The Deaf, and Animals—
Striving to be Heard

Avery’s plea:

As a filmmaker, I do my best everyday to remind others to be more perceptive and sensitive towards the deaf, hard-of-hearing, and especially to animals.

Why do I classify the deaf and hard-of-hearing together with animals? It’s comparatively simple.

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AHIMSA
THE COMPASSIONATE WAY
AHIMSA is a Sanskrit term meaning non-killing, non-injuring, non-harming.
AVS defines it in daily life as Dynamic Harmlessness, spelled out at right.

THE AMERICAN VEGAN SOCIETY is a nonprofit, non-sectarian, non-political, tax-exempt educational membership organization teaching a compassionate way of living by Ahimsa (see above) and Reverence for Life.

VEGANS—pronounced VEE-guns—live on products of the plant kingdom, so exclude flesh, fish, fowl, dairy products (animal milk, butter, cheese, yogurt, etc.), eggs, honey, animal gelatin, all other items of animal origin.

VEGANISM ALSO EXCLUDES animal products such as leather, wool, fur, and silk, in clothing, upholstery, etc. Vegans usually try to avoid the less-than-obvious animal oils, secretions, etc., in many soaps, cosmetics, toiletries, household goods and other common commodities.

AN EDUCATIONAL CONVENTION is held each year, at Malaga or elsewhere.

INDIVIDUAL MEDICAL ADVICE is not given; AVS educates on ethical, ecological, aesthetic, healthful, economic aspects of vegan living in general.

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ABSTINENCE from Animal Products
HARMLESSNESS with Reverence for Life
INTEGRITY of Thought, Word, and Deed
MASTERY over Oneself
SERVICE to Humanity, Nature, and Creation
ADVANCEMENT of Understanding and Truth
Editorial:

Pop Culture/Health Culture

Veganism has moved into the realm of Pop Culture, facilitated by the proliferation of commercial soy milk, veggie burgers, and other products. Some things, such as cakes, are not generally available unless you get to a large organic supermarket. We used to be protected from eating cakes, cookies, and candies (except home-made) by our label reading habits, which soon ran into eggs, milk, whey, or honey!

Some recent vegan dessert books are receiving exuberant praise for their recipes for missed familiar pleasures! They show how to bake without eggs, cow milk or butter—which is great information. Since they also still use white sugar and white (common all-purpose) flour, the results are melt-in-your-mouth, and people love them. It’s wonderful bait to encourage people to give up animal products. Ditto for some of the vegan baked goods and frozen desserts in the market place. Question is, can you eat an appropriate serving, or do you want more—and give in to that craving? Craving more is a sign that what you are eating is devitalized and not nourishing. These snacks and desserts have saved some animal lives, but they can ruin your life. They also give a bad impression of vegan diets among people who know the importance of whole-foods to health. Odd that at a time when some schools are banning cupcakes out of concern for children’s overweight and associated problems, people are busy baking vegan versions.

Becoming vegan of itself is no guarantee of health and longevity. There are tremendous benefits to not eating animals—reduced risk of heart disease and cancer for a start, since no longer consuming the saturated fats, additional cholesterol, and the toxic matter they contain. But this must be paired with good eating habits. Beware of replacing animal-fat calories with calories from refined carbohydrates. Sugar, like animal protein and salt, accelerates calcium loss. Sugar is a cause of tooth decay—not just from the outside but affecting the hypothalamus and fluid movement within the teeth. Sugar decreases the blood’s ability to fight germs, and those with high blood sugar levels tend to get infections more readily. Sugar may increase triglycerides (fat) in the blood which may lead to heart disease. When too many calories come from sugar, diabetes may result. Refining whole-wheat flour removes the germ and bran; there is a loss of protein, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. “Enriched” is still short-changed. This flour has a high glycemic index, and habitual use can lead to obesity, high blood pressure, and metabolic disorders.

There are occasions when you may feel that the tastes of those present call for compromise, and nothing less than sweet and light will be accepted. You can impress, and still bake vegan. But when baking for self and family, try more wholesome versions by substituting all or part of the white stuff with whole-grain flours: wheat, pastry, spelt, oat, and barley; and low levels of sweeteners such as rice, agave, fruit, and maple syrups; and evaporated cane juice—as do our best vegan restaurants.

Most important, eat wholesome meals, with enough nourishment, calories, and bulk to feel satisfied. Ensure good sources of vegetable protein. Pulses (peas, beans, and lentils), whole grains (like brown rice and good bread), vegetables, nuts and seeds are the vital components. Fruits are excellent additions to meals, and for snacks. Too many people these days are not getting anywhere near enough of these essentials.

-Freya Dinshah

HELP AVS SPREAD THE VEGAN MESSAGE!

GoodSearch.com and GoodShop.com are search engines that donate half their revenues, to the charities their users designate. You use them just as you would any search engine, and they are powered by Yahoo!, so you get great results. Go to www.goodsearch.com or www.goodshop.com and enter American Vegan Society as the charity you want to support.
At birth, I was diagnosed with profound and permanent deafness in both ears, a hereditary attribute that resulted in the inability to either hear my own voice or the voices of others. Yes, deafness is a disability in the mainstream society I live in. Yet, I am privileged to have integrated deaf culture into my soul and I am a native user of the American Sign Language (ASL) used by millions of deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing peers throughout this country and Canada. ASL has enabled me to express my feelings and thoughts to others. But what about the countless people not familiar with ASL? I am sure you can understand the difficulties I confront daily.

And what about animals? Do we humans understand what animals are trying to communicate? Do we “hear” animals speaking about their afflictions or discomfort? I strongly empathize with animals for being incapable of clearly expressing happiness, frustration, illness, hunger, and especially pain. In this area “voices” fall upon “deaf” ears.

For this reason my company partner Gilda Ganezer, who has also been deaf since birth, and I decided to use our professional and personal experiences to create a pair of educational films and DVDs that will teach viewers to be sensitive towards people and animals. The films integrate and highlight concepts of communication, animal rights, healthful diets, and exercise.

We created the videos at a very special place, Farm Sanctuary, which nurtures over 700 rescued farm animals living on its 175-acre property in Watkins Glen New York. These animals were neglected and abused, prior to being rescued. Here, we met nine barnyard animal friends we have now “adopted”, produced a two-day long vegan cooking show, and conducted various down-to-earth interviews with respected professionals. We even played a nifty softball game using animal-free sporting equipment.

Preparing to Film

The whole film project was a labor of love. All food served and presented was vegan, and all clothing was free of animal products (leather, silk, wool, etc.). It took me almost a year to coordinate, and involved communicating with others by telephone-assisted-relay-service, and emails; receiving permissions, obtaining samples and product images from over seventy companies and manufacturers of vegan foods. Products came from all parts of the United States, from newly-formed and local businesses, as well as other countries including Canada, England, and Australia. Norm Scott, Farm Sanctuary’s photo/video coordinator helped us with the complex logistics of housing and storing over 400 boxes of food which needed to be refrigerated, and another 200 boxes of non-refrigerated items. It was a challenge in the hot summer. The project would have been easy if we had presented only a couple of brands. However, we needed to recognize and present many brands to demonstrate how “easy” it is to enjoy a healthful vegan diet.

Traveling from Long Island to Watkins Glen

At five o’clock in the morning on Wednesday, June 20 2007, we picked up a rented cargo van and collected approximately 25 boxes from our storage facility in Commack NY, before driving back to our LI offices to pick up yet another 100 boxes of vegan products—over 40 large packages of food, cookies, drinks, snacks, and sporting equipment. We made a final stop at a Whole Foods store in Jericho NY to receive additional cartons packed in ice.

Seven non-stop-driving hours later, we arrived at the Inn at Glenora of Dundee NY, where we met people from the Farm Sanctuary, and guest presenters, at a dinner meeting. None of the people, other than Gilda and I, were deaf; neither did they know how to communicate using ASL. To bridge the communication gap, we had hired an American Sign Language interpreter. Thus we became familiar with each other’s goals, linguistic and cultural diversities, and were finally

Gilda Ganezer
Filming the Cookery Show

Starting at the crack of dawn the next day, it took us almost five hours to set up the production area. Food and products, valuing over $10,000, were spread throughout Farm Sanctuary's spacious People Barn facility—literally thousands of items on twelve conference tables with the rest still stored in freezers and in partially opened boxes filled with ice packs. We had invested in cooking tables, customized cooking-table-cover fabrics, several canvases as backdrops, multiple lighting systems, four professional recording cameras, 50 beautiful dinner plates, 20 colorful serving bowls, dozens of kitchen towels, animal-free cosmetics, vegan-related books, a high-quality cutting board, flatware and utensils, as well as professionally-designed nesting boxes to use as display stands for the vegan foods during filming.

As the cookery show host, I was in front of the cameras for a total of about thirteen hours from midday Thursday to the end of Friday. About twenty hands-on presentations were filmed—which are mouth-watering! Creations included vegan “emerald” smoothies made using a Vita-Mix® blender, a range of vegan deli sandwiches, and a homemade vegan pizza with various toppings. It was indeed amazing that I, who did not have significant cooking experience, was able to cook diverse, nutritious vegan meals with minimal effort. Products were featured and sampled in the breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack, special-occasion-related, and dessert categories. Several co-presenters showcased their remarkable work producing vegan foods.

Vegan BBQ

We also filmed Farm Sanctuary staff, interns, their families, and friends enjoying a vegan barbecue. There were over 100 vegan burgers and patties from Boca® Burgers, over 100 vegan hot dogs from Lightlife®, over 150 vegan soda bottles from Steaz®—A Healthy Beverage Company, over 100 vegan hamburger and hot-dog buns from Ener-G Foods®, dozens of condiments from Annie’s Naturals®, over 200 packets of vegan snacks from Robert’s American Gourmet®, over 140 bottles of spring water from Fiji®; and over 50 neon-colored sunglasses and 150 costume jewelry rhinestone-studded rings—gifts for the youngsters from Gilda and me.

Take Us Out to the Ballgame

The barbecue was followed by a veganized softball game, where everyone was a winner. People of all ages had the time of their lives; everyone was moved to see Gene Baur, Farm Sanctuary co-founder, guiding a young child in hitting the ball. All our sporting goods (a wooden bat, 20-plus animal-free softballs and baseballs, and bases) were contributed to the project by Easton Sport. The animal-free synthetic and vegan baseball gloves were made and donated by Scott Carpenter, owner of Carpenter Trade glove manufacturing company in Cooperstown NY. We did not realize how uncomplicated it was to exercise and enjoy a game without infringing on the vegan policy set by Farm Sanctuary. At the end of filming, all the sporting goods were donated to the sanctuary.

A Song

The production ended quite emotionally when Gilda, an extremely talented individual, sang a song in American Sign Language about how animals, children and adults all share the same ability to feel.
Our Beloved Animal Friends

After filming, we spent time with almost every one of our nine “adopted” farm animals. Larry the cow, Ormsby the sheep, Mayfly the rooster, Chicky the turkey, Baby the goose, Diego the duck, Barnaby the rabbit, Simon the goat, and Ellen the piglet, were the stars in the production. They were simply as “human” as each one of us.

Mayfly the rooster knew his own name! Susie Coston, the sanctuary shelter director, called out his name in front of us and we, beyond belief, saw him running out of nowhere and responding excitedly. Larry wholeheartedly loved eating bagels, while Chicky the turkey’s chest colors would change in seconds with fluctuating emotions; a mother and son sheep pair would always stick together and one of them would cry when the other was temporarily taken away to see a medical professional for treatment. We encountered an adult pig, Marvin, who was inconsolable over the loss of an adult pig friend he grew up with. Don’t we, as humans, feel the same when a friend has passed away?

End Results and the Next Step

This yearlong production has a number of rewards; not only for the producers but for every viewer who strives to learn American Sign Language in everyday situations. It will also help English-speaking individuals benefit from the healthful vegan foods currently available, while empathizing with animals and discovering how their emotions resonate with those of humans.

We are making two DVDs, one for the American Sign Language community and the other for the spoken-English community. They are scheduled to be ready in late 2007. They will certainly be powerful educational tools. Don’t miss them; we hope you will learn a thing or two from a pair of deaf filmmakers striving to make themselves “heard” about animals and their feelings, and the fast-growing world of veganism.

Avery Posner & Gilda Ganezer
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DVD preview at http://youtube.com/watch?v=7ZgZHZHj_eE
Order from: www.veganonthego.com

Obituaries:

J. R. (Regina) HYLAND, 64, died in October 2007, unexpectedly from breast cancer.

In Slaughter of Terrified Beasts, she wrote about religious sanctioning of animal sacrifice—today in the form of vivisection, hunting, meat-eating, clothes and adornment. In 2000 the book was republished by Lantern Books in an expanded edition, titled God’s Covenant with Animals. It examines spiritual growth in its plea for compassion. (Both books are available from AVS priced at $5 (sale) and $14.00 respectively.)

Regina was an ordained evangelical minister who worked in prisons, and with migrant workers.

Regina shared her vision of humanity’s spiritual and moral evolution toward an eventual societal choice to live with respect for all creatures who inhabit the earth—fulfilling the Bible promise of a kingdom in which humans and nonhumans live in peace with their own kind, and with other species.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb…and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

Isaiah 11:6

PAT MERITHEW died July 27 2007. With husband Chuck, she owned Sweet Thyme Inn, a vegan bed and breakfast in Green Bank West Virginia. Pat loved being an Innkeeper, contributing to a gentler world with her hospitality and the food she served.

Some of the stars in the production: Barnaby, Ellen, and Ormsby
Custom Vegan Baseball Gloves

MATERIALS
The time for synthetics in professional baseball gloves has come. Each year more synthetics are being used in parts of Major League gloves. Star players such as Roger Clemens, Chris Carpenter, and Johan Santana, are opting for synthetic backs. Welting, lining, and padding are increasingly made with synthetics by most brands. The newest synthetics are outperforming leather. Completely synthetic gloves will be an industry standard in the future.

In the past, synthetics in gloves meant vinyl, a cheap material that performs poorly. Today the most technologically advanced man-made leathers available are microfiber leathers made by Clarino®. Clarino's synthetic microfibers vary from 1/250 to 1/125 the size of a silk yarn. Ten grams of such fiber is enough to make a trip around the earth. The result is greater suppleness, greater strength, and reduced weight. Additional features include “memory retention”—allowing a pocket to form, and breathable linings that wick away perspiration and moisture. Carpenter Trade Company has worked with the makers of Clarino™ to develop the most advanced performing materials for baseball gloves today.

Large glove companies have thus far resisted this evolution toward synthetics primarily due to consumer misconceptions and with the fact that the latest high-tech synthetics are more expensive than leather. Some major league players have switched to synthetic versions of the brand-name gloves they are paid to endorse. Tellingly, while their game-use gloves have synthetics, the consumer versions of their gloves are all leather. Carpenter gloves are different. Carpenter Trade Company is proud to be the original and exclusive maker of the only high-quality, all-synthetic gloves available anywhere. The gloves are the only all-synthetic leather gloves ever to be used in professional baseball.

DETAILED LIST OF MATERIALS: PALM, SHELL, WEB, TRIM
Clarino™ microfiber synthetic leather, some are suede-like in feel, others have a urethane coating for abrasion resistance INSIDE LINING: Clarino™ microfiber (standard), nylon tricot (optional) WELTING: Nylon microfiber LACE: Nylon microfiber THREAD: Nylon PADDING: Combination of natural wool and synthetic wool padding (all-synthetic is optional), urethane foam STAYS: stress-relieved High-density polyethylene (HDPE)

ANIMAL LEATHER TODAY
Leather in gloves 50 years ago held up better and longer than leather used today. The reason is that cattle raised for slaughter 50 years ago were usually raised naturally—meaning they roamed in open fields, ate grass, and were slaughtered at a mature age (about 5 years). Today’s leather usually comes from factory-farmed cattle. These animals are confined to feed lots where they don’t build muscle or thick hides. They are fed unnatural, fattening diets of grains supplemented with growth hormones. They go to slaughter at a young age (about 14 months). The resulting leather is inferior. While animal leathers have gotten worse, man-made leathers are always advancing.

FOR THE CRUELTY-FREE CONSCIOUS
We use synthetics based on their performance; nevertheless, some of our customers are drawn to us for the simple fact that our gloves have never been made with animal leathers. Some web sources advertise “vegan” gloves which are actually cheap imported vinyl gloves made with leather laces and wool. While our gloves never use leather we do use wool for padding. Those wanting absolutely no animal materials can request all-synthetic padding from us; such gloves are the only vegan gloves available anywhere.

Carpenter Trade Company was created in 2001 by Scott Carpenter.

Carpenter Trade Company
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See www.soyhappy.org/venue.htm for info on vegan food at baseball stadium concession stands.
My personal odyssey, resulting in my becoming a vegan for the rest of my life, began nearly four years ago when my husband of only six years suddenly died from a massive heart attack—his fourth in his 66 years of life, but his first during the few years we were together. He suffered from some of the familiar health problems that many other Americans sadly find themselves with today: heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 late-onset diabetes, and obesity. Fortunately I didn’t have the first three, but I certainly did the fourth, because when he died I weighed more than I had in my entire life—over 300 pounds, with a BMI of 50 (morbidly obese). The sad part of that story is that it wasn’t the first time in my life to be overweight. I had been a chubby child, and during the course of my adulthood prior to 2004 I had gained, maintained, then lost, over 100 pounds three separate times. Each time I obviously did not learn why I ate so much, made such poor food choices, or, once off, how to keep the excessive pounds off permanently. I was one of those types—eating because I had made it through another workweek, eating because it was a special holiday, eating because I was happy or because I was sad or stressed, or eating when I had nothing else to do—you name it, I ate my way through it all.

My late husband and I both retired in June 2003, when he was 65 and I was 54. We built a lovely retirement home in rural East Texas and were looking forward to many blissful years ahead enjoying the peaceful serenity of a quiet, country lifestyle. After my husband passed away just seven months into our retirement, I found myself alone, miserable, and very obese! I knew that once again I needed to lose all the weight I had packed on recently. After discovering that my retirement health insurance didn’t cover any surgical procedure to assist me in losing the massive amount of weight I needed to lose, and since obviously none of the methods I had tried the three previous times to lose weight had proven to be successful long-term, I realized that I had to attack my current dilemma immediately, boldly, and once and for all finally learn how to eat to live, rather than merely live to eat as I had done all my life before then.

As a former career teacher I already loved to read, so now in my time of desperation I turned to numerous books about healthy nutrition, reading voraciously and taking copious notes from book after book. I discovered that the prevailing consensus now is that there’s a new Four Basic Food Groups we should be eating from for maximum health and energy: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes. It sure wasn’t the old Four Basic Food Groups I had learned about in school in the 1950s and 60s.

As I researched further and began putting into practice what I was discovering, I found a resurgence of the energy I had lost long ago, and a natural decrease of interest in my former poor food choices and eating habits. As I continued through the various texts and increasingly incorporated what I was reading into my lifestyle more regularly, I was amazed as the weight started coming right off. Friends wanted to know my secret. I hated to disappoint them, but honestly there was no secret. The truth was that by merely adopting a plant-based diet my body just naturally began to shed its unnecessary pounds.
and adjust to its height’s appropriate weight. Within three years I had lost all the excess weight I had been carrying around—without the aid of any diet, surgery, pills, drinks, or pre-packaged foods. I dropped from a size 28W to a size 4-6 and felt fantastic! In January 2007 I became vegetarian and just a few months later went completely vegan.

Today I’m still reading, still studying, and still taking notes because there’s still so much I want to learn and understand about my new, exciting vegan lifestyle. It continues to amaze me just how marvelous the natural wholesome foods taste and how much better I feel as I’m nourished by what I call the Going Back to Eden way: choosing the foods God intended for all humankind to eat in His original perfect creation, with the vast array of plant foods He has so wondrously provided us.

Some people have suggested that I must have given up a lot to eat this way. Rather, I’ve found that by simply removing the meat and other animal-based food products from my plate there’s now so much more room for the delicious, healthful, colorful, cellular-supporting plant foods that our bodies were originally created for—and to this day still need, in order not only to survive but to thrive.

I have discovered in these past three years numerous remarkable positive outcomes from changing my food choices—not least among them, the loss of a tremendous amount of unnecessary weight naturally and easily, an abundance of energy and enthusiasm, and the wonderful feeling of being rightly-aligned with the Creator and the other two life-forms He also created: animals and the environment.

My goal now is to spread the word: no matter where you are in your life’s journey or current health situation you too can choose to live longer, happier, healthier lives (and quite often even reverse already diagnosed debilitating, degenerative diseases) simply by removing all animal products from the diet and eating totally vegan for the rest of your life. I’ve now lost nearly 200 pounds on my own, am at my ideal weight, feel terrific, and have regained the energy of my youth. I can’t remember the last time I felt this great!

I’m beginning to speak to interested groups, churches, and schools to tell my story and share the wonderful resources from various healthy-eating, animal-compassion, environmental-awareness organizations. I don’t claim to know it all about healthy eating, but I do know what I’ve lived; and now I want to help as many people as possible before they become overweight or develop an obesity-related disease that will negatively impact their lives as well. I hope to encourage others to realize that we don’t have to eat the packaged and processed, chemically-altered junk they call food. Rather, by choosing to eat the exclusively-plant diet, we are taking a stand and making a statement that we have the freedom and power to choose to eat healthy delicious food, be happy, and to honor God by taking good care of this earthly temple He’s given us to live in while on this earthly journey and to show His mercy and compassion to all His creation as well. There can be many more vibrant days ahead if you’ll join those of us who have joyously found the amazing energy and great health we’ve discovered by merely adopting a totally vegan lifestyle.

Jennifer Grundner, lives in Mineola Texas and may be contacted at templekeepers@suddenlink.net.
In a host of news articles recently published, we found both the words "spinach" and "salmonella" mentioned, and sometimes within the same sentence—an unsavory juxtaposition, I'd say, considering salmonella hitches a ride onto our food via fecal matter. We learned in late August 2007 that a California spinach grower had detected the excremental bug at his farm. But lucky for us: he was on the problem in the blink of an eye. He followed recently-instituted government rules to stem the spread of the stomach-sickening bacteria.

He tracked, sequestered, and retrieved 8,000 pounds of spinach, that is, all that had been processed the day the company detected the contaminant. Though 10 percent of the batch did reach stores, warnings from the spinach company, replete with code numbers, kept suspect spinach from being sold. Ultimately, there were no reports of anyone being poisoned.

In other words, the system is working, or so declared the head of the spinach company. Critics begged to differ, as critics tend to do. The system is broken, they said. This episode proves it. That any potentially contaminated produce got so close to consumers’ lips was proof that more oversight, more inspectors, and more regulations are needed.

Now, rewind to last year. At that time we first read in a New York Times story (food-writer Marian Burros), "Facing a loss of consumer confidence in fresh fruits and vegetables because of repeated outbreaks of food-borne illness, three major produce industry groups have for the first time called for government regulation in an industry that until now has had none." And now it seems that the produce industry, dominated, we can be certain, by large companies, got what it wanted—those recently-instituted government rules. It seems that this recent incident—the salmonella-tainted spinach—was the perfect test case for them, too, almost made to order for the spinach growers. The particular grower in this case jumped through the hoops of regulation and came out smelling like a fresh leaf of, well, spinach. Curiously, I might emphasize, these rules need only be followed voluntarily.

So the brand new regulations, if they were ever in danger of being rescinded, are, we suppose, now here to stay. Apparently, they did work, and the critics, who are calling for even more regulation, only bolster a government-interventionist stance. Why would they do such a thing?

I have a theory. You see, not all spinach producers are big ones. The little guys, the small spinach producers, may be stretched to the financial limit by these rules. They cannot afford to institute regular in-house testing to detect for salmonella and other deadly bacteria. Nor, should we figure, can they institute sophisticated tracking. These little guys, who probably don’t need to be regulated at all, will surely be shaken out of the marketplace by these government rules. But more on that later.

With all this talk of outbreak and government regulation and oversight and inspection—and that's about all you ever do read about after a big recall—we vegans almost forget to ask the crucial question that never seems to be asked: Why do we have salmonella contaminating our produce at all, ever?

What is it about spinach that's suddenly making it poisonous? A Martian perhaps comes to Earth with a spinach-contamination gun?

One journalist, Annys Shin of the Washington Post, attempted to answer some of these questions as well as others in an article published in the winter of 2006, albeit about another spinach contamination episode and another contaminant, then, E. coli O157:H7. She wrote, "The strain that caused September's [2006] spinach outbreak, which killed three and sickened about 200, has been found in cattle feces near a California spinach field and in wild pigs that roamed through it."

Alas, we learn in this case, as with virtually all of them, that it was cross contamination making the spinach inedible. Indeed, there is nothing intrinsic about spinach to sicken us. So, we can pretty much assume that wherever we have contaminated produce, there's a feedlot or a range of grazing livestock nearby that produce.

Indeed, the article noted, "Over the past three months, fresh produce has been the culprit in one episode of food-borne illness after another. The patchwork of federal and state regulations that is supposed to ensure food safety has become less effective as the nation's produce supply has grown increasingly industrial. The number of produce-related outbreaks of food-borne illness has

Not So Fast With Those Food-Contamination Rules for Produce

Pamela Rice
increased from about 40 in 1999 to 86 in 2004, according to the Center for Science in the Public Interest. Americans are now more likely to get sick from eating contaminated produce than from any other food item, the center said."

This increase in food poisoning on produce should be deeply troubling, because eventually it will force people to have to cook everything they eat to neutralize potential pathogens, even those foods a person might prefer to eat raw.

And in the case of E. coli O157:H7, you could more than just get sick from exposure; you could die. In the body, the bacteria produces toxins that destroy the intestinal lining and lead to bloody diarrhea, kidney failure and, at times, to death. And, wouldn't you know it, O157:H7 was incubated on American factory feedlots by operators force-feeding grain to cattle—who, more prudently, would be fed on hay—and pumping up the animals with antibiotics to counter the effects of this very diet.

Incidentally, O157:H7 is the bane of every organic farmer who uses manure to fertilize his or her crops today. In fact much of the produce being singled out in recent produce recalls has come from organic farms.

Which brings me back to my first major point: consolidation in agriculture. Contamination today is largely a function of it, certainly when it comes to meat, but also when it comes to produce.

Just ask Nicols Fox, who wrote Spoiled: The Dangerous Truth About a Food Chain Gone Haywire. In her book she documented all types of food-poisoning cases, but particularly those of animal agriculture. She brought us back to a more innocent time, when food was strictly local and grown on small organic farms. Then, we didn't yet have the varieties of food-borne bacteria we have today. Campylobacter, Salmonella Enteritidis, E. coli O157:H7, and Listeria either did not exist back then or were nothing to worry about.

These bacteria got their foothold with the advent of concentrated agriculture, the kind you certainly see in pork and chicken processing, as well as in beef finishing in feedlots. But add to this, these industries eke out slim profits by passing much of their animals' mountains of waste into the environment. Apparently to survive financially, factory-farm operators routinely allow manure to run downstream. Jeff Tietz, in a Rolling Stone article ("Boss Hog", Dec. 14 2006) chronicled this phenomenon in nauseating detail.

Sadly, today we have a situation where three quarters of the spinach Americans eat is being produced in one state, California, and over 55 percent is coming from one county alone, Monterey (which encompasses Salinas Valley where the salmonella-infected spinach, noted above, was found).

So you have all these factors coming together at once: food-borne contamination being incubated on highly-concentrated factory farms where operators slough off the animals' waste into waterways; then you have produce farmers consolidating into behemoths, so that when contamination comes it affects many more people in far-flung places across the country.

The new government rules regulating produce outbreaks end up just feeding the beast, that is benefiting large-scale operations, the very operations that tend to be at the center of food-borne outbreaks.

Again, the recent case of salmonella infecting spinach played right into the hands of the big production operations. You can just figure that the little guys' days are really numbered now. All people are going to be left with are industrial-sized produce producers, which are more susceptible to outbreaks.

Indeed, that which is best all around—small operators supplying a local consumer—these people are, today, being relegated to a niche realm.

That's not where they need to be right now. Still, they are being ghettoized at the green market in your local park. I have a green market outside the door of my office right now as I tap out these words. And it is wonderful. But green markets are not the norm, though they should be.

Now, none of this should take animal agriculture off the hook, we hope. They're at the crux of the food-contamination problem in the first place. The industrialization of our food is a function of the meat industry for the basic fact that it takes so much more cultivated land (twenty-fold, in fact) to feed a meat eater over a vegan. And this augmentation in the recent past has historically forced agriculture, in general, to get bigger, more industrial, more powerful, and more corporate.

But now these unfortunate adjectives can be attributed to our produce producers. Indeed, with this latest outbreak, we had just the latest nail in the coffin for the small farmer. The little guys will likely be even more a thing of the past after this latest salmonella contamination. And if food contamination is a function of bigness, we're sure to see more of it.


While I was drinking green tea as some friends drank Coke®, I asked them to describe their image of a vegan. “Natural,” said one. “Wearing hemp,” said the other “with compost in her pocket and always talking about the benefits of her diet.”

The vegan lifestyle is gaining a voice with the popularity of whole-food markets, vegan cuisine, disease prevention, and an increased understanding of the intelligence and emotional lives of animals. Yet, many people still think vegans are strange because of unfamiliar foods in the diet, a steadfast conviction to help the environment, and extreme compassion for animals. In other words, vegans are often viewed as drab recycled un-fun vegetable vigilantes.

Whether or not we choose to be, each vegan/vegetarian is an unelected spokesperson for the lifestyle. People around us are watching what we do. How we look, act, and respond to inquiries does make a difference. When anyone asks us about our diet, we have a mini-opportunity to educate and influence. The way we handle these interactions can mean the difference between a questioner backing away from us or staying engaged in the conversation—even if only briefly.

As a vegetarian, it has taken me a long time to realize that a light touch and a few directed comments can convert stark resistance into—a little less resistance. With a few simple sentences, I have the power to direct the dialogue away from heated confrontations, and instead have a compassionate discussion. Maybe I no longer fully express my heartfelt beliefs, but at least I am not losing my audience.

In order to do this, I have had to step back from the concepts that are so familiar to me. Every vegetarian knows the benefits of the diet. And we think we are right. We may well be. But in order to persuade others, we must be constantly aware of their mind-set. Changing a diet and a lifestyle is threatening to most people.

Most of us are emotionally involved with our food, whether or not we are vegetarian. For many people, when contemplating even the remote possibility of becoming vegetarian, let alone vegan, they remain fixated on the foods they would have to give up. They look at it as a losing, not a gaining. Face it, most of us prefer the status quo. Change means uncertainty and confusion. Ultimately, change can lead to positive transformation, but first one must endure the process that change requires. When the process involves altering eating habits, it becomes exceptionally complicated and about as welcome to most people as canned Brussels sprouts.

Also, as vegetarians we must respect the fact that choice of diet and lifestyle are very personal. I am a vegetarian, not a
People have always inquired about my vegetarian eating. They still do, and with increased frequency. The questioners might be friends, family, or curious strangers. Maybe, someone has been thinking about converting to vegetarianism and seeks information. In the past, when someone asked why I choose to be a vegetarian, I would go into a passionate explanation about the benefits to health, the environment, and animals. I must have appeared to be a natural-cloth-wearing, wild-eyed fanatic. Before long, the questioner would have defensive arms folded across his chest and would be frantically looking around for the nearest exit.

If someone shared with me that they had cut down on red meat but they still ate chicken, I would go on and on about beautiful fuzzy baby chicks, and the horrors of factory farming. After which, I would announce that once a person totally stopped eating red meat and chicken, it would be easy to give up the rest. “But, I love buffalo wings,” the person would comment before looking at her watch and stating, “Gotta run!”

My new style is much simpler and more effective. Instead of projecting the image of a nay-saying food evangelist, I now aim to emanate encouragement and friendliness. If a little bit of cool seeps through also, so much the better. If someone mentions that they have “almost stopped eating red meat,” I say “Great. That’s wonderful. There are so many delicious, non-meat options available at your local grocery store.” If they tell me that they are cutting out poultry, I mention, “Morning Star has these great vegetarian buffalo wings. . . .”

If someone says, “I still eat fish,” I respond, “Well, everyone has to make choices. By foregoing the red meat and poultry, you are helping the environment, animals, and your health. So that’s really good.” If I’m asked about restaurants, I note how many now have garden burgers and other veggie options. I also try to remember to smile a lot.

Now, people are taking the time to ask me more questions about my lifestyle. Some open their hearts and talk about their fears of converting to vegetarian-eating. Will they get enough protein? Will their diets be balanced? Will they be perceived as drab recycled and un-fun?

“I’m a lot of fun, aren’t I?” I laugh as we continue our conversation.

Marie Cappuccio is an attorney, mediator, adjunct law professor, and writer. Her emphasis is on peaceful communication. A counsel to the law firm of Cappuccio and Zaorski, she is also principal mediator of the Mediation and Arbitration Group. She invites readers to view www.hammontonlaw.com and to contact her directly at castabouts@aol.com.
“Right now we have the longest waiting list for membership in the farm’s history,” proudly explains CSA Honey Brook Organic Farm planner, Sherry Dudas. “The 2007 season sold 2,200 memberships; feeding vegetables, fruits, and herbs to between 3,000 and 4,000 people.” She enjoys the way members connect with home, friends, or the past, through food.

The organic process uses no synthetic chemicals but does employ animal and fish waste. The intent is to nurture the earth’s soil, as well as protect humans from working with or ingesting harmful chemicals.

Since attending an ethics study program at her church, which featured a film about landmark animal activist Peter Singer, she and her husband, farm manager Jim Kinsel, are moving away from their omnivorous eating style. She is now much more conscious of her vegetarian members.

Sherry estimates 10% of share members are vegetarian (includes vegans), and reports, “New college student members in their 20s are taking to vegetarianism for health reasons,” and observes, “Being a vegan can be an obstacle; people feel vegans put their host out! But vegans feel welcome here at Honey Brook”.

At a vegan farm member’s suggestion, Jim Kinsel started using veganic farming methods: substituting leaf compost for animal-manure compost, and eliminating blood and bone meal as soil nutrients. Driven by cost, non-animal products are less expensive.

Mr. Kinsel believes that the use of plant-based fertilizers has improved crop quality, as animal-based manures tend to be high in phosphorus, interfering with the plant’s ability to utilize other nutrients in the soil. Animal manures also contribute to an increase in phosphorus water runoff.

The organic industry and calls for “humane” treatment of farm animals run somewhat parallel. Although organic farmers and consumers are more likely than the general population to be vegetarian or vegan, the organic industry fosters the raising and slaughter of animals—without the deplorable conditions in factory farms. Recognizing this intertwined relationship, Erich Bremer, Director of the NJ Department of Agriculture, Division of Marketing and Development points out that Whole Foods Market has lured organic inspectors into their “humanely-raised” inspector—programs.

Currently the demand for organic produce is greater than the supply. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture in close cooperation with the Northeast Organic Farming Association-NJ, is helping farmers meet the demand. NJ Ag is now accredited to offer in-state-certification services to organic farmers and processors. Bremer observes that larger farms are now seeking organic certification. In the early 1990s, when Kinsel became manager of Honey Brook Farm with 13 available acres, there were a total of 12 certified organic farms with a total of 380 acres in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania. According to the Northeast Organic Farming Association, by end of 2007 there should be a minimum of 58 farms (52 in NJ, 6 in Eastern PA) and 2528 acres (including animal pasture and feed-crops—for which distinct statistics are not readily available).

Fields that grow food for human consumption have greater restrictions on the use of uncomposted animal manure than fields that raise animal-feed crops. As vegetarians and vegans increase in numbers, areas of organic certification will come under greater scrutiny.

CSAs provide much food for vegan table enjoyment. Encourage a CSA you belong to, or might join, to go veganic! Communicate with the farm managers. They just might be as supportive as Jim Kinsel and Sherry Dudas at Honey Brook Farm!
Farm staff include two full-time employees, two part-time secretaries, twelve part-time seasonal farmhands, two part-time drivers, three part-time box packers, six part-time seasonal farm stand attendants, and one farm dog, Jack.

There are two share sizes, Individual and Family. The price is affordable. An Individual Share costs $341.00, while a Family Share costs $549.00. A Delivered Box share costs $577.00. According to Ms Dudas, based on Whole Foods Market prices, last year’s family share (of farm-provided produce from June to November) had a retail value of $1,200, or a 50% savings.

Ms Dudas acknowledges that shopping at a modern organic market, such as Whole Foods, has a Gee Whiz factor. But both she and the farm manager, Jim Kinsel, cherish their farm’s rustic appearance and minimally clean produce. Sitting in the midst of a nature preserve, the farm invites its members to leave the real world behind, and slow down.

Driving up to the farm stand to pick up a weekly share, a member might sit in a grassy area while their toddlers climb the huge friendly climbing tree. Cars overflow the small lot and pull up on the grassy area near the stand, while a small but friendly line of members choose their produce items from a colorful assortment under the farm stand cover. The farm stand sits in front of the old farm house where the farm manager and his wife live, and out of which the operation is run.

Although her role is a watchdog for legislation that may impact her farm, Sherry supports a recent proposal by US Congressman Rush Holt (D-District 12) to create Farmers Markets in each county. Rather than compete with Farmers Markets, she sees them as offering a synergistic effect; she supports them especially for products her farm does not grow.

Honey Brook Farm was not always a model of success. The farm started as an experiment in the early 1980s. By 1991 the project had suffered many failed attempts and was still faltering, with only 50 paying members and a borrowed tractor, when Jim Kinsel was named farm manager. At the year’s end Mr Kinsel’s share of income was a mere $4,000, which could have been regarded as too small, but Jim thought it was great for a start. And it was.

Instrumental in the farm’s success during the third year was hiring David Camancho, who provided moral support as well as farm labor. David lived in the house with Jim and soon bonded with the farm—he wept the first year he returned to his family in Texas for the winter. More workers were hired as time went on.

Under Mr Kinsel’s direction the farm prospered. Ten years later, when Sherry Dudas came aboard, the farm had 65 available acres and 500 shareholders. The project was steadily moving forward, as was the relationship between Jim Kinsel and Sherry Dudas, who recently married.

The Honey Brook Organic Farm operation doubled in size when earlier this year it purchased 65 additional acres in Chesterfield NJ—where anticipated members may come from homes with less disposable income. “Organic is moving from a luxury to a necessity,” smiles Ms Dudas. She excitedly anticipates organic food being accepted by this Burlington County population.

As vegans living in a very non-vegan world, we often find ourselves out of place. It's rare to come across cruelty-free principles in daily living portrayed by the media. When we stumble across something that confirms our core beliefs, it's a refreshing reminder of why we live our lives the way we do. DreamWorks' *Bee Movie* is a film that has brought vegan ideals to the big screen in an entertaining way. Whether it was the intention of the film or not, it raised many questions about people's treatment of non-human life, and perhaps may have helped some see things in a whole new light.

*Bee Movie* is about a bee named Barry (Jerry Seinfeld) who is extremely curious about life outside the hive, and will stop at nothing to experience it. When he finally gets out, he encounters humans for the first time. He is met with both the wanting-to-squish-it-just-for-the-heck-of-it mentality that many humans have towards insects, and the compassion of one woman, Vanessa (Renée Zellweger), who goes above and beyond kindness to protect him. Barry is touched by Vanessa's effort to save his life, and so starts a special friendship. Barry enjoys life outside the hive so much!

One day, he goes to the grocery store with Vanessa and comes across something appalling: honey for sale! This leaves Barry disturbed, and bursting-at-the-seams, wanting to do something about this outrage! He can't believe that the honey that the bees work so hard to make for themselves is stolen from their hives.

With Vanessa's help, he pursues legal action to stop the honey-stealing. What seems like an uphill battle for the tiniest of plaintiffs turns into an opportunity to show the whole world just how unfairly and unkindly bees are really treated.

This was such a gratifying movie! It's not everyday that you see on the big screen the simple act of using a cup and paper to pick up an insect to get it outside and set it free. Seeing life from a bee's perspective was enlightening and touching. It really helps bring home the point that these unique beings aren't here merely for our benefit, but have their own purpose to existence.

It was heartwarming to see my seven-year-old son's reaction to the movie: quite a long conversation about bees and how it's wrong of us to take their honey. If he was able to understand that point more clearly by seeing this movie, it gives me hope that others too will understand.

Reviewed by Melissa Maly

Images courtesy of Paramount Pictures
Kids everywhere may revel in the fact that bees are no longer stinging them as frequently on playgrounds and in backyards, but the decline in honeybee populations in the U.S. and elsewhere signals a major environmental imbalance that could have far-reaching implications for our agricultural food supply.

Brought here from Europe in the 1600s, honeybees have become widespread across North America and are bred commercially for their abilities to pollinate crops—90 different farm-grown foods including many fruits and nuts depend on them—and produce honey. But in recent years populations across the continent have plummeted by as much as 70 percent, and biologists are still scratching their heads as to why and what to do about the problem which they have termed “colony collapse disorder” (CCD).

Many believe that our increasing use of chemical pesticides and herbicides, which bees ingest during their daily pollination rounds, are largely to blame. Commercial beehives are also subjected to direct chemical fumigation at regular intervals to ward off destructive mites. Another leading suspect is genetically modified crops, which may generate pollen with compromised nutritional value.

It may be that the build-up of both synthetic chemicals and genetically modified crop pollen has reached a “tipping point,” stressing bee populations to the point of collapse. Lending credence to this theory is that organic bee colonies, where chemicals and genetically modified crops are avoided, are not experiencing the same kind of catastrophic collapses, according to the non-profit Organic Consumers Association.

Bee populations may also be vulnerable to other factors, such as the recent increase in atmospheric electromagnetic radiation as a result of growing numbers of cell phones and wireless communication towers. The increased radiation given off by such devices may interfere with bees’ ability to navigate. A small study at Germany’s Landau University found that bees would not return to their hives when mobile phones were placed nearby. Further research is currently underway in the U.S. to determine the extent of such radiation-related phenomena on bees and other insect populations.

Biologists also wonder if global warming may be exaggerating the growth rates of pathogens such as the mites, viruses and fungi that are known to take their toll on bee colonies. The unusual hot-and-cold winter weather fluctuations in recent years, also blamed on global warming, may also be wreaking havoc on bee populations accustomed to more consistent seasonal weather patterns.

A recent gathering of leading bee biologists yielded no consensus, but most agree that a combination of factors is likely to blame. “We’re going to see a lot of money poured into this problem,” says University of Maryland entomologist Galen Dively, one of the nation’s leading bee researchers. He reports that the federal government plans an allocation of $80 million to fund research in connection with CCD. “What we’re looking for,” Dively says, “is some commonality which can lead us to a cause.”

GOT AN ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTION? Ask EarthTalk, c/o E/The Environmental Magazine, PO Box 5098, Westport CT 06881; e-mail: earthtalk@emagazine.com. Past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php
Honeybees aren’t the only pollinating creatures. In June 2007 the United States Post Office issued a set of four pollination stamps. The design (by Steve Buchanan) emphasized the ecological relationship between pollinators and plants. Depicted were Morrison’s Bumblebees, a Calliope Hummingbird, a Lesser Long-Nosed Bat, and a Southern Dogface Butterfly. Other pollinator types are flies, beetles, wasps, ants, and other bugs and insects. Some are specific to certain plants. All are threatened by pollution, pesticides, and loss of habitat (land and native plants). Wind is used to pollinate some plant species. Some aquatic plants employ water.


Vegan Demons : Roving Restaurant Review

24 Seven

Restaurant: 24 Seven
Phone: 202-232-7108
Location: 1408 U St NW, Washington DC 20009
Hours: 24/7 (never closes!)
Selection: Vegan Options
Service: Friendly & Fast (counter service only)
Value/Price: Way Reasonable/Good Bang for the Buck
Rating: VVVV (out of 5)

24 Seven is a place all late-night prowling veg’ns should know about. Convenience, value, and friendly service are its hallmarks!

We were on our way to see the band Gongzilla in DC and had lightly researched some vegetarian-vittle destinations. When we arrived at the venue, the Velvet Lounge, the show was already underway so we hurried on in to enjoy the music. The only drawback was that the show ended after 2 am and there were two hungry vegan demons on the prowl. Driving down U Street less than a mile we spied a glowing neon sign that read Falafel. And it was open! The brightly-lit no-frills atmosphere was no deterrent at that hour. The menu had a full section entitled “Vegetarian Blast” comprised of seven vegan selections. We chose the ultimate “24 Seven Veggie” which included falafel, hummus, spinach, rice ‘n beans, and salad. It was delicious and plentiful. Another selection worthy of mention (but not yet tried) was the “Appetizer Combo” featuring baba ganouj, tabouli, grape leaves, falafel, and hummus. We ordered a falafel wrap to-go which was devoured shortly after our departure. Delectable. Thoughts of coffee for the three-hour trek home to the Philly/NJ area were banished by the ever-so-satisfying mango nectar found in the fridge section.
Even after 15 years teaching vegetarian cooking classes, I’m still moved to hear one of my non-vegetarian students admit: “I thought vegan food was dull until I tried your dishes. How can vegan food taste so good? I can do this!”

It makes my heart swell especially to hear them say, “I can do this!” But of course, anyone can “do” vegan foods. What’s not to love about the incredible diversity and bounty of plant foods at our disposal? “Love notes from God” as author Gabriel Cousens, MD, affectionately refers to plant foods.

So that my students will be clear, I’m always mindful to point out to them what constitutes “vegetarian” and “vegan” diets. Namely, that vegans exclude all animal products while vegetarians exclude only animal flesh. Vegans include in the diet legumes, grains, fruits, veggies, seeds and nuts; vegetarians include the same, but add dairy and/or eggs to their list.

“You mean you don’t even eat fish?” I shake my head and reply that the terms “vegetarian” and “vegan” do not include any animal flesh, thus, there are no “pollo,” or “pesco,” or semi-vegetarians. Sorry.

So much for definitions. Let’s talk flavor. A plant-based diet has enough pizzazz for most anyone to fall in love with the sensual act of eating. The good taste that is inherent in plants may well be the result of not only what’s in a vegetable, but also what’s not.

A plant-based diet, as observed in the preface of my book, is “rich in wholesome life-giving nutrients, bursting with taste and color, devoid of environmental destruction and economic waste, and untainted by animal misery and slaughter.”

A bunch of luscious grapes, a juicy peach, the heavenly aroma of a succulent tomato—don’t these things naturally make the mouth water? Even when we’re not hungry, look how easy it is to feast, on such ripe, fragrant delights—just for the taste of it!

On the other hand, there is raw, animal flesh. The thought of consuming it in its natural state must surely repulse all but the true carnivores, such as lions, tigers, and polar bears.

So-called human “carnivores” generally opt to have their pound of flesh fried, grilled, baked or broiled, and well-disguised with sauces, gravies, and seasonings. As far from its original form as possible, it seems.

Before attending one of my classes most of my students would have admitted that the notion of a plant-based diet had conjured up visions of heaps of mushy beans and bland, boiled tofu, surrounded by piles of steamed, lifeless veggies on mounds of tasteless rice.

To purge them of such illusions, I enjoy whipping up simple, delicious vegan meals that retain the colors, flavors, textures, and traditions they’re used to.

I know I have won my students over after just a few mouth-watering bites of such delights as “Tofu ‘Egg Fried’ Rice,” “Orange Bean Cake,” “Kasha Krunch Cereal,” and “Apple Bread.”

As I demonstrate with these and other dishes I’ve developed over the years, adopting a plant-based diet doesn’t mean having to sacrifice the customary flavors and textures of traditional meals. Tofu and tempeh, for example, as well as various types of beans, are easily transformed into extraordinary home-cooked dishes.

It’s not difficult to make a plant diet both joyfully flavorful and vibrantly healthful. Here are just a few of the hints and observations I share with my students.
Organic plant foods taste better and are healthier than their conventionally sprayed and chemically fertilized counterparts. If organic is not available, peel (where possible) and discard the skins of all non-organic plant foods.

Neither good health nor genuine flavor can be found in such things as refined grains, boxed cereals, or fake meats. Open up your repertoire to include such whole grains as millet, buckwheat, and quinoa. They cook in 15 minutes and are gluten-free, to boot.

Further, millet, buckwheat, and rolled oats are “soft” enough to be ground into “flour” in your blender. Quick breads, cookies, cakes, and muffins never tasted so fresh and sweet as when these homemade flours are used to replace store-bought flours.

Baked goods will be all the more moist and mouth-watering (and especially healthful!) when all the oil and shortening in the recipes is replaced with pureéd fruit, tofu, or ground flax seeds.

Instead of so-called “meat analogs,” like textured vegetable protein (TVP) or textured soy protein products, try natural, nutritious powerhouses like tofu, tempeh, and beans. And if you buy canned beans, buy organic, and rinse away the salt. Canned beans will do just fine in any recipe calling for home-cooked beans.

All fruits and vegetables should be washed before using. The same for dried beans, grains, seeds, and nuts. (However, it’s not practical to wash grains that are being ground into flour in the blender or mill.)

Although most store-bought, non-dairy milks are flavorful, if you really want a great tasting, fresh milk just make it yourself. Blend 1 cup raw nuts or seeds with 3-4 cups water for 1 minute; strain and use instead of dairy milk.

Stir-frying with oil is not a healthy practice because all oils break down into toxic compounds when overheated. Why not lightly steam your veggies or try your next stir-fry using a little vegetable stock, or fruit juice—especially pineapple juice. Even water, along with aromatic dried herbs, will yield results as toothsome as they are good for you. Then drizzle a little oil—my favorites are flax, olive, and toasted sesame—on the stir-fry and serve.

Dried herbs and spices are best used within 6 months; after that, much of their aroma and taste have faded. Write the date on the jars or airtight containers and keep them in a dark, cool spot.

Incidentally, dried herbs are best used at the start of cooking a dish, while fresh herbs impart their flavor best if used near the end of the cooking process. For the maximum flavor, use the suggested dried herbs in the beginning, and add a bit of their fresh counterparts just before serving the dish.

Speaking of soup, nothing is finer (or healthier!) than a bowl of miso soup. Dark misos (red/brown) have a deep savory flavor, while light misos (white/yellow) have a mellow, sweet flavor. Mix 2-3 tsps. of miso with 1 cup hot water for a mouth-watering treat. Or, to add a wonderful deep burst of flavor to a pot of soup, add the miso (diluted with water) to the soup pot just before serving.

The recipes that follow are quite popular among my students. These and scores more of wholesome, tasty, and quick and easy recipes can be found in my book, From David’s Vegetarian Kitchen.

**Tofu ‘Egg Fried’ Rice**

Yield: 3-4 servings

16-oz. firm tofu
¼ cup water
1 cup mushrooms (sliced)
1 tsp. liquid smoke (optional)
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. turmeric
3 cups cooked brown rice
3 Tbsp. soy sauce
2 Tbsp. toasted sesame oil
¼ cup chopped roasted almonds or cashews

Place tofu in large skillet and mash with fork. Add water and next 4 ingredients and combine. Stir-fry until water in skillet has just evaporated (about 10 minutes) and tofu is somewhat light and fluffy (and before tofu begins to stick to skillet), stirring occasionally.

Remove cover and simmer until water in skillet has just evaporated (about 10 minutes) and tofu is somewhat light and fluffy (and before tofu begins to stick to skillet), stirring occasionally.

Add rice, soy sauce, and oil; combine. Cook briefly over low heat until thoroughly heated. Just before serving, stir in green onions and nuts.

Note: Refrigerate leftovers and use within 3-4 days.

**To make Oat Flour:**

Blend 1½ cups rolled oats at a time in a blender for about 15-20 seconds. This yields about 1¼ cups oat flour. Store extra flour in airtight container in fridge or freezer.
Orange Bean Cake
Yield: 4-6 servings

2 cups whole wheat flour, spelt flour, or Oat Flour
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
2 cups cooked lima or navy beans
½ cup frozen orange juice concentrate
½ cup water
¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp. maple syrup
( optional)

Orange Maple Glaze
(see recipe below)

Preheat oven to 300°. In bowl, combine first 3 “dry” ingredients. In blender, blend next 5 “wet” ingredients until smooth.

Pour blender mix into bowl of dry ingredients, mixing thoroughly. If batter seems thick, add a little juice or water to thin.

Transfer batter into oiled 8” square baking dish. Bake 45 minutes or until lightly browned.

Cover with glaze.

Note: Refrigerate leftover cake and use within 3-4 days, or freeze for longer period.

Kasha Krunch Cereal
Yield: 6 servings

3 cups uncooked raw buckwheat
¼ cup sugar (ie evaporated cane juice)
½ tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. salt
3 Tbsp. peanut butter or other seed or nut butter

Preheat oven to 300°.

Pick through buckwheat and remove any stones or other foreign matter. Rinse buckwheat.

In mixing bowl, completely combine buckwheat, sugar, cinnamon, and salt. Spread evenly on oiled baking sheet (or baking dish).

Bake 20 minutes, stir, and bake 20 minutes longer, or until lightly browned.

Remove from oven and immediately transfer hot cereal to large bowl (to prevent sticking to baking sheet). Add peanut butter and thoroughly combine.

Note: Refrigerate leftovers and use within 10 days.

Kasha Krunch Cereal
Yield: 6 servings

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¼ cup sugar (ie evaporated cane juice)
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Bake 20 minutes, stir, and bake 20 minutes longer, or until lightly browned.

Remove from oven and immediately transfer hot cereal to large bowl (to prevent sticking to baking sheet). Add peanut butter and thoroughly combine.

Note: Refrigerate leftovers and use within 10 days.

Apple Bread
Yield: 4-6 servings

2 cups whole wheat flour, spelt flour, or Oat Flour
1 cup rolled oats
½ cup sugar (ie evaporated cane juice)
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. salt
1½ cups apple juice
2 medium apples (peeled and chopped)

Cinnamon Maple Glaze
(see recipe below)

Preheat oven to 300°.

In bowl, combine first 6 “dry” ingredients. In blender, blend juice and apples until smooth.

Pour blender mix into bowl of dry ingredients, mixing thoroughly. If batter seems thick, add a little juice to thin.

Transfer batter into oiled 8” square baking dish. Bake 45 minutes or until lightly browned.

Cover with glaze.

Note: Refrigerate leftover bread and use within 3-4 days, or freeze for longer period.

Cinnamon Maple Glaze
Yield: about ¼ cup

3 Tbsp. maple syrup
1 Tbsp. non-hydrogenated margarine
½ tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. vanilla extract

In small bowl, combine all ingredients thoroughly.

Note: Refrigerate leftovers and use within 5-7 days.

FROM DAVID’S PURE VEGETARIAN KITCHEN —David A. Gabbe. A wealth of creative pure vegetarian recipes that delight the senses and are simple to prepare. 2002, 192pp 5½x8½” $14.95, from AVS.

David Gabbe has taught cooking classes in California, Oregon, and Washington, and has been a speaker at numerous health symposiums, seminars, and conferences for over a decade.

For more information on David, visit his website at www.davidsvegetariankitchen.com.
In the fall of 2007 I had the opportunity to stay with Freya Dinshah, president of the American Vegan Society. As part of our visit, we gave a one-hour presentation and sampling event in the second hour of an after-school program for children aged 6 to 14 years from a low-income area.

The program takes place in a nearby community center in southern New Jersey and runs from 6:00 to 8:00 pm every Tuesday. The after-school program provides help with homework and educational basics, along with crafts and activities for 12 to 20 students. Some of the youngsters are terrific on the basketball court, but they don’t have much interest in the three Rs. A number find school work to be a real struggle; while several have made the honor roll. This group had little experience with vegetarian food and plenty of experience with fast foods. Typical menus for the after-school program were pizza, grilled cheese sandwiches, or hot dogs and chips, with ice cream and soda. Many of the participants were overweight.

We focused our discussion on plant foods and asked the following questions, which are based on a section in Raising Vegetarian Children which I wrote with Jo Stepaniak.

When we eat plant foods, we eat different parts of the plant: the leaves, stem, flowers, roots, fruits, and seeds.

- What is an example of a food that is the leaf of a plant?
- What is an example of a food that is the stem of a plant?
- What is an example of a food that is the flower of a plant?
- What is an example of a food that is the root of a plant?
- What is an example of a food that is the fruit of a plant?

Thinking of fruit as something that has seeds in it and that can start another plant growing, what is an example of a food that is the fruit of a plant?

Right from the start the youngsters jumped in to participate, though occasionally the students’ input was given more to amuse their peers than to be helpful. For instance, the first example given of a possible food plant was tobacco. This answer, while incorrect, made us all laugh (as intended).

The questions were engaging, and all of the children took part. Here are some of their responses:

- **leaves**: collard greens, spinach, lettuce, kale
- **stems**: celery, asparagus
- **roots**: beet, carrot
- **flower**: broccoli, cauliflower
- **bulbs**: garlic, onion
- **tubers that grow underground**: sweet potatoes, yams, potatoes

African American children were particularly interested in collard greens, sweet potatoes, and peanuts. We mentioned that peanuts are known as ground nuts in Africa and that they grow just under the earth.

We discussed that fruits contain seeds, and from these new plants grow. A fruit is the part of a plant involved in its reproduction. Other plant parts are called vegetables. Seeds are present in pumpkins, berries, apples, oranges, and pears. Here is another question we asked: “Some people say a tomato is a vegetable. Others call it a fruit. Who’s right?” We considered that although in our kitchens we use certain plant foods as vegetables, to a botanist they may be fruits. Examples are avocados, cucumbers, eggplants, peppers, squashes, tomatoes, and zucchinis.

As we talked, we held up foods that we had brought as examples (broccoli, garlic, hot and sweet peppers, eggplant, celery, chickpeas, a bean in the pod, and walnuts) and asked which part of the plant it is.
That used up 15 to 20 minutes, just the right amount of time to keep lively kids involved in a discussion. By then, we all wanted to get to the practical part of the presentation—eating the samples we had brought. On each table were seven paper plates, each containing an attractively arranged raw plant food. One plate contained carrot sticks, another celery sticks, and others red pepper strips, trimmed snow pea pods, green beans, and spinach leaves. An eighth plate was piled with roasted, unsalted peanuts that were still in the shell. Also provided were small bowls of hummus to use as a dip for the veggies, two types of rye crackers, and small boxes of fruit juice.

We invited the children to eat whilst giving them permission not to try or like some things. We were pleasantly surprised by our reception and the participation. Whereas the prankster of the group made a few comments indicating that he wouldn’t want to eat a certain item, at the end of the session, we realized that he had jumped in like everyone else and ventured into uncharted territory as far as tasting new foods. The boys were particularly enthusiastic about shelling and eating the peanuts.

Wild, locally-grown persimmons attracted a lot of interest. Some students asked if they could grow a tree from their seeds. Fresh figs from Freya’s tree were another treat, and we noted that South Jersey is the northern limit for this fruit.

Parents, tutors, and caregivers present also were captivated by the presentation. One mother and a grandmother asked for the recipe for hummus. Another said she liked it but couldn’t see herself taking the time cooking and blending the beans, or even making a quick version with canned chickpeas. Whether they would buy hummus at a deli is questionable when family budgets are tight. Many working poor are caught short of time and cash. However, this might be a matter of familiarity and perception, as fast foods can be more expensive than simple home-cooked soups, and hummus.

Several adults mentioned that they were concerned about their own weight issues and related health problems and said they’d like to explore this way of eating further. One preteen girl said, “I wish that we could eat this way at school.”

When children reject vegetables, often they’re mirroring a lack of enthusiasm demonstrated by adults. Luckily, we can revisit this idea! We can try a new vegetable or fruit each week or month and take an interest in where it comes from, how it grows, and how it usually is prepared. Even if our opportunities to visit different states or countries are limited, we can explore the world from our own kitchens.

You’ll find a wealth of information on food and nutrition for young people in *Raising Vegetarian Children* by Vesanto Melina and Jo Stepaniak 2003, 381pp 7½x9” $18.95. Also see *Becoming Vegan* by Vesanto Melina and Brenda Davis. 2000, 224pp 8x11” $16.95 and *Food Allergy Survival Guide: Delicious Recipes and Complete Nutrition* by Vesanto Melina, MS, RD, Jo Stepaniak, MSED and Dina Aronson, MS, RD. 2004, 384pp 7x10”, $19.95.

Vesanto’s books are available from the American Vegan Society, discounted 20% to AVS members.

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Cell: 604-614-5372
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www.nutrispeak.com

*Community kids name the parts of plants we eat.*

Back row: Zaneta Pierce, and Yasmar Gill. Middle row: Kendra Johnson, Eric McCloud, Trevor Farley, and Lena Pierce. Front: Amir Simpson
Reprieve: Killing Dogs in Training of Doctors to End

According to reports by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), and in the New York Times, all U.S. medical schools will have closed their dog laboratories by February 2008. They will no longer be operating on dogs to examine their beating hearts, and then disposing of them after the lesson. Students now use echocardiograms to study heart function. Case Western Reserve School of Medicine will be the last to close its dog lab. New York Medical Schools stopped these procedures in November 2007.

Note: Other animals are still used in medical schools, and dogs are still subject to experimentation in research laboratories.


Restaurant Review by Maureen Koplow

Zizi’s Vegetarian 2Go

Restaurant: Zizi’s Vegetarian 2Go
Location: 177 S Centre St, Merchantville NJ 08109
Hours: Monday-Wednesday: 11:30am-3pm,
Thursday-Saturday: 11:30-7pm, Closed Sunday. Hours are weather permitting—call first to make sure they’re open.
Selection: All Vegan
Service: Friendly & Fast Counter Service; picnic tables outside
Value/Price: Reasonable Rating: VVVV (out of 5)

Some fast food chains and diners now offer a veggie burger. Ethnic restaurants—Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Italian, Middle Eastern and Mexican—have always had wonderful vegetarian options. But there are still very few places in South Jersey where everything on the menu is vegan, so I was excited to hear about Zizi’s Vegetarian 2Go. Owner Heru Myrrh opened it in June 2007. Located in a former ice cream parlor, with take-out window service only, Zizi’s is a treasure—absolutely delicious! Choices include “steak” sub, “rib tip” wrap, crispy “fish”, “chicken” tenders, grilled “salmon steak”, spicy “buffalo wings”, “beef ‘n broccoli” or “chicken” salad as well as nut loaf supreme, avocado salad, and more. Chocolate fudge brownie or sweet potato cheese cake plus other desserts finish off the tasty delights, and fresh fruit smoothies help wash it all down. Zizi’s offers catering and local delivery service. The location is a little out of the way—tucked into a tiny shopping strip. It’s not on a main highway, but it’s easy to find at the end of Cuthbert Road. It’s a good idea to call in your order so you don’t have to wait in your car while it’s being prepared (usually 10-15 minutes). You’re sure to love whatever you order, but try to taste something new each time you go—every choice is a winner!
In January 2000, when John Street took office as Mayor of Philadelphia Pennsylvania, the city was ranked the #1 fattest in the country by *Men’s Fitness Magazine*. Mayor Street wasted no time in setting up his Office of Health & Fitness (MOH&F) appointing Gwen Foster as the city’s first Health & Fitness Czar. She worked with institutions and individuals to create an innovative and imaginative fitness program that has proven popular, and become a model for other cities. As Street left City Hall, Philly had moved to #23 on the Fattest List, and expects to get off the list entirely.

John Street is fit, but he weighed 300 pounds in his youth! Today he jogs around the city. Street’s level of energy and clarity of thought give him an advantage in politics, where he can outlast opponents! He follows the principles taught by Gwen Foster, a longtime friend with a Master’s degree in Public Health from Loma Linda University, who previously directed the Seventh Day Adventist Health Ministries program for the Allegheny East Conference states of PA, DE, NJ, MD, VA, WV, and DC.

Sedentary lifestyles and poor food choices underlie the obesity epidemic. Obesity is associated with chronic life-threatening diseases such as type-II diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and cancer. Increasingly, health professionals are indicting eating patterns where animal-sourced fat and proteins, and refined carbohydrates, predominate. Fast Food is on every corner in the city known for its Philly Cheese Steaks and Tasty Cake™. MOH&F won the collaboration of city chefs. Restaurants and large companies introduced healthier versions of standard items, and added whole grain and vegetable options to their menus.

Promoting a Fun, Fit & Free image; H&F Czar Gwen Foster advises eating more plant foods and increasing exercise. Not forcing, but suggesting, works well. People learn to realize what brings the best results.

In a testimonial, Karla Hill reports a total lifestyle change. She lost 51 pounds and lowered her cholesterol level dramatically in her transition from a diet dominated by meat to an exclusively plant diet—vegan. Program participants set goals; sugar levels came down, heart rates went up (when exercising), and citizens smiled! Diane Davis, who no longer has to take medication for arthritis says, “If you are true to the program you will see and feel the results.”
For a $25 10-week fee Philadelphians receive a “passport” and gained access to over 60 indoor and outdoor activities each week including gym sessions, yoga, cooking classes, massage, and fitness forums.

**Health Journeys** had destinations such as Or-Lean-do Florida, Hon-A-Lose-It Hawaii, Las Veggies Nevada, Slim-cinnati Ohio, New You New York, and Feel-A-Healthier Pennsylvania—without actually leaving the city. “Travelers” were awarded Frequent Activity Miles for positive health behaviors like exercising, drinking water, and making healthful food choices. The Frequent Activity Miles were redeemed for incentive gifts and prizes. At the end of 2007 they arrived at Fit-adelphia.

A team of 60 **Chefs in Red** was trained to give cooking classes and demos all over town. Upon graduation they were presented with their trademark red-wheeled luggage—filled with kitchen utensils and equipment. Their hands-on cooking classes are the most effective. There are vegan-style classes for kids as well as for adults.

Ten relatively simple health principles have been identified to combat the national cost of sedentary lifestyles and obesity. Schools, corporations, NGOs, businesses, and churches were enlisted to host health programs, and provide the advantages of fostering new habits in a group setting. For corporations there is the incentive of reduced healthcare costs. In working with churches, Foster promotes the Daniel Diet*, and incorporates Gospel stamp aerobics, on a “40-day Journey from Egypt to the Promised Land”.

Sandy Weston, exercise guru, created the Philly Line Dance, taught in classes and performed throughout the city, because “Philly people love a good time”.

The program web site lists Health Principles, “Journeys”, and has a **Chefs in Red** section with vegan recipes: Hummus and Tabouli, Breakfast Recipes, and Main Dish Recipes. This section gives very helpful Vegan Information.

Insightfully, Mayor Street made his OH&F independent of the City Health Department. Monthly City Hall meetings offered encouragement. Demand for the program had staff working overtime to meet requests for services, and participate in events. Budget needs were largely met by donations from corporations and other sectors.

The city’s press, always ready to criticize the mayor, praised the achievements of MOH&F in teaching Philadelphians how to be healthier and live longer. Fatimah Ali considers MOH&F “his most brilliant idea”. Mayor Street told her that “he might not be able to fix all of Philadelphia…but he wanted to leave each of us with some personal tools for self-empowerment to help enhance our lives”. U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson, praised the Philadelphia program for its support of President Bush’s Steps to a Healthier United States, launched in June 2002.

The program continues under the new Mayor, Michael Nutter, with a Health Trip announced in 2008.

Thank you, Mayor Street for your vision. Well done, Gwen Foster, for creating a concise and do-able program, which makes healthy living enjoyable!

*Daniel refused the king’s meat and wine, and asked for pulse and water instead. (See Bible, Old Testament, Daniel 1: 1-15)
1. **Select A Buddy**  Be sure your Health Buddy is someone who will encourage you all the way. You should be in contact with your Health Buddy daily!

2. **Drink More Water**  GRADUALLY increase water intake to half your body weight in ounces. (For example, a 150lb. person would gradually increase water intake to 75oz. or 9.4 glasses daily.) Disclaimer: Please check with your physician if you have been diagnosed with congestive heart failure, kidney disease, edema, or any condition that restricts fluid intake.

3. **Increase Physical Activity**  Gradually increase aerobic activity to at least 30 minutes a day most days of the week (Examples: walking, biking, swimming). Be sure to include a five-minute warm-up and cool-down.

4. **Enjoy More Fruits & Vegetables**  Eat 2 to 4 whole fruits* and 3 to 5 (½ cup) servings of veggies daily. Choose a variety of colors! (*Diabetics: Check with physician for safe number of servings)

5. **Eat Foods High in Fiber & Vegetable Protein**  Eat more whole-grain breads, cereals, and pastas; along with beans, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

6. **Take Time to Breathe Deeply**  Inhale through nostrils to the count of 4, hold for 16, and exhale for 8. Repeat 10 times. (Do three times daily).

7. **Schedule Time for Rest & Play**  Having fun is an important part of healthy living. Schedule time for adequate rest and the hobbies you enjoy.

8. **Adjust Your Eating Schedule**  Eat like a King for breakfast, a Queen for lunch, and a Pauper for supper. Space meals 5 hours apart, drink water in between.

9. **Get Adequate Amounts of Sunlight**  Using the proper safety precautions, get 10 to 15 minutes, 2 to 3 times weekly. (This builds Vitamin D & can help to lower blood pressure.)

10. **Give Someone a Reason to Smile**  Develop meaningful relationships with friends and family. Do something nice for someone.

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**THE WORLD PEACE DIET: Eating for Spiritual Health and Social Harmony**—Will Tuttle, PhD. How food choices underlie many of society’s problems. This rationale for vegan living examines cultural traditions and is enriched by vignettes of personal experience from Tuttle’s life. He is a musician, philosopher, and teacher who has studied deeply and widely. 2005, 318 pp 6x9” $20.00. **LIVING IN HARMONY WITH ALL LIFE: A Discourse on the World Peace Diet**—Companion CD $5.00.

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**VEGAN HEALTH STUDY**

Participate in nutrition research, investigating the long-term effects of vegan diets, by any or all of these ways:

- Complete a questionnaire.
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www.veganhealthstudy.org

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New Documentary:

A SACRED DUTY
Applies Jewish Values to Environmental, Health, and Humane Issues
Richard H. Schwartz

Because the world is heading rapidly toward an unprecedented catastrophe from global warming and other environmental threats, Jewish Vegetarians of North America (JVNA) has produced this documentary, A Sacred Duty: Applying Jewish Values To Help Heal The World, to address these threats from a positive Jewish perspective.

Almost daily there are reports of severe droughts, floods, storms or wildfires, the melting of glaciers and polar ice caps and other indicators of global warming. It is frightening that, while these effects are due to an increase in temperature of less than 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit in the past 100 years, the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—a group composed of hundreds of the world’s climate scientists, is projecting an increase of 3 to 11 degrees Fahrenheit in the next 100 years. Even more ominous is that some climate scientists, including James Hansen of NASA, are warning that global warming may reach a tipping point and spiral out of control within a decade, with disastrous consequences, unless major changes are soon made. Israel is especially vulnerable to global climate change, in terms of reduced rainfall, severe storms, and flooding from a rising Mediterranean Sea.

A Sacred Duty is a Jewish response to these realities. It reminds us that it is our sacred duty to become aware of current threats and our responsibility to apply Jewish teachings to how we obtain our food, use natural resources, and live among other creatures whom God created. It offers simple practical measures for reducing our impact on the planet, including “an inconvenient truth” that even Al Gore has not yet acknowledged.

Produced by the highly acclaimed multi-award-winning film maker, Lionel Friedberg, A Sacred Duty reinforces the messages in Al Gore’s An Inconvenient Truth and Leonardo di Caprio’s The Eleventh Hour about the dangers of global warming. However, it goes beyond these films by showing how religious responses can make a major difference, and why a shift toward plant-based diets is an essential part of efforts to reduce global climate change and other environmental threats. It also challenges people to consider the many moral issues related to our diets, referring to Torah teachings.

The documentary interviews leading Israeli and American environmental, health, vegetarian, and animal rights, activists, as well as Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, and secular leaders. Interviewees include: Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen, Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Haifa; Rabbi David Rosen, Former Chief Rabbi of Ireland and International Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee; Dr Yeshayahu Bar-Or, Chief Scientist Israel Environmental Ministry; and many other rabbis and Jewish leaders and activists.

Biblical passages are read by the Jewish star of Broadway and screen, Theodore Bikel.

Although primarily intended for a Jewish audience, A Sacred Duty speaks to people everywhere about the ethics of our relationship to the natural world in which we live. Its universal message will appeal to anyone interested in such topics as biblical teachings, Israel, the environment, health, nutrition, vegetarianism, hunger, and resource usage. The movie may be said to be like Levy’s Jewish Rye bread—you do not have to be Jewish to appreciate it.

A Sacred Duty and the many activities being planned around it have the potential to help move our imperiled world toward a sustainable path. But only if the movie is widely viewed and discussed.

Please order a FREE copy and also consider taking one or more of the following actions after viewing the movie: have viewings for family, neighbors, and friends; try to schedule showings at a local school, a synagogue and/or other houses of worship, a community center or other communal site, etc.; share the DVD with local rabbis and other religious leaders, teachers, politicians, and other local influential people. Send your request (with name and mailing address) to JVNA’s secretary/treasurer John Diamond (jdiamond4@cox.net), 49 Patton Dr., Newport News VA 23606. Ph: 757-930-4998.

Contact Richard Schwartz at President@JewishVeg.com.
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Department of Corrections
Office of the Secretary
June 25, 2007

SUBJECT:
New Menu Choices - Regular Mainline Menu or Alternate Protein Line Menu

TO: Inmate General Population
FROM: Jeffrey A. Beard, PhD Secretary

For quite some time, inmates throughout the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections have requested that a no meat food choice be made available to them. In 1997 the DOC incorporated an Alternative Protein Source choice into the regular mainline menu to accommodate the increasing requests. To ensure the content of all products being used on the regular mainline menu, the DOC standardized recipes, along with purchasing specifications. As the standard recipes were developed, the DOC started to make some items on the menu, such as soups and gravies, with vegetarian bases that do not contain meat or meat by-products.

Dear Ms Dinshah:

I am writing...to inform you of the changes in my life and the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections prison system as far as their handling the Alternate Protein Meals.

I must thank you and American Vegan Society for helping me with information needed to enforce a change, and to pass around to others that share the same passion of veganism and more compassionate living. I could not have done it without the support and dedication of American Vegan Society.

So again, thank you and God Bless.

KAP, Somewhere PA

PRISON NEWS:
 PENNSYLVANIA OFFERS NEW ALTERNATE PROTEIN LINE MENU

Inmates are now requesting more “no meat” and foods choices from “non-animal sources” for various personal and religious reasons. In response, the DOC will be implementing Master Menu choices in the near future. The Master Menu choices will be offered as a REGULAR MAINLINE MENU or an ALTERNATE PROTEIN LINE MENU.

The menu choices will be offered as two separate lines:

1. Regular Mainline Menu —
   a) The food items served on this line will be meat, milk, dairy/cheese, egg, fish or food items containing meat, and/or other “animal” derived food sources.
   b) The menu on this line will be the mainline that inmates currently eat with one noticeable change: The Alternate Protein Source will no longer be offered on the Regular Mainline Menu.

2. Alternative Protein Line Menu —
   a) The food items served on this line will be free from all “animal” derived food sources.
   b) This menu will NOT have any meat, milk, dairy/cheese, egg, fish, or food items containing meat, an/or other “animal” derived food sources.
   c) Many of the entrées on the Alternate Protein Line Menu will be the same as the former Alternative Protein Source.
   d) Soy milk will be served at breakfast on this line.
   e) Food items such as macaroni salad and potato salad will be made with a vinaigrette dressing or served plain since mayonnaise contains eggs.
   f) A majority of the baked goods (desserts) contain eggs, and ice cream contains milk, therefore most of the desserts on this line will now be fresh or canned fruit.
   g) Inmates currently on lactose restricted diets, pork allergy diets, poultry allergy diets, egg allergy diets, and mayonnaise allergy diets, will be able to meet their dietary needs using this line.

The DOC will continue to provide inmates with Kosher Diet Bag Meals, with approval from the Religious Accommodations Committee; and Therapeutic Diets for inmates that have medical conditions requiring a separate diet prescribed according to policy.

*KAP became vegetarian in January 2006. By July, at age 25, he was attempting to follow a vegan diet, but was thwarted by pervasive animal-origin ingredients in the prison food available. In December 2006, AVS wrote a letter testifying to the sincerity of his beliefs, and requesting prison authorities to accommodate his dietary request—to enable him to observe his ethical/religious convictions and scruples, as is his constitutional right.  

American Vegan 7—1, WINTER 2008 29
Wonderfully woven watery tales of dark doings, depicted by puppets, actors, and dancers.

Kids and adults gave rapt attention to a humorous treatment of the sorry situation flowing from streams and rivers to the sea. A favorite character is the mobster who faces drowning in the Schuylkill River unless he agrees to help stop global warming, over-fishing, and pollution. The 2007 production was staged at the Mum Puppet Theatre, Philadelphia, by Public Eye: Artists for Animals, (a project of Mobilization for Animals) and is available on DVD. Get your copy, view it with friends, and delve deep to answer problems.


FROM THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER: 1 hour, $10.00.

VEGGIE CABARET: Daniel Piraro and other comedians share funny moments of vegetarians living in a meat-eating world. Piraro delivers powerful message. 2 hours, $10.00.

THE HUMAN CIRCUS: entertainment as people perform, circus history, tale of two elephants, bear and lion sub-plots. 2 hours, $10.00.

AMERICAN VEGAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

BASIC MEMBERSHIP is open to all: vegan, vegetarian, or non-vegetarian. ADVANCED Membership (voting, office holding) is open to vegans practicing Ahimsa (send for application form).

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION is $20 per calendar year (3 print issues & website). ($10 student/low-income within U.S.A). Join before midyear, receive back issues, or join later and you’re on to end of next year. Pay by check/money order/credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express).

LIFE MEMBERSHIP IS $200; Life Patron $500 or more; Life Benefactor $1000 or more. Each type includes lifetime (your or AVS, as the case may be) American Vegan subscription. Each type payable at one time or in installments, normally completed within two years.

IRS REGULATIONS permit tax-deductibility for all actual contributions (including Life Membership donation beyond the first $100—due to the value of the lifetime American Vegan subscription). FEES paid for annual membership, or books, tapes, conventions, etc. are paid for value received so are not tax-deductible according to IRS regulations.

CANADA: Please remit in $U.S. only, by International Postal Money Order, or Bank Cashier’s Draft on account in a U.S.A. bank. Or use credit card.

OVERSEAS: U.S.$20 sea mail; U.S.$25 air mail. As above; or United Kingdom personal check in £ Sterling at current exchange rate.

DEFINITIONS

VEGAN: Uses no animal-source food or clothing.
TOTAL VEGETARIAN: Uses no animal-source food, vegan in diet only; still using some animal items such as leather, wool.
VEGETARIAN: Uses no flesh, fish, fowl (products of slaughter), still using milk or dairy products. lacto-vegetarian), or eggs (ovo-vegetarian).

American Vegan Society

Together we explore and apply compassionate living concepts, and reflect on the beauty of life.

We learn: How to save the animals. How to revere the Earth. How to care for ourselves.

People follow a vegan lifestyle for ethical reasons, for health, for the environment. A vegan diet is an adventure in taste offering an amazing variety to please the palate. Vegetables, grains, fruits, and legumes are the basics from which delicious meals are made. Foods from plants best provide for all people in the world. Vegans exclude flesh, fish, fowl, dairy products, eggs, honey, animal broths and gelatin, and other items of animal origin. Vegans dress with care; fashion with compassion is the style. We do not use leather, wool, fur, or silk, and choose animal-free soaps, toiletries, and consumer products. Learn to live in harmony, creating a better world for all.

Subscribe to American Vegan Make payments to American Vegan Society & receive 20% or greater discount on books purchased from AVS.

Enclosed: .....$20 per year .....$10 Student/Low Income .....New subs. .....Renewal .....$200 Life Membership .....$500 Life Patron .....$1000 Life Benefactor .....I’m learning about vegan living. .....I am a new vegan. .....I have been vegan .....years.

Remarks:

*Name, Address, City, State, Zip-plus 4:

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Send to: American Vegan Society, PO Box 369, Malaga NJ 08328 Ph : 856-694-2887 or Fax: 856-694-2288

Sign-up for E-Alerts online at www.americanvegan.org
“Journeys to Health” story, page 25

Chef in Red (left), and Family, Cook Plant-based Cuisine in Philadelphia

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