letty, a ship owned by the Ecuadorian line Ecoventura. This 23-year-old company has a good track record of following sustainable tourism practices. They also have a kitchen staff trained in making delicious food for various diets, including vegan. From what I heard, a good boat is much easier for vegans than staying onshore.

The Letty houses 20 passengers and 11 crew members, making it the most common size of tourist boat plying the waters. Only 85 boats are licensed to take visitors around the Galapagos. Of these, five carry 100 passengers, four carry 48, and the rest are limited to 20 or fewer. Their itineraries are carefully regulated by the park service, both in terms of which parts of which islands can be visited, and exactly when and for how long. Itineraries are subject to change when the park deems it necessary. Sometimes an island will be taken off the tourist route for years to give the land, flora and fauna a break.

Playing God

The Galapagos became famous after Charles Darwin visited in 1835. While Darwin only spent five weeks on the islands, he killed many small animals for later study. Pondering the ways in which finches differed between islands led to his famous breakthroughs regarding evolution.

As Darwin noted, the animals were doing fine evolving according to their needs. However, human interaction had already begun to compromise the islands' animal inhabitants well before the famous naturalist's visit. Giant tortoises were especially hard hit. The pirates who hid out on the islands

found tortoises good eating. Sailors learned that the lumbering reptiles, who weigh up to 250 kilograms, could go a year without food or water. They stacked live tortoises in the holds of their ships as a source of fresh meat during the voyage. Tortoise fat was also used to fuel street lamps on mainland Ecuador. Nowadays, the giant tortoise population is down to 25,000 from an estimated pre-human contact level of 250,000.

Humans also threw off the balance by introducing non-native species. First came the accidental introduction of black rats. Then people brought goats, cats, dogs, pigs, horses, cows and donkeys. Rats and goats have hit the tortoise population hard. Rats eat tortoise eggs. Goats compete for prickly pear and grasses, a tortoise's favourite foods. And goats, of course, are much quicker.

Tortoises and land iguanas are both extinct on some islands. Lonesome George, the world's most famous tortoise, died last year, the last of his species of Pinta tortoise. If left to their own trajectory, more tortoise and land iguana species would become extinct. The islands would be ruled by rats and goats, which would be bad for tortoise diversity, a zoological failure, and terrible for tourism. Who wants to take long flights and pay lots of money to visit Rat Island?



I met this giant tortoise in the Santa Cruz highlands

Instead, humans are giving evolution a guiding hand. Captive breeding programmes on Santa Cruz island are generating new tortoises and land iguanas, which are released into the wild when they're big enough to survive. Eradication programmes on several islands aim to eliminate goats and rats.

Vegans and other animal lovers might find the eradication programmes hard to stomach. Rats are generally poisoned. But goats are lured to central areas, then shot with rifles from helicopters. The locals are so matter-of-fact about this approach that I saw a video of the goat shooting playing as I waited in line at the San Cristóbal airport. Even my carnivorous travelling companions were shocked.

Life on a Tourist Boat

Travellers to the islands are unlikely to directly encounter goat eradication, although in some places you may see plastic buckets of poisonous water set out to kill paper wasps. For the most part, you will probably see the idyllic side of the islands.

Because of park rules, the Ecoventura followed a strict schedule: wake-up call at 7:00, breakfast at 7:30. A vegan

breakfast usually consisted of toast, jam, all the fresh pineapple, watermelon, cantaloupe and banana you could stand, fresh fruit juices, and yucca or potato cakes, depending on what the chef made me that day. Every single day chefs Roberto Urgiles and Xavier Mancayo cooked special vegan items, arranged beautifully and served with a smile (the photos below show them, and a soy meat dinner). Through a translator they told me that providing special diets such as vegan, gluten-free or diabetic is a big responsibility and they're happy to do it. They love that people visit the Galapagos and Ecuador from all over the world.



At 8:15 every day, we had our first shore visit. Everybody boarded two Zodiac boats, which are called pangas locally, and motored to shore. Often we had a wet landing, getting out in surf up to our thighs. Occasionally there was a dock. Our 18 passengers divided into two groups, each going with one of the ship's naturalists. Then began a slow walk on a trail, with many stops for lectures on wildlife and the snapping of a zillion photos. Each island had something special, such as the flamingoes of Floreana or the oversized lava lizards of Española. The islands vary in topography. Bartholemé is bare as the moon, while South Plazas has tall prickly pears and thick ice plant.

After a couple of hours, we'd return to the Letty to change into swimwear. We were warned to use the bathroom before getting off the Letty, as relieving yourself is prohibited on most islands.

Our itinerary was very heavy on snorkelling. "You can see more wildlife in five minutes underwater than in five hours on land", pointed out Ivan Lopez, one of our naturalists. Ivan has also taught diving for a dozen years and he made even less confident swimmers feel safe. The snorkelling was incredible. We saw huge marble rays, pointy-nosed cornetfish, white-tipped reef sharks, and huge schools of colourful fish. Special thrills included swimming with sea lions, sea turtles, and the adorable Galapagos penguins.

In the afternoons we had a buffet lunch - tons of salads and fruit - then took a siesta. I was in the Galapagos in late January/early February, which is the hot, wet season. We were all happy to rest during the hottest part of the equatorial day. Post-siesta, we did more of the same. Snorkelling, walking on islands, looking at animals, swimming, and then dinner. Eggplant and fake soy-based meat were mainstays in my vegan entrées.

We visited approximately ten islands, which are already muddled in my mind, despite my incessant note taking. Mostly I remember the amazing animals, on land and in the sea. I miss the beautiful snacks and the daily snorkelling.

Teresa, who lives in Oregon USA, is the author of Vegetarian Asia (reviewed in Vegan Views 126). There's more on the trip, and more photos, at www.teresabergen.com

Three Intriguing Animals of the Galapagos

Marine Iguanas

This sea-going iguana lives on most of the islands. Females are mainly black to blend in with the lava rocks. But some of the males are colourful, especially on



Española, where during winter they turn red and green, giving them the nickname "Christmas iguana". Since marine iguanas evolved to scrape algae off rocks with their teeth, they have flatter faces than other types of iguanas, and protruding teeth, giving them a Godzillalike look. They keep their limbs close to their sides while swimming, using their long, flat tails for propulsion.

Blue-footed Boobies (see photo on front cover of this issue)

Three types of boobies live in the Galapagos, but the blue-footed are probably the most popular due to their mesmerising courtship dance. These birds owe their blue feet to a pigment in the salemia fish they devour. This is important, as the bluer the feet, the hotter the date. During their courtship dance, the male lifts one foot high in the air, demonstrating its azure allure, then the other. If the female is interested, she'll dance too. You can tell the sexes apart from the noises they make. As our naturalist Orlando Romero put it, "that's a lady making honk". The male boobie whistles. Look on YouTube for videos of their mating dances.

Frigatebirds

This pirate of the skies lacks waterproof feathers, so it learns to steal food from other birds. They fly far from land and often follow boats. I loved watching frigates circle the Letty's top deck, slowly moving their heads back and forth, not missing a thing. Frigates are most loved by tourists for their red throats, which males puff up enormously when trying to attract a female.



If You Go ...

Park restrictions mean that the types of foods you can bring to the islands are restricted. Processed, packaged food is generally okay. Fresh food is not. This might affect your plans to pack your own vegan food. If you're on a cruise, discuss the definition of veganism beforehand, and make sure they can provide.

Ecoventura is reliable, and employs naturalists who are fluent in English and able to translate for the kitchen staff if needed: www.ecoventura.com/home.aspx

Most travellers fly to the Galapagos from Guayaquil, Ecuador's largest city. If you're staying in this big city for a night or two, you'll find plenty of vegetarian restaurants. Stay at El Manso, a boutique hotel where you can book a private room or a hostel bed. El Manso has a mostly vegetarian restaurant on site, which makes life easy. They specialize in conscious tourism. This is the best place in Guayaquil to take an evening bike tour of less touristied neighbourhoods or book an eco-day trip to a nearby nature reserve: <http://manso.ec/en>

Take the equatorial sun seriously! Bring more sunscreen than you think you'll need. Pack a wide-brimmed hat and some light-weight, long-sleeved tops. In the few inhabited parts of the islands that have shops, you'll find that hats, clothing and sunscreen are dreadfully expensive. Consider wearing a wetsuit while snorkelling for skin protection. Many people succumb to seasickness (hey, it even happened to Darwin), so you might want to bring remedies ranging from packaged ginger candy to prescription patches.

Nearsighted tourists will benefit from prescription snorkel masks. You won't want to miss a single shark. My mask from Snorkel Mart was well worth the money: www.snorkel-mart.com/index.cfm

Veganism and Krishna Consciousness

by Jenny Wood



Jenny Wood at Manchester Rathayatra Festival 2012

In this article I am going to look at Krishna Consciousness and veganism. Recent editions of Vegan Views have included articles on Buddhism and veganism, and as I have been Krishna Conscious and a vegetarian since 1977, and then a vegan since 1981, I want to look at the relationship between this philosophy and veganism. Compassion to animals is at the very heart of Vaishnava philosophy (the proper term for Krishna Consciousness), and a vegetarian diet is a prerequisite. In the words of Srila Prabhupada (founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness or ISKCON): *“The narrow idea that my family or my brother is good, and that I can kill all others, is criminal ... Real philosophy is ... friendliness to all living entities.”* (Science of Self-Realization (1978) p.180)

Thus one would assume that a vegan diet was best of all because it is the only diet that does not involve the killing and oppression of other animals.

However, there is a problem. According to Vaishnava belief, Krishna, when he appeared on earth 5000 years ago, lived as a cowherd. In fact he is often called the Butter Thief because he enjoyed stealing the butter that the elderly gopis (cowherd maidens) had just churned. Also, in India, the cow is seen as a mother because she nourishes people with her breast milk. In fact, when the earth was polluted and destroyed by the so-called leaders of society, Mother Earth assumed the form of a cow to plead for the advent of Lord Krishna (Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (1970) p.1).

Because of this sacredness of cows, and Krishna's predilection for their milk products, cow's milk is seen as the most holy of foods: *“[Milk] can increase the duration of one's life ... Although in this age men can live up to one hundred years, their duration of life is reduced because they do not drink large quantities of milk ... One should take ample milk, and thus one can prolong one's life, develop his brain, execute devotional service and ... attain the favour of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”* (Srimad Bhagavatam Book 8, chapter 6, verse 12, commentary)

This meant that when I embraced veganism I unwittingly threw myself on a collision course with ISKCON devotees. Ironic

because it was my interest in Krishna Consciousness which led to me going vegetarian and consequently vegan in the first place!

In 1981 I was walking in Doncaster's Arndale Centre when an ISKCON devotee approached me, selling books. Unprovoked, he started to criticise my wearing of a vegan badge (he didn't know I was a devotee myself), even implying that I must be an atheist (?). A few years later I had a lot of contact with devotees, and often my partner and I would go to the London temple. Although we were always catered for as vegans, there was a kind of silent disapproval of our dietary choice. This culminated in a heated disagreement with a devotee in the street who told me I could not be both a vegan and Krishna Conscious. I took his words to heart and left the movement (it was not the only reason).

In 2002 I returned to Vaishnavism but this time I decided to follow the central teaching of Srila Prabhupada (who said that if you have problems with the philosophy or lifestyle, then 'just chant Hare Krishna' and everything will be fine). This approach actually led to a discovery that veganism and Krishna Consciousness were not in fact mutually exclusive but were largely compatible.

Cow protection

In Vaishnava thought there is the notion of 'go-raksya' or cow protection. The sending of calves to veal units, exploitation of dairy cows, and the slaughter of old and unwanted animals, are all absolutely contrary to this concept. Most milk produced (and consumed by devotees) is a product of this cruelty. It is therefore fair to argue that devotees should not use milk unless it is produced in accordance with Vaishnava principles. Such milk is known as 'ahimsa milk', but is not easy to obtain. This would mean that most devotees would be dietary vegans, and that devotional cookbooks would use an option of soya or ahimsa milk (instead of huge quantities of milk, cheese, yoghurt and cream).

This stance is supported (in theory) by the teachings of Swami BV Narayana, a god brother of Srila Prabhupada, who many devotees consider his successor. When questioned on the poor treatment of cows in the USA he responded: *“That is a very wrong thing. It is cruelty. The Supreme Lord will surely punish such cruel persons. They will take birth as cows, and those cows will take birth as humans and do the same thing to them. All activities have a reaction - good or bad - so we should not do such things.”* The interviewer then asked him if therefore the milk in the grocery store should be avoided and he replied: *“It is like meat. We should not take it.”* (Bhakti Yoga - Yoga for Peace (2012) pp.13-14) - my emphasis.

In this way I would argue that a vegan diet is a valid Vaishnava diet, and that consequently devotees should consider it. Not only this, but I would argue that it is perfectly in keeping with Vaishnava philosophy to seek alternatives to animal products which are currently used by devotees but which are cruel, for example conch shells. The rules for deity worship include bathing the deities in cow's milk; however I would argue that if the cows were abused in the obtaining of this milk then how can it be used to bathe the deity, which is seen by a devotee as God/dess incarnate? Is not such milk tainted with blood; and would any Vaishnava believe it was acceptable to bathe

Radhe-Krishna in blood? (I prefer to use the term 'Radhe-Krishna' as it includes both the God and Goddess forms of the Absolute, Radhe being Krishna's eternal consort.)

So what would I do if I was given prashadam (sanctified food that has first been offered to the deity) containing ahimsa milk, would I accept it? I was asked this question recently by a devotee.

My answer? No. I am sceptical of claims that any milk can be ahimsa other than a mother's breast milk for her offspring. There are still inherent cruelties in any dairy industry as calves are still denied their mother's milk - their birthright - and even if the males are kept for use as 'tractors' they are still castrated.

There is a lovely story in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* where Krishna naughtily allows the calves to get loose and drink the cows' milk. This is how I see Krishna, always compassionate to all beings and always willing to break rules to show the true way to live.

Further reading

- *Bhakti Yoga - Yoga for Peace* (BhaktiMedia 2012) by Swami BV Narayana
- *Kitchen of Love - recipes to feed your soul* (BhaktiMedia 2012) by Yasodanandan das - most recipes are vegan and the few which are not are easily adapted.

The two books above are based on the vegan friendly teachings of Swami BV Narayana, and are available from www.backtobhakti.com

- *The Higher Taste* (Bhaktivedanta Book Trust) - the second edition (2006) in particular has many recipes that can be adapted for vegans, but this book is mainly good for its presentation of vegetarianism as a philosophy.



Jaganath and his brother and sister (forms of Lord Krishna and the Goddess Durga) at Manchester Rathayatra Festival 2012

Live like an Essene

Have you ever wondered why the Master known as Jesus was born in Palestine? Well, the answer is obvious when you think about it because the most holy people in the world at that time were the 'Essenes'. They were a vegetarian and compassionate people, and the man who became known as 'Jesus' belonged to the most devout group of Essenes, called the 'Nazarenes'.

The 4th century church father Epiphanius described the 'Nazarenes' as follows - they acknowledged Moses and believed that he had received laws, and so they kept all the Jewish observances, but they would not offer sacrifice or eat meat. They considered it unlawful to eat meat or make sacrifices with it.

Subsequently the Essenes and Nazarenes in particular were disliked, or even hated, by the other Jewish sects because of their holier than thou lifestyle.

I realise this must be confusing to those of you who like to believe in the traditional gospels, but Jesus would not have eaten meat or fish any more than I would. It would have been a complete abhorrence, and totally against his divine mission as the manifestation of love. The concepts of Jesus being the lamb of God, and the disciples fishing for the deeper mysteries, became corrupted as fact rather than a way of comprehending the allegories. You might ask was this a deliberate ploy?

What John Todd Ferrier (1855-1943), the founder of the Order of the Cross, tells us is that the accepted gospel writers had their own agenda when they developed the early Pauline church. They didn't know Jesus or his disciples and didn't even know his real name, because 'Jesus' is a state of being, similar to the consciousness of Buddha.

They created a superhuman saviour that you only had to believe in to be 'saved'. You didn't have to aspire to be like him and live in a non-violent vegan/fruitarian manner. It was much easier to control the masses that way. Can you imagine the trouble in stipulating that to be a proper Christian you had to be at least a vegetarian and be compassionate to all living things? How many people would have joined? So everything was dumbed down. You only had to believe in Jesus to be allowed to join the new Christian sect.

So those of you who today live a vegan lifestyle, abhor violence, and want to live peacefully supporting your fellow humans, are really living the gentle Essene lifestyle.

Richard Kemble

Why are few spiritual teachers vegan?

This is the title of a very interesting 1750-word article by Will Tuttle, which can be read in full at www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/why-are-few-spiritual-teachers-vegan

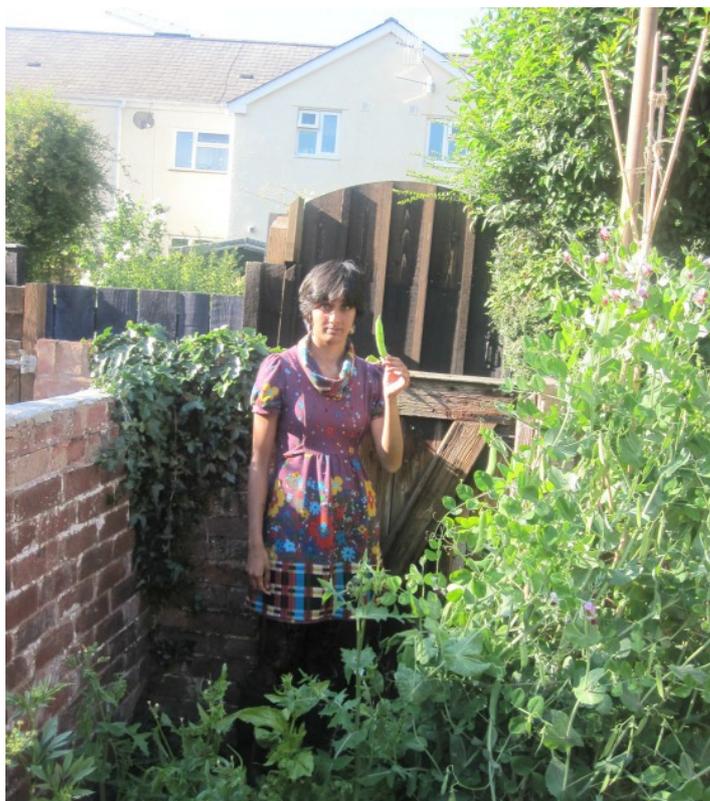
Here's an excerpt: "Even if a deeply realized spiritual teacher were to emerge and teach a vegan doctrine of compassion for all life, for that teacher's message to be embraced on a mass scale, our culture would have to evolve and transform enormously so that individuals would be able to be receptive to it; otherwise the message would simply be suppressed or modified."

And another: "Real political and spiritual progress comes from the grass roots, not from the top down. As vegans, we already are the spiritual leaders of the coming more-awakened society. As the vegan movement continues to gather momentum, spiritual teachers who aren't vegan will be increasingly ignored as hypocritical and out of touch."

Will, who has been vegan since 1980, is the author of the acclaimed book *The World Peace Diet* www.worldpeacediet.com

Spring into gardening this season – the vegan way

Zion Lights, who lives in Devon in south west England, explains why vegan organic gardening is both possible and enjoyable



Vegans usually express outrage when they learn that the fertilisers they have used in their gardens in the past have contained products from dead animals such as blood meal, fish products, bone meal, faeces, or other animal-origin matter. These are by-products of an industry that exploits animals, and they can be difficult to avoid when you're shopping for your garden, but I can testify that vegan organic gardening and farming are not only possible, but enjoyable. Unnecessary harm to animals can be easily avoided if you follow a few simple principles in your garden at home. First, by preparing it for planting, you can eradicate the need to buy products like fertilisers, and also minimise the amount of work you need to put into your garden throughout the year.

1. Prepare your garden

Spring is a great time to do this. Just as you clean the home, 'clean' your garden. Don't make the big mistake of tilling your garden though; this only brings up dormant weeds and disturbs the worms living in it. I recommend reading *The One-Straw Revolution* by Masanobu Fukuoka [1] if you are interested in more information on gentle, or 'No Dig' gardening.

If you have gardened before, then you'll first need to remove and compost any dead annual plants that remained over winter. Try to do so without disturbing the soil too much. Next, and this advice is relevant even if you have grown crops in your garden before, you'll need to lay down some good mulch material. By doing so you contribute to the quality of the soil and everything you grow in it. Vegan sources of mulch might be a thick layer of hay, cardboard, bulky compost, or grass cuttings. A good layer of mulch conserves water, helps to reduce weed growth, helps to keep weeds from seeding,

reduces evaporation, adds substance to the soil, and can help to deter slugs. You don't need to dig your mulch into the soil, because earthworms will take it down into the soil efficiently over time. There are other vegan sources of soil nutrition, starting with ...

Compost: I personally believe that home composting is one of the most positive things we can do as individuals for the health of our planet. If you want to know why, read this article [2]. If you use the compost you make at home on your plants, you will naturally recreate a healthy and self-sustaining cycle where, instead of throwing away food scraps and thereby creating waste in the world, you instead recycle them into nutrient-rich soil for new foods to grow in. This is the essence of composting.

You can compost almost anything plant-based, and the longer you leave it to rot down the better quality compost it will become. Don't fall for myths and avoid composting specific things, or stir up what's in the compost bin - this disturbs the natural ecosystem that thrives within it and the growth of the fungi that are needed to digest the decaying matter into good quality compost. Just keep an eye on your compost so that it doesn't become too dry or too wet, in which case you can add more food scraps/chunks of cardboard as required.

Some vegans choose to close the nutrient loop entirely by using humanure [3] in their gardens. This is basically human waste that is broken down using hot-composting toilets over a minimum of two years. Easier options are liquid feeds, which are ideal for nourishing the soil before the new planting season begins, and as it progresses. Liquid composts include comfrey or nettles, which are easily grown and/or harvested locally. Soak the leaves in water for a few weeks before draining it and adding the feed to the soil. Nettles are packed with a variety of essential nutrients that promote soil health and plant growth, and both nettles and comfrey are excellent sources of potash. Also recommended for the vegan gardener is human urine from vegans, which helps to add nitrogen to your soil. This needs to be diluted in order to reduce its potency. I recommend the book *Liquid Gold* [4] to anyone who is interested in this waste-free use of urine.

Another form of wonderful liquid nourishment for your plants is worm castings (encouraging worms in the garden is becoming known as natural vermiculture). This is basically worm pee, and it is rich in nutrients and excellent for improving soil health. The natural way of increasing worm castings in your garden is by establishing natural worm populations in it. As you improve the soil, worms will congregate within it. Composting worms love cool, damp and dark environments, which are easily found under a thick layer of mulch.

The following should be used sparingly:

Many websites recommend using lime on your soil to provide calcium and magnesium, and to raise the pH level by lowering the acidity of the soil, because most plants prefer a fairly neutral soil pH for optimum growth. You can test your soil to see if you need to raise the pH level, but if your soil is not very acidic, applying lime to it will damage the growth of certain plants such as blueberries, rhododendrons and azaleas, which require soil with a low pH.

Wood ash is also often used by gardeners because it is high in potassium, however it is very alkaline and will harm acid-loving plants. The nutrients in wood ash are very soluble so they easily wash through open compost heaps, which is why, if you choose to use it, it needs to be applied to your soil in spring when the growth is just starting.

2. Decide what to plant

For me, deciding what to plant is the most exciting part of gardening. I recommend using permaculture principles as much as possible, such as the *Three Sisters* method [5], as these will maximise the use of space and plant growth in your garden, as well as encourage nutrient-exchange between your plants. To begin, observe your garden to learn which areas get the most sun, which the most shade, whether some patches are wetter or boggier than others, and so on. Then draw a sketch of your garden and plot out where you will plant specific crops. This will be invaluable next spring when you want to see which parts of your garden suited which plants best. Get to know your garden, be willing to experiment, and you will grow along with it.

I suggest that you start small and choose plants that you know you will enjoy and have the time to harvest. In my experience, peas (see photo previous page) can grow in even the most compact, untended soil, so long as they get plenty of sun.



Cherry tomatoes taste great, don't require cooking, and are full of vitamin C. If you get a whole glut of them like we did, you can make smashing chutney from them if you harvest them before they ripen.

Strawberries are easy to grow and you don't need to buy seeds for them, as they reproduce quickly by sending out runners. For this reason they aren't ideal if you have a small garden, as they have a tendency to spread, but they are of course divine when enjoyed with a bowl of vegan cream. Strawberry plants need to be protected by mesh or wire netting if you want to eat the berries before the birds do.

Spinach is full of nutrients including iron and folic acid and it is an easy addition to any meal. Salad greens are a must for any vegan and, in my experience, easy to grow. Nothing beats the taste and texture of fresh lettuce picked from the garden.



Beans and squashes grow well together and therefore take up surprisingly little space. Beans are brimming with protein and nutrients, and can be grown easily along walls, using trellises as they gain height. Squashes keep for a long time so you won't end up with a glut of them and then a too-much-squash induced aversion. They also make wonderful gifts for friends and family members.

Root vegetables usually require more work. Carrots can be tricky to grow, but they tend to thrive when planted in soil that was used to grow other crops in the year before. You can choose from many varieties of carrot seeds and keep the seed

lines alive by doing so (supermarkets usually only stock a single variety of carrot because it is the most uniform-looking, and easy to grow in large quantities). If you're an experienced gardener or have more time and energy on your hands, try growing different varieties of potato too.

Scatter wild flower seeds across your garden to attract bees, butterflies, and welcome insects. Poppies look lovely among the veg and take no tending to grow. Sunflowers need a lot of light but they attract bees in large numbers, and the seeds from a single blooming sunflower can easily be saved for next year's planting season. Grow them along walls to help keep them from blocking access to other plants.



3. Obtain your seeds

Before you hit the seed catalogues, take a look around your local area to see whether any seed swapping events exist. If not, you might be able to set one up, or use social media to arrange swapping via post. Otherwise, I recommend the following organic seed companies in the UK:

Seeds of Change www.seedschange.com

Seed to Plate www.seedtoplate.co.uk

Tamar Organics www.tamarorganics.co.uk

Duchy Originals www.duchyoriginals.com

4. Get planting!

When you plant out your seeds, poke holes into the ground and drop the seeds in, rather than tilling over your nicely mulched soil. Be sure to water your garden well and often; consider installing a water butt in your garden as rainwater is free from the chemicals in tap water, and harvesting it also completes another natural cycle. When you water your plants with liquid gold, avoid getting it on the actual leaves of salads. You can use it often however as all liquid composts drain from the soil, especially during rainy seasons. Finally, have fun!

Further reading

[1] *The One-Straw Revolution* by Masanobu Fukuoka
www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1590173139

[2] *Five reasons why composting is the greenest thing you can do* by Zion Lights www.onegreenplanet.org/lifestyle/5-reasons-why-composting-is-the-greenest-thing-you-can-do

[3] *It's time to start thinking about the environmental impact of poo* by Zion Lights www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/its-time-to-start-thinking-about-the-environmental-impact-of-poo

[4] *Liquid Gold: the lore and logic of using urine to grow plants* by Carol Steinfeld www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1903998484

[5] *Three Sisters method*
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Sisters_\(agriculture\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Sisters_(agriculture))

On Zion's website www.zionlights.co.uk you can read articles by her on animals and nature, the environment, ethical consumerism, parenting, political and social issues, etc. She is also on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ziontree>

The Vegan Organic Network (VON) www.veganorganic.net promotes vegan organic methods of agriculture and horticulture - see their listing on our back page.

Vegan dietitians for life

Interview with Jack Norris & Ginny Messina

In Vegan Views 123, Paul Appleby reviewed the book *Vegan for Life* by American dietitians Jack Norris and Virginia (Ginny) Messina (Da Capo Press 2011; ISBN 978-0-7382-1493-1, e-book ISBN 978-0-7382-1497-9). In this issue Paul interviews the authors.

Could you begin by telling us a little about yourselves and your paths to veganism?



Jack Norris: My path to veganism started on a fishing trip I took while in college. It had always bothered me how people treated animals with no regard to their feelings, and witnessing the fish struggle to breathe made me seriously question our treatment of animals.

Eventually I got some information from PETA that persuaded me to give up eggs from battery cage hens. Soon after, I stopped eating mammals and birds, then fish, and finally became vegan.

I got involved in animal advocacy and in 1993 co-founded *Vegan Outreach*.

Vegan Outreach produces booklets exposing the conditions on modern day animal farms and in slaughterhouses. We personally hand them to millions of pedestrians each year, mainly at colleges in the U.S. and Canada.

I became a Registered Dietitian in 2001 after coming across numerous people who said they had been vegan or vegetarian and had not been healthy. I wanted to address this, along with other nutrition issues surrounding a vegan diet. Now I maintain the websites www.VeganHealth.org and www.JackNorrisRD.com

When I'm not doing my various jobs, I like to play ultimate frisbee and lift weights.



Ginny Messina: It's interesting that Jack and I both ended up as vegan dietitians who bring fairly similar perspectives to our work, since we followed very different paths to get here. Vegetarian or vegan diets weren't really on my radar when I started out in dietetics. I came to vegetarianism through the kitchen - newly married and experimenting with different cooking styles.

As someone who has always cared deeply about animals, but just wasn't making the connection with the food on my plate, I was ready for a

vegetarian message. I found that message in the 1970s cookbook *Laurel's Kitchen*, which was dedicated to a "glossy black calf on his way to the slaughterhouse many years ago". I don't know why those words hit me so profoundly and changed the way I was to eat (and live) forever, but reading them started me on a path towards a very different kind of life and career.

It was several years later when I went to work for the *Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM)* that I had my first exposure to a vegan message and an animal rights ethic. That's an ethic that really touches on all parts of my life now because it underscores my work and all of my lifestyle choices. When I'm not working on vegan nutrition projects, I'm involved in local animal issues related to spay/neuter programs and the animal shelter.

When I can grab a little bit of leisure time, it's usually spent reading, practising piano, learning to knit, and working in the garden.

What prompted you to write *Vegan for Life*?

GM: I had been working on and off on a book for several years before Jack approached me about writing *Vegan for Life*. I had this idea that vegans needed a book that they could read in just a few hours - something that offered just enough information to give vegans confidence that they are making good food choices. My concern has long been that many vegans are not getting reliable nutrition information, and so I wanted to write something that was very accessible and balanced.

JN: We also felt that there needed to be an updated, comprehensive yet concise guide to eating vegan. *Becoming Vegan* by Brenda Davis and Vesanto Melina had been that guide, but it had not been updated in many years, during which time much pertinent research had been conducted. For example, about ten studies were published showing vegans who did not supplement their diets with vitamin B12 had elevated homocysteine (greatly elevated in many cases) which can lead to stroke, dementia, and other long term illnesses.

Studies on vegans and calcium needs had been indicating vegans were not getting enough calcium, and I had come across many vegans who had become vitamin D deficient and suffered from severe fatigue. These issues needed to be addressed.

In the introduction to *Vegan for Life* you list the "top ten myths about vegan diets". Which do you consider to be the most persistent of these myths and how can we best dispel it?

JN: In the book we phrase one myth as "vegans need less calcium than omnivores", but my biggest concern is for vegans who think they don't need to pay attention to calcium. If a

vegan isn't aware of how they are specifically getting enough calcium, then there is a very good chance they aren't. Only a few leafy greens are high in absorbable calcium - collard greens, turnip greens, mustard greens, and kale. If you are not eating at least three servings of those foods a day (one serving is ½ cup cooked), then you need to be having calcium fortified non-dairy milk (or another calcium-fortified food), calcium-set tofu, or taking a calcium supplement to ensure you are getting enough calcium.

GM: It's hard to choose just one! I think the most important myths are those pertaining to vitamin B12 and calcium. I still encounter vegans on a very regular basis who don't want to believe that they need vitamin B12 supplements.

These myths about B12 and calcium get repeated over and over again in the vegan community, sometimes even by those who are in positions of considerable authority in that community.

This was a big reason for writing *Vegan for Life*. We wanted to provide solid evidence to counter those beliefs and help vegans make optimal food choices.

Many vegans place great faith in the China Study, and the book of the same name by Professor T Colin Campbell. However, you do not cite results from the study in *Vegan for Life*, saying that it “doesn't provide information ... on the health of vegans”. Would you care to explain to readers why the findings of the China Study are largely irrelevant to vegans?

JN: The China Study is an ecological study, which means that it pools information from different populations, in this case different regions of China, and compares the averages among the groups, rather than from individual subjects.

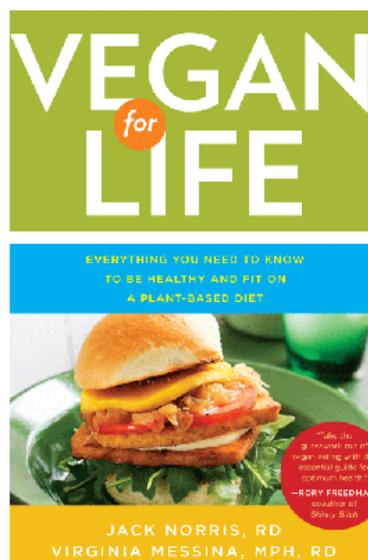
There is certainly nothing wrong with doing this - it gives researchers an idea of what about those regions might be useful for further research, looking at individuals rather than regions. We now have a great deal of data on many of the disease markers of actual vegans, and some data on their disease rates, through the Oxford Vegetarian study, EPIC-Oxford, studies of Seventh-day Adventists, and a few other studies. That data, which is highly relevant to vegans at large, is what we focused on in the book.

GM: I would add that the findings from the China Study aren't exactly *irrelevant* to vegans. Any well-designed study like the China Study that looks at health impacts of animal versus plant foods has relevance to vegans. However, because it didn't include vegan subjects, the China Study doesn't speak specifically to the health of vegans. We can't look at that data and conclude that vegans are healthier than lacto-ovo-vegetarians or pescovegetarians, for example.

Something that is also a little bit unique to our book is that we wanted to help readers understand that some types of studies carry more weight than others - or that they have different purposes. As Jack pointed out, ecological studies, which include the China Study, generate findings that stimulate further research. But they aren't the type of studies that allow us to make statements about causal relationships between diet and health.

In fact, there are instances where ecological studies have led us completely astray. For example, the belief that vegans have lower calcium needs than omnivores comes, in part, from an ecological study that compared rates of hip fracture to protein intake around the world. It showed that hip fracture rates were highest in countries with the highest per capita protein intake. The obvious conclusion is that eating protein causes weak bones. But it's turning out that this conclusion may in fact be wrong. There are other explanations for the

differences in hip fracture rates in these countries, all of which are missed in ecological studies.



What are the main advantages of a well-planned vegan diet?

JN: On average, vegans have lower LDL (low-density lipoprotein) and total cholesterol levels. In studies done on healthy populations, vegans have had an average cholesterol level of 160 mg/dl (4 mmol/l) compared to 202 mg/dl (5 mmol/l) for regular meat eaters.

Vegans also have lower levels of triglycerides, which is interesting because many clinical trials have shown that high carbohydrate diets raise triglyceride levels; apparently this isn't the case for vegans. Vegans are less likely to have high blood pressure, and more likely to have lower body weight.

Best of all, after adjusting for all the factors that might affect diabetes, vegans have been shown to have a 62% lower risk of diabetes than regular meat-eaters. Not bad!

GM: I agree that the findings regarding health benefits for vegans are encouraging. I'm not quite convinced that a person needs to be 100% vegan to reap them, since it's a theory that hasn't been tested. But, definitely, a person who is eating a typical American or British diet is extremely likely to see some improvements in their health by switching to a vegan diet; a drop in cholesterol level at the very least.

But, what we tried to do in our book was to recognize those advantages without over-promising any particular health benefit. Not all vegans are slender and not all vegans are protected from heart disease and cancer. I always think of those health benefits as a nice little perk anyway. The real advantage to me is the positive impact we make with a vegan diet.

What are the main disadvantages of a vegan diet and how can they be overcome?

GM: Aside from vitamin B12 and vitamin D, we know that all nutrient needs can be met through consumption of plant foods. The real disadvantage is that western cultures rely on animal foods for many of their nutrients and so vegans don't have cultural or family habits to fall back on. I grew up getting calcium from milk and if you had taken that milk away, my mother would not have had any idea what to feed me to ensure adequate calcium intake.

The fact is that a vegan diet is a foreign way of eating for most people and so we have to actually learn how to meet

nutrient needs. It's not hard; it's just different. We do need to learn where to get calcium and iodine, and we have to work a little bit harder to ensure adequate intake of zinc and adequate absorption of both zinc and iron. We also need to ensure adequate vitamin D, although that's an issue for everyone, vegan or not.

JN: You should make sure you have a reliable source of vitamin B12, calcium, iodine, vitamin A, and omega-3 fatty acids. For some people, vitamin D, zinc, and iron could also be issues. Rarely will protein be a problem unless someone doesn't eat legume products.

Which aspects of the health of vegans require further research?

JN: Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) is a long-chain omega-3 fatty acid and the main dietary sources for omnivores are fish and eggs. DHA is much lower in the blood of vegans who do not take DHA supplements than in the blood of omnivores, but it is not clear if these lower DHA levels matter. My main concern is with the possibility of low DHA levels reducing cognition. It could be that vegans have all the DHA they need in their tissues (where it matters) while having low levels in the blood. It would be great to know more about this.

GM: I agree that we need more research on the significance of those lower blood levels of DHA in vegans, and also on the effects and potential benefits of DHA/EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid, another long-chain omega-3 fatty acid) supplements for vegans.

Zinc is another area where I'd like to see some more data. Vegans often have lower intakes, and zinc is absorbed less well from plant foods. Does this matter? Since it's hard to measure zinc status, and indeed the effects of the lower intakes among vegans, it's something we don't fully understand.

We also need much better information about the health and nutrient needs of older vegans. As a post-menopausal vegan, I'm especially interested in the relationship of protein intake to health in older women. It's so important for preserving muscle mass and for bone health. There is ongoing discussion among the experts in protein nutrition about whether recommended intakes for older people are high enough. I'd like to know more about how that impacts those of us who are vegan and trying to hold on to every milligram of bone and muscle we can!

JN: I'd also add that we don't know much about the cancer rates of vegans. I see that a report from the Adventist Health Study-2 is in the process of being published indicating that vegans have a 16% reduced risk of cancer compared with meat eaters. That's actually a disappointingly low risk reduction, in my opinion. I was hoping for more like the approximately 50% reduced risk of diabetes for vegans.

What do you consider to be the chief 'take home' message of *Vegan for Life*?

JN: For years, the mantra in the vegan community was that plants contain all the necessary nutrients for good health with the implication being that all you had to do was eat a variety of plant foods and you'd be just dandy.

The message of *Vegan for Life* is: "Not so fast - there's more to it than that."

GM: Yes, I think this sums up the message pretty well. There is a little bit of a learning curve when it comes to healthy eating. That's true for any kind of diet, of course.

You are both Registered Dietitians: does veganism have a generally positive or negative image among dietitians in North America?

JN: My assessment is that it's a mixed bag, with many RDs thinking it's a great diet and even one to strive for, but others consider it lacking in too many nutrients. The *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)* has a position paper that supports the use of "appropriately planned" vegan diets at all stages of the life cycle. Many of our colleagues balk at the phrase "appropriately planned" because they believe all diets should be appropriately planned. While that is a good point, it's also true that it's easier to suffer acute nutritional deficiencies on a vegan diet. Although I appreciate the fact that the *AND* qualify their statement, it is annoying to know that, in comparison to the vegan diet, inappropriately-planned, or unplanned, long-term omnivore diets can increase the risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease, among other problems.

GM: I'd say that "mixed bag" describes it pretty well. Many dietitians are still nervous about vegan diets, believing that it's difficult to meet nutrient needs. In the U.S. the dairy industry has done an incredible job of convincing even health professionals that dairy foods are absolutely essential in the diet. But other RDs embrace veganism for health benefits. I don't see many dietitians speaking out on the ethical imperative of veganism, though. That's an area where we have a long way to go.

What are your plans for the future?

GM: My goal as always is to help make a vegan diet a safe and realistic option for as many people as possible. To that end,



I plan to keep writing about vegan nutrition on my blog www.TheVeganRD.com and elsewhere on the internet. I also volunteer for the vegetarian practice group of the *AND*, contributing and reviewing written materials on vegetarian nutrition for dietitians. I have a book on vegan nutrition for women being published this summer and am working on another book for next year.

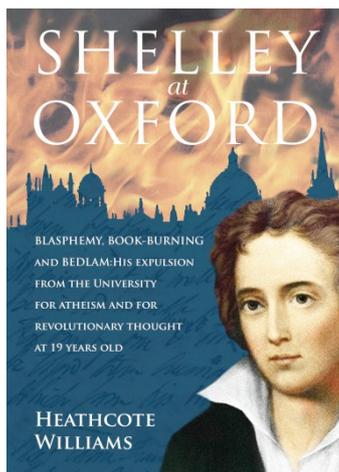
JN: I will continue to maintain www.VeganHealth.org and www.JackNorrisRD.com to make sure vegans have the latest pertinent information regarding their diet.



And *Vegan Outreach* will continue to promote a vegan diet. We are happy to report that, in the United States, the demand for meat has decreased in recent years, saving millions of animals from a lifetime of misery - we plan to continue until our efforts are no longer needed.

Thank you for your time and for giving readers the benefit of your knowledge and experience.

Shelley at Oxford



Shelley at Oxford: Blasphemy, Book-Burning & Bedlam by Heathcote Williams, Huxley Scientific Press 2012, 32 pages, £6.

In the history of vegetarianism the presence of Percy Shelley (1792-1822) is huge. Despite the fact that he died at the age of only 29, he has achieved immortality in the public consciousness. Shelley is the quintessential rebel, a beautiful revolutionary, and a key member of a celebrated group of writers and poets which

included his wife Mary Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein*.

In fact, Shelley and associated figures (Alexander Pope, Thomas Tryon, and Joseph Ritson) promoted vegetarianism before the word had even been coined in 1847. These 'Pythagoreans' combined the ideals of compassion, non-violence, and respect for nature, with the fundamental idea that slaughtering animals for meat was disgusting and immoral.

Shelley at Oxford provides us with a new account and gives us "the real Shelley, the intellectual revolutionary free of the romantic stereotype". In Heathcote Williams's inimitable and distinctive style he presents a prose poem which tells the story of Shelley's radicalism during his brief time at University College. He was threatened with blasphemous libel, and expelled from the University. How ironic that Shelley is now one of University College's most famous alumni. This status is highlighted by his memorial within the college, a white marble sculpture of a reclining nude and dead Shelley washed up on the shore at Viareggio in Italy after his drowning. Also, in 2005 the college (in association with the Bodleian Library) acquired some of Shelley's letters to further enhance its connection with the poet.

What would Shelley make of all this, and the way that Oxford University operates now? It's fair to say that he would be appalled at the University's animal lab which demonstrates the most disturbing lack of enlightenment. Two hundred years after he was thrown out of Oxford, and in many ways so little has changed. The reviled establishment is still in control, and still making decisions which display a dearth of humanity or compassion. In another 200 years Shelley's memorial will (almost certainly) still be there, but will anyone remember the despicable vivisectionists that are currently working within the University?

In his preface the author points out that Shelley was hugely influential for people like Karl Marx, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, Mahatma Gandhi, and Upton Sinclair. *Shelley at Oxford* is a timely reminder of why subversive writers and artists (like Shelley and Heathcote Williams) are so important.

Paul Freestone

This review was first published on the OxVeg blog <http://oxveg.wordpress.com> (part of the local Oxford Vegetarians & Vegans group).

An audio-visual version of the poem is on YouTube in six parts: www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjxzrA1fyl&list=PLLM58ROhsS8OUpa_oa_W3KcRcXNDt1Bv

John Davis has also written about Shelley (in his History of Veganism blog): 'Shelley - the first celebrity vegan' www.worldvegfest.org/index.php/blogs/john-davis/141-shelley-the-first-celebrity-vegan

40th IVU World Vegfest

San Francisco and Los Angeles 2012

The photos below are from last October's IVU World Vegfest in California - over 5,000 attended the big food fair in San Francisco. See <http://worldvegfest.org> for many more photos, plus details of the 2013 Vegfest in Malaysia (3-9 October) and 2014 Vegfest in Ghana. All the food at IVU events is vegan!



Standing room only for one of the talks in San Francisco



Written on Venice Beach LA



Lunch at Native Foods, Westwood LA

- **Plant-powered Professionals** is a worldwide list compiled by Butterflies Katz of around 30 medical doctors, registered dietitians, certified nutritionists, doctors of veterinary medicine, etc - all either vegan or advocating a 100% plant-based diet. The list includes photos and potted biographies, see <http://thevegantruth.blogspot.co.uk/2012/12/plant-powered-professionals-vegan.html> (and it includes the dietitians we've interviewed in this issue, Jack Norris and Ginny Messina).
- **100 Vegan-eating Dogs** ("an encyclopedia of vegan dog nutrition"), is another list compiled by Butterflies. See <http://thevegantruth.blogspot.co.uk/2013/01/dogs-that-eat-vegan-directory.html> - also with photos and biographies!
- **Vegan Dog Nutrition** This Facebook group www.facebook.com/groups/vegandognutrition (set up last year by Sarah Austin and Butterflies) has continued to prove very popular with over 1200 members at present.

Fantastic Not Plastic !



“The environmental impacts resulting from the accumulation of plastic waste are huge and increasing. Plastic debris affects wildlife, human health and the environment. The millions of tons of plastic bottles, bags, and garbage in the world's oceans are breaking down and leaching toxins posing a threat to marine life and human. Plastic materials in landfills sink in harmful chemicals into groundwater.”

www.endangeredspeciesinternational.org/plastickills.html?gclid=CJ3akPeokrUCFaTMtAodFykAIQ

“Plastic water bottles and shopping bags don't come with ingredient lists, but ... dangerous compounds contained in household plastics are leaching into ecosystems ... Plastic wastes choke seas across the globe.

... Phrases like 'The Great Pacific Garbage Patch' have become common parlance. But this is a too-simple way to mentally contain a problem that is everywhere - no stretch of water, no beach is free of microplastic. ... in this particular area of the north Pacific ... there is more plastic than plankton; it has become a toxic soup.

... Plastic fragments of all sizes have appalling effects on marine organisms ... One of the most common chemicals in plastics is Bisphenol A ... has been linked with an array of afflictions as diverse as diabetes, heart disease, breast cancer, thyroid disorders, ADHD, infertility, erectile dysfunction, early-onset menstruation and obesity. Bisphenol A and other persistent organic pollutants can pass through the placental wall and also enter infants through breast milk.”

www.theecologist.org/how_to_make_a_difference/cleaner_air_water_land/468768/beyond_plastic_bags_stopping_plastic_pollution_at_source.html

“Camels, sheep, goats and cattle, as well as the protected Arabian Onyx, the Sand Gazelles and other wildlife are dying after ingesting plastic - just like the albatross birds in the Midway Atoll ... these animals are eating the plastic pollution left behind by visitors ... and then choking on it, or starving to death because the plastic blocks their intestines. The pollution in the desert is already an outrage. The death of these innocent animals is inhumane, unnecessary and horrific.”

<http://plasticpollutioncoalition.org/2010/07/plastic-pollution-kills-desert-animals-too>

If you google 'plastic pollution' you will find a seemingly limitless supply of articles like those listed underneath the photo on the left. From animals ingesting plastic and feeding it to their young, to others getting trapped in plastic litter so that their bodies are strangled into deformed shapes.

To be vegan is to try to do no harm. That goes beyond just what we eat to what we wear, what products we use, and which companies we patronise. Using plastic therefore cannot be vegan. But how can we avoid it? Sadly, even some vegan and otherwise ethical companies are packaging in plastic.

Of course we can, and should, write to retailers and manufacturers, expressing our concern and requesting at least a reduction, if not an end, to their use of disposable plastics. We can ask those who cannot avoid it to use plastics made from harmlessly degradable plant starch material. If enough of us do this and are persistent, they might start to listen.

Recycling is not a sustainable solution - there just aren't enough recycling facilities to deal with more than a tiny fraction of the vast quantities of plastic produced. Most plastic waste is land-filled, exported to other countries, or downcycled. “A plastic drink carton can never be recycled into another carton - it can be made into a lower quality item like plastic lumber, which can't be recycled.” (www.mnn.com/lifestyle/responsible-living/photos/16-simple-ways-to-reduce-plastic-waste/learn-more)

We've simply got to stop buying new plastic!

Here's How:

Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

REFUSE

Say NO to all disposable plastics! No plastic straws. No plastic cutlery. No plastic lighters, disposable nappies, plastic razors, plastic bags ...

REDUCE

Reduce your plastic footprint. Choose products with the least packaging. Buy all your produce loose from the greengrocer or supermarket, taking your own re-usable cloth bags to fill. If possible take your own containers to fill with lentils, pasta, rice, cereal, etc at a bulk buy store like *Unpackaged* in London (www.beunpackaged.com) or *The Kitchen Larder* in Montague Street, Worthing. Make your meals and baked goods from scratch so that you only have to buy ingredients like flour, sugar, fruit and veg in paper (or no) packaging. When you can't avoid buying pre-packaged food or drink, choose those packaged in tins, aluminium cans, glass, paper, or cardboard, instead of plastic.

REUSE

Reuse what you've already got because once it's here it's here to stay. So don't buy more tupperware - reuse and refill jam jars, Swedish Glace tubs, margarine tubs, etc. Be imaginative about what you can do with what you've already got. The same goes for reusing other people's old stuff. If you really need something that is made of plastic - like a kettle or a toaster - try first to get it in a second hand shop. Buying second hand, and making use of something that already exists, is better than that item going straight to landfill, and it's

better than buying new and perpetuating the production of more plastic. If you want to enjoy CDs or DVDs, borrow from the library or a video rentals company - if we all shared we wouldn't need so many!

RECYCLE

Recycle what you can't refuse, reduce or reuse. Recycling plastic items is a last option as in many cases your plastic recycling is shipped overseas or ends up in landfill. (See <http://plasticpollutioncoalition.org> for more information about speaking out and sending a message to government, business and organisations, asking them to help stop plastic at its source.)

Pick up litter and dispose of it responsibly; buy unpackaged toiletries from companies like *Lush* who will also recycle bottle tops and retainer rings; recycle what you can't avoid. Yes, it's a huge problem but not impossible to put right if we have the will to do it. And once you get into the swing of it it's not that difficult. The more of us that do it, the more of us that keep saying 'no thank you' to a plastic bag, or 'could you wrap my chips in paper only?', the more businesses will take notice. It's just another part of being vegan. We have to keep chipping away - which is, after all, what we're used to.

Debbie Andrews

Veggies News

So here we are writing in early February, and Veggies has 30 events on the diary already. This includes catering for a vegan wedding in 2014, and the 90th birthday of noted physician, vegan, natural health writer and poet, Keki Sidhwa, in 2016!

One of the highlights for vegan outreach is the British Ultra Fest, a six-day track race event near Oxford from 11th August 2013. This is the first time this event has looked for vegetarian catering and, with Veggies on board, it may be all-vegan - if we can convince the non-veggie participants that we can provide a pure vegan menu that satisfies all the nutritional needs of extreme athletes. With people like Fiona Oakes (who is to run both the Arctic and Antarctic marathons this year) to hold up as an example, we hope that we will prevail.

With a similar remit, Veggies are also catering at the British Juggling Convention in Pickering, North Yorkshire, for a week from 9th April.

These following forthcoming events should also be of interest to Vegan Views readers:

Sat 13 April: Northern Vegan Festival, Manchester

Sat 27 April: World Day for Animals in Laboratories rally, in Oxford

Fri 3 - Sat 4 May: Ashleyhay Festival, Derbyshire

Sun 26 May: Nottingham Green Festival

Wed 26 - Sun 30 June: Glastonbury Festival 2013

At all these events there will be opportunities for readers to help with vegan outreach (and to sell Vegan Views!). Details may be found at www.veggies.org.uk (see also the Veggies advert on the back page of this issue).

Patrick Smith

Around the World in 128 days minus 1

In September 2006 I set off from England on a four month journey around the world to meet up with many of my internet friends. The book I have written is the story of all those meetings and the places I saw, either with my friends or on my own.

I decided to emulate Phileas Fogg (the fictional character in Jules Verne's book) by travelling right round the world, visiting Canada, USA, Argentina, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines (photo on the right), Hong Kong, and Singapore. Unlike Phileas, however, I was not attempting a world speed record, but I simply had a desire to meet numerous friends in far off places who have become good friends over a six year period of cyber connections on the World Wide Web. Also, unlike Phileas, I was not accompanied by anyone, except by the 30 or so interesting friends of all ages who I met up with in their countries.



Excitements abounded: failure of mobile phones, getting lost in the middle of the night, crashing through Yukon's unexplored undergrowth, being knocked out on a bus, three-day train journeys, sleeping in cars and airports and under the stars, a 'mistifying' boat journey under great waterfalls, close encounters with deadly snakes and spiders and cockroaches, three creepy scorpions descending my bare arm, stroking both a koala (photo below) and the adorable quokkas, and ravenous birds eating out of my hand. Not all the incidents in this story are hair-raising; some are funny, and a few sad, but all are imprinted on my mind for ever.



I am vegan and was about a 70% raw food eater whilst on this journey. Most of my friends were not veggie (some were), but I had no problems in finding suitable food. When staying with friends I made at least one vegan meal for them. I had no illnesses throughout the four months, and survived climbing Heart Attack Hill in Central Australia in temperatures above 40°C in the shade.

The book has 324 pages (69 in full colour, with many more pictures in black & white). It also lists many eating places and hotels that are good for vegans - and includes one chapter entitled *The Best Vegan Restaurant in the World*. This was in Fort Worth, Texas! Now that it has done so well it has expanded into Dallas.

Chris Phillips

Around the world in 128 days minus 1 costs £11.99 plus postage (£1.40 in the UK) directly from Chris (email chris@philatelic.org.uk). Kindle e-book version also available (£4.07). More details and photos at www.facebook.com/AroundTheWorldIn128Minus1Days

RECIPES

These two recipes are by Helen Rossiter (Helen used to work for Viva! and took the photographs for the new Viva! Catering guide, see right).

Helen's blog <http://lotsofnicethings.com> includes many more of her recipes.



**Thai-style
Banana and Red Pepper Frittlers**

Soft and flavoursome, these little Thai-style Banana and Red Pepper Frittlers make a great starter or lunchtime snack. Make them spicier if you wish by adding more chilli powder, and serve them with sweet chilli sauce to add that extra zing!

If you don't have a red pepper, use something else. Grated courgette would work, sweetcorn, or small pieces of green beans.

We enjoyed them before a Thai Green Curry and Sticky Rice, made with homemade paste, and made by blending green chillies, ginger, garlic, sunflower oil and lemongrass.

Serves two

Preparation/cooking time 15 mins

1 large ripe banana
 ½ red pepper, finely chopped
 2 pinches of medium chilli powder (or more if you want a hotter flavour)
 Pinch of salt
 ½ cup self-raising flour
 1 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil

1. Mash banana in a bowl and mix in the pepper, chilli and salt.
2. Gradually mix in the flour using a wooden spoon to form a dough.
3. On a floured surface, knead the dough for a minute before cutting it into four pieces.

4. Roll each piece into a small ball, then flatten into a circular fritter shape.
5. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan.
6. Fry the fritters on a medium-heat, turning after a few minutes on each side, so they turn a golden colour.
7. Serve hot, with sweet chilli or a satay sauce.



Banana, Apricot and Walnut Loaf

Makes around 8 slices

Preparation/cooking time 1 hour approx

2 large ripe bananas, peeled and sliced
 3 ripe apricots, stones removed and chopped
 60g/2oz vegan margarine
 100g/3oz soft brown sugar
 250g/9oz self-raising flour
 1 tsp baking powder
 1 tsp vanilla essence
 Handful of chopped walnuts
 5 tbsp soya milk

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.
2. In a mixing bowl, mash together the banana and apricot. Add in the marg, creaming it in with a wooden spoon.
3. Add sugar and sieve in flour and baking powder.
4. Mix in vanilla essence, nuts and soya milk, stirring everything together thoroughly with a spoon.
5. Grease a bread tin and pour in loaf mix.
6. Bake for 50-60 mins until loaf is golden and a skewer comes out clean. Turn out onto a wire rack to cool.
7. Serve on its own or with a spoon of soya yoghurt and berries.

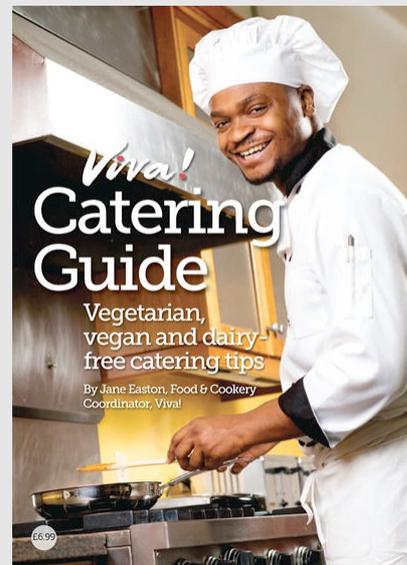
Guide to running a vegan food fayre

Eat Out Vegan Wales have produced a very detailed guide to organising free vegan food fayres, based on their experiences over the past ten years.

If you'd like a copy (or if you know anybody who might like one), you can email them for a free guide (21-page pdf, a print version is also available).

"Vegan Food Fayres present a positive way of campaigning and spreading the vegan message. If you pitch it correctly, you may even reach people who have never heard of veganism and who would not normally come across vegan food."

Website: www.eatoutveganwales.org



Viva! have published an attractive and comprehensive new catering guide (in which all the recipes are vegan), written by Jane Easton.

The guide is for professional caterers and veggie/vegan customers who want more inclusive menus from restaurants. It includes simple definitions of what vegans and veggies eat, ways to 'veganise' classic dishes, plus a product and stockists section.

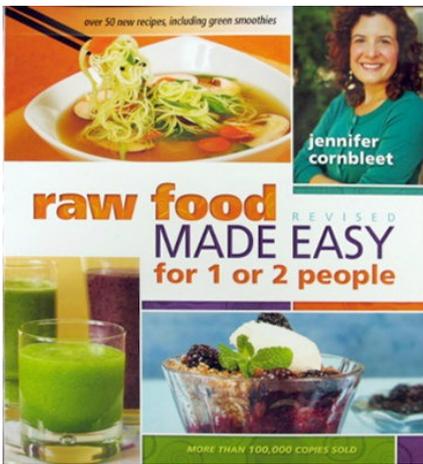
The guide is free to download at www.vivashop.org.uk/viva/viva-materials/guides-reports/catering-guide (32 page pdf)

Also available in printed form (£6.99 inc UK postage) from Viva! at 8 York Court, Wilder Street, Bristol BS2 8QH.

Around 35 recipes are included - salads, soups, budget meals, gourmet lunches and dinners, light meals, sweets, bulk recipes for caterers, etc.

The photo below shows the wonderfully named Viva!Bocker Glory ("the ultimate in old school desserts").





Raw Food Made Easy for 1 or 2 people
 by Jennifer Cornbleet
 Book Publishing Company
 Revised edition 2012
www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1570672733
 (where you can 'look inside')

Jennifer Cornbleet is a well known raw food chef and instructor. She lives in the San Francisco Bay area where she lectures and holds classes.

Raw Food Made Easy for 1 or 2 people is a lovely addition to any raw foodist's bookshelf, for either those who are complete beginners exploring a raw food diet, or for those who are more experienced but may like new recipes.

It is probably one of the simplest introductions to raw food that anyone could find, with over 150 recipes and some colour illustrations, 216 pages with an index and an extensive glossary including cooking terms, equipment, food terms and ingredients.

The book is clearly written, and explains how to introduce more raw food into your diet, and how you can set up your kitchen to make the recipes with everyday ingredients and basic equipment. It introduces readers to natural wholesome raw food - and includes the staple ingredients needed, such as dried and frozen fruits, real natural sweeteners, raw nuts and seeds, dried herbs and spices, and oils and vinegars plus a list of various other foods.

She gives a list of fresh weekly groceries to buy, with sections on *Raw Basics* and *Advance Preparation* which explain how to prepare nuts, seeds and fruits (including making your own seasoning and sprouts), or making recipes in advance so that they are readily available when needed.

Jennifer explains that raw food is uncooked - it is food in its natural state, totally unprocessed, unrefined, and there is no white sugar or flour, no preservatives, and nothing is processed or contains chemicals. So we get more nutrition from our food, including

vitamins, enzymes and good fats.

Each recipe is clearly written and lists the equipment needed to make it, how much it yields, any variations which can be made, and its nutritional values.

Each recipe is also simple to follow, although some need more preparation which is explained. There are recipes for every occasion - for breakfast, dinner and snacks: sauces, cakes, salads, sandwiches, patés, and smoothies, all avoiding processed ingredients and trans fats. An example food plan is included.

Jennifer Cornbleet's website www.learnrawfood.com is also an excellent resource.

Sarah Austin

From the book:

Cream of Zucchini Soup (2 servings)

- 1 zucchini (courgette), unpeeled and chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- ¾ cup water, as needed
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon mellow white miso
- ½ teaspoon crushed garlic
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Dash of cayenne
- ½ avocado, chopped
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh dill, or ½ teaspoon dried dill weed

Put the zucchini, celery, ½ cup of the water, lemon juice, miso, garlic, salt and cayenne in a blender and process on a medium speed until smooth. Add the avocado and oil and process on a medium speed until smooth. Add the dill and the remaining ¼ cup of water to thin, if necessary, and process on medium speed briefly, just to mix. Stored in a sealed container in the refrigerator, the soup will keep for two days.

University's 100% vegan dining hall

The Mean Greens 100% vegan 300-seat dining hall at the University of North Texas, which opened in the summer of 2011, is "believed to be the first big exclusively vegan eating venue on a major college campus. After a year-and-a-half of discussion and evaluating student feedback, the decision was made to change one of their five general-purpose dining halls to completely vegan, using no animal products whatsoever to avoid any confusion." (from *American Vegan* Winter 2012 p.15)

For more on this, and a photo, see: www.fesmag.com/features/foodservice-issues/10002-university-of-north-texas-goes-vegan-at-mean-greens-dining-hall

5th Worldwide Vegan Bake Sale 20-28 April 2013



Bake Sale table in Cologne 2012

Who can participate? Just about anyone! What is it? From April 20-28 (two weekends and the weekdays in between), groups from across the world will hold vegan bake sales.

Each participating group gets to choose its venue, what to sell, and what cause it uses the proceeds for. (You can hold the bake sale on any day during the period - or on more than one day if you like.) You don't have to be a vegan group or an animal group to participate.

The photos here are from last year's bake sale, when bake sales also took place in Arizona, Brisbane, British Columbia, New York, Seoul, and Vienna - to name just a few.

So far the Worldwide Vegan Bake Sale has raised close to \$200,000 for a wide variety of causes. (The bake sale in Cologne last year, photo above, raised \$1820 for a pet sanctuary.) More info/photos at www.veganbakesale.org



Vegan Ireland's bake sale stall in Dublin 2012

Vegetarian for Life : helping older vegetarians and vegans

Vegetarian for Life was launched in 2008, funded by the Vegetarian Housing Association which had been established in the 1960s to provide sheltered housing and meals for older vegetarians. This activity became increasingly unviable, and in 2007 VHA decided to wind down its housing activities and redirect its resources to funding the formation of Vegetarian for Life.

Tina Fox, the director and secretary of Vegetarian for Life (VfL), explains its work.

What is Vegetarian for Life's role and purpose?

Both Peter Lakey (Chair of VfL) and I felt that although there are excellent vegetarian and vegan organizations out there, none of them were helping older vegetarians and vegans - who often struggled to get interesting and nutritional meals when in care, or in hospital, or when getting home meals.

We decided to focus our efforts on this rather neglected group, initially by setting up a list of vegetarian/vegan-friendly establishments. This list has grown from 100 in 2008 to nearly 700 now, and includes both independent care homes and some groups or charities such as Barchester Care Homes, Elizabeth Finn Care, MHA, etc. We also have a few member charities who supply home meals, eg WRVS and Wiltshire Farm Foods.

Our focus initially was on the website which gets around 10,000 hits a month, and then on print - we produced a catering guide which we sent, free of charge, to all care homes in the UK. We also have a healthy living guide for older vegetarians and vegans living at home, and have produced since then a number of publications based on festive recipes (Christmas, Easter, Valentines, etc, for the care homes), a nutrition guide, and others. We are currently working on a new publication for individuals cooking on a budget - rather timely in today's economic climate.

We also have an advisory panel with nutritionists etc, so can provide specific advice on diets when asked, and we attend a number of vegetarian events and also social care events throughout the year.

You administer two charitable funds, the Vegan Fund and the Vegetarian Fund. What are those funds for, and how does VfL ensure that applications to the Vegan Fund come from genuine vegans? Also do you apply any form of means testing to ensure that grants are only made where there is a real need that cannot be met from other sources?

The Vegan Fund originated out of a fund started by the Vegan Society, initially to set up a purely vegan care home or sheltered scheme. This never proved feasible so the Charity Commission agreed to the two organizations splitting the finance available. Funds from the VHA were then used to set up an equivalent Vegetarian Fund, so that both sections of the vegetarian community could be helped appropriately.

All applicants have to be on pension credit and prove this (and their age) to meet our criteria. For the Vegan Fund we like them to be members of a vegan organization but sometimes this is not possible. You can usually tell from the letter what their needs are, and how genuine they are, and sometimes references come via a social worker or other social agency. If there is any doubt a home visit can be organized.

So far grants have covered a stair lift, mobility scooter, downstairs shower room, bath aid, cooker, computer, and washing machine. We also gave a small grant to a vicar in Wales to teach vegetarian cookery to a group of older people.

Is there any connection between VfL and the Vegan Society's Serena Coles Fund for Older Vegans, which was established in 2009/2010?

No - we advertise in the Vegan magazine, but their fund is entirely separate from our own. [Ed's note: The Vegan Society's fund also aims to help elderly vegans, and a Vegan Catering Guide for Hospitals and Care Homes is available from them.]



Tina Fox on the Vegetarian for Life stall at a Gloucestershire Care Providers Association event in 2009

There has been some debate about whether it's better to try to set up a specific home for elderly vegans and vegetarians (eg Paul Appleby's letter V.V.121 p.14), or else to concentrate instead on helping individuals either in their own home or in a care home. What do you feel about that?

The VHA originally owned a number of sheltered housing schemes, whereby residents met together for a lunchtime meal. However they were not supported by the vegetarian/vegan community (primarily because people do not want to move away from friends and relatives as they get older), so they were not economically viable and they had to close down. The funds from the properties that were sold go to run VfL, so we are still helping the older vegetarian and vegan community.

We know from our research that there are around four to six thousand vegetarians and vegans in care homes throughout the UK, as well as those receiving home care, so we feel it is better to help them than perhaps just 30 in one home. That said we would be very pleased to hear of any totally vegetarian or vegan home as currently none exist.

You run training courses for caterers. How often do those take place, and how successful have they been?

We have run two courses so far this financial year, with a third booked for March. Around ten to twelve chefs attend each course, which we subsidise heavily, and feedback is excellent. We find many chefs do not know how to cook pulses or soya protein, tofu, etc so they focus too much on dairy products. We try to redress this balance and make life pleasanter and tastier for the residents.

We have also produced a short (20 minutes) training DVD based on the course, as we appreciate not all care homes have the resources to send their staff on a course. This was sent to all the members of our UK vegetarian-friendly list and is available free of charge to appropriate charities and organizations.

For further information see www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk or email admin@vegetarianforlife.org.uk or phone 01683 220888, or else you can write to VfL at Dalveen, Grange Rd, Moffat, Dumfries and Galloway DG10 9HS, Scotland.

Vegan meat and dairy substitute products : the good, the bad, and the gluten

In recent years there has been a proliferation of vegan meat substitute products available in health food stores, and especially in the well known large chains.

I am not strongly against these products since they may be of great benefit to some and might encourage more people to go vegan, and in the early stages I am sure they can be really helpful. As a vegan of long standing, however, I moved away from using these on any regular basis a long time ago.

Twenty five years ago when I first became vegan there were none of these products unless you travelled a very long way to find them. In those times we had things such as soymix and the like, a powdered soya product which we would add water to and make sausages and burgers, but it took some getting used to.

After a while I found I didn't need meat substitute foods anymore and gave them up, except for the odd occasion when I will eat the odd item for a change, and I still do from time to time indulge in a vegan soya sausage purely because it is a tasty treat.

I have, though, always wanted to find a truly acceptable vegan cheese, something which has eluded vegan food manufacturers for many years I know, and believe me *I have tried them all*, and not found one I liked, so have not bothered about cheese either.

All this was until a European company recently began advertising the ultimate in vegan cheese, a cheese which is only available online. I was curious so I placed an order - the delivery charge was £5 so I decided to add a few more items from their vegan range to try, since the postage would be the same. I ordered two cheeses, some vegan sausages, and some vegan burgers. My thinking was that if the cheese is as good as they claim it to be then the other products might be a wonderful surprise too.

They arrived and the cheese was, at least as far as I am concerned, horrid and made me feel quite nauseous. The sausages and burgers didn't state the ingredients on the website, just that they were 100% vegan. True, they are vegan but are 100% wheat (gluten) protein, so I was terribly disappointed. I accept part of the blame since I didn't

enquire about the ingredients before ordering. The sausages and burgers also tasted awful, at least that is my opinion, so having been so excited by the advertising, I had found myself throwing £32 worth of vegan products in the bin.

I have truly learned a big lesson here. I do think it is important for manufacturers to state the ingredients online, and not just on the product packaging, to avoid this dilemma - many people are on gluten-free diets anyway so it does matter.

This all brings me on to the subject of wheat (gluten) protein meat alternatives. Vegan meat substitute products these days increasingly contain wheat (gluten) protein, whereas older products would be soya or other. A couple of years ago I had been eating wheat protein (wheat gluten) products quite a lot and I noticed I was becoming constipated. I looked into this and discovered that wheat gluten can cause constipation if eaten in quantity, and if you eat these meat alternative products on a big scale, or on a daily basis, you might be advised to consider if this is a problem for you also.

A recent check I did of all the vegan meat alternative products in a national health food chain revealed that a large number, if not the majority, of products



Gentle World

In Vegan Views 125 last year we interviewed Angel Flinn of the Gentle World vegan community <http://gentleworld.org> in New Zealand and also Hawaii. This charming photo of Light and Sun, the co-founders of Gentle World in 1970, is one we didn't have room for at the time.

You can listen to audio interviews from 2009/2010 with Light and Sun (and also Butterflies Katz) at <http://insearchofsimplicity.com/tag/gentle-world>

A quote from Sun: "The next evolutionary step for humankind is to move from human to kind".

Sun and Light have both been vegan for over 40 years.

are made of wheat protein, so if you are as concerned about this as I am, and for certain if you are on a gluten-free diet regime or if you suffer from constipation, check the packaging carefully.

I know that there are vegans who cannot eat soya so wheat protein has come as a blessing for them, but for me I prefer soya if I ever decide to eat any of these products. Mainly for protein I eat tofu, tempeh, various beans, chick peas, nuts, and hempseed flour mixed into fruit - hempseed being a complete protein, but don't take my word for it, look it up.

I do often wonder why vegans would need such a massive range of imitation meat products, it almost seems (for a great many) to defeat the reason for being vegan in the first place.

Caroline Marks

My veganism : a bone of contention

'Vegan,' I explain patiently, 'no meat or dairy.'

'Gosh,' she says, 'I thought you'd be skinnier.'

To be honest, so did I.

I imagined my eating patterns would alter to mirror that of a contented ruminant. I would continuously graze while others gawked in jealous fascination at where it all went. I imagined short skirts to show off my stem thin pins and see-through tops over striped bras because, hey, I had the body.

Sadly, nine years on, I am still waiting. As it is, I have remained a very normal size 10 with a stomach that does not lend itself to see-through tops.

People regularly inform me I look 'robust' and 'solid' and 'healthy' on my 'limited' diet. I have people comment in fake admiration that 'it's a wonder I keep my weight up'. Decoded, this translates as 'you're awfully fat considering you don't eat'.

Another thing that seems to confuse is my refusal to 'dress vegan'. I am unsure whether I am expected to sport a labelled t-shirt, or whether a giveaway knitted rainbow jumper would do the trick.

Sadly, nobody has yet referred me to the vegan clothes shop. But no matter. By all accounts, nothing would fit me ...

Chloe Dalton

Chloe is a vet student and has been vegan for nine years

GROUPS

VEGAN SOCIETY The UK Vegan Society is an educational charity providing information and guidance on various aspects of veganism, for new and potential vegans, caterers, healthcare professionals, educators, the media, etc. Membership £21 a year (with various concessions) includes quarterly magazine *The Vegan* - from Donald Watson House, 21 Hylton Street, Hockley, Birmingham B18 6HJ Tel: 0121 523 1730. Website (with online shop): www.vegansociety.com



VEGAN VILLAGE (www.veganvillage.co.uk) closed in November 2012 but returned in January 2013 under new management. Lists hundreds of UK vegan companies and contacts. Also message noticeboard, shopping, food, travel, health, and more.

VON The Vegan-Organic Network researches and promotes vegan organic methods of agriculture and horticulture. They produce a large informative magazine *Growing Green*

International twice a year, with articles and news from vegan-organic growers worldwide. Membership £16 single, £18 family a year. Further info from VON, 11 St

Mary's Rd, Disley, Cheshire SK12 2AH. Tel: 01663 766366 www.veganorganic.net also www.stockfreeorganic.net

MCL (Movement for Compassionate Living - the vegan way) promotes "a way of life that is free of the exploitation and slaughter of sentient beings, that is possible for all the world's people and that is sustainable within the resources of the planet". Annual sub £5 includes the quarterly journal *New Leaves*. From 105 Cyfyng Road, Ystalyfera, Swansea SA9 2BT (tel: 01639 841223). Website: www.mclveganway.org.uk

VEGGIES are a vegan food catering service, based in Nottingham but operating at events all over the country. Their "vast & extensive" website www.veggies.org.uk includes the UK Animal Rights Calendar and the Vegan Outreach Diary. At 245 Gladstone St, Nottingham NG7 6HX (tel: 0115 960 8254).

VEGAN FORUM (www.veganforum.com) is a very active online message board for vegans. New posts each day on a wide variety of vegan-related topics.

OVER 3200 LINKS TO VEGAN-RELATED WEBSITES (blogs, recipes, forums, action & campaigns, online shopping, recipes, events & festivals, networking, etc, etc) at www.veganchatroom.co.uk

EVENTS

For loads more events click the Events link on the Veggies website at www.veggies.org.uk

WORLD DAY FOR ANIMALS IN LABORATORIES

Sat 27th April 2013 Oxpens Park, Oxford. Meet at 12 midday for march and rally. www.wdail.org

BRISTOL VEGFEST

24-26 May 2013 at the Amphitheatre and Waterfront Square in Bristol. Tel: 0117 307 9872 <http://bristol.vegfest.co.uk>



VEGAN CAMP 3-17 August 2013

The Camp began in 1981 and rotates around campsites in England, Wales and Scotland. This year's 33rd Camp is to be held at Kilkhampton, near Bude in Cornwall. Family-oriented but many single people go too. Focus is mainly on outdoor activities (walks, fun sports, trips out, etc). Friendly atmosphere, and ideal for children. Come for a day or two, or stay the whole two weeks. Website: www.vegancamp.co.uk or SAE to Gordon Forrest, 9 Seymour Street, North Shields, Tyne & Wear NE29 6SN.

DRIMLABARRA HERB FARM

Sat 31st Aug 2013 12-5pm Open Day. Vegan organic project on the Isle of Arran, Scotland. Website: www.veganherbal.com or ring 01770 820 338.

ADVERTS

SELF-CATERING HOLIDAY

ACCOMMODATION in the Burren National Park, Co.Clare, Ireland. The house is situated in its own grounds deep in the countryside, and surrounded by spectacular views. The letting in this very comfortable house consists of a living room with wood burner, sunroom, kitchen, two bedrooms and a bathroom. Tel: 0161 4913027.

VEGETARIAN FOR LIFE

The advocacy charity for older vegetarians and vegans (see *interview page 18*). Charitable grants. Can we help you, a family member, or friend with a grant from The Vegan Fund? Older vegans in need can apply for help with independent living, for example: a stair lift, disabled adaptation, or bathing aid. For more information phone 01683 220888. Website: www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk Registered charity no.1120687

THE FUTURE OF VEGAN VIEWS See page 2

This is our final printed issue, after which Vegan Views will be online only. We are looking to find one or two people (who like what we're doing, and don't want to change the content or style too much) to help or advise us in areas that we aren't so knowledgeable about - blogging, Facebook, Twitter, etc, etc. If you're interested in helping please get in touch (contact details are on p.2).

THE BARN VEGAN GUEST HOUSE

Exclusively vegan accommodation in the beautiful New Forest. 100% cruelty free, 100% solar powered. Perfect for walking, cycling and relaxing. Website www.veggiebarn.net or tel: 023 8029 2531.

PERSONAL Vegan female, living in Provence, would like to get in touch with vegans in England. Please write to Janna Van Wijngaarden, 287 Chemin Rural du Plan, 83630 Aups, France.

FOLLOWERS OF THE WAY Explaining why a vegetarian diet is essential for (Christian) spiritual development and how Paul misled people by obscuring the original message of Jesus. Please get in touch via Vegan Views.

VEGAN SKINCARE Daily cleansing, exfoliation and acne & pore control. Visit www.skinvac.com and see it work before you buy. Kind to humans & animals! Vegan discount code: *vegan*

• VEGFAM •



"Feeds the Hungry Without Exploiting Animals", registered charity no. 232208.

Vegfam has been helping to alleviate hunger, thirst, malnutrition and starvation since 1963, by funding vegan food production projects worldwide.

During 2011 and 2012, Vegfam financed projects (totalling almost £282,000) in eight countries (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Liberia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia), which should help more than 165,000 people. Funding the seeds, tools and other supplies facilitated the planting of thousands of acres of land - to provide lifesaving nutritious food. Water resources will provide safe, clean drinking water and much needed irrigation.

More information from Vegfam (VV), c/o Cwm Cottage, Cwmynys, Cilycwm, Llandoverly, Carmarthenshire SA20 0EU (tel: 01550 721197). Website (with link to online giving): www.vegfamcharity.org.uk