



REASONS TO BE VEG

VEGETARIAN
NUTRITION

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“It is the position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that appropriately planned vegetarian, including vegan, diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits for the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. These diets are appropriate for all stages of the life cycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, adolescence, older adulthood, and for athletes.”¹

“The food you eat can be either the safest & most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison.”

Ann Wigmore

A healthier, more compassionate and environmentally friendly way of life.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Eating a whole food, plant-based diet is the best way to achieve good health.

Vegetarians have a lower risk of:

- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Obesity
- Diabetes

And, live longer!

Food is a package deal. While it is true that there is iron in red meat, and omega-3 fatty acids in fish, they also come with cholesterol, saturated fat, carcinogens and in the case of fish, mercury. It is simply safer and healthier to get these nutrients directly from plants, without the harmful substances. What's more, plants are also loaded with fibre, good fats, vitamins, minerals and cancer fighting compounds. There is nothing in animal products that you can't get in a healthier form from somewhere else.



ANIMAL WELFARE

Compassion for animals is one of the main reasons why people become vegetarian.

- Animals (including fish) are sentient, conscious beings
- Just like us, they feel everything from joy to grief
- They feel pain and don't want to die
- Farmed animals are only allowed to live a fraction of their natural lifespan

SLAUGHTER AGE VS NATURAL LIFE SPAN

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 1 - 24 WEEKS | 15 - 20 YEARS | "VEAL" CALVES |
| 4 - 6 MONTHS | 10 - 12 YEARS | PIGS |
| 3 - 8 MONTHS | 12 - 14 YEARS | LAMBS |
| 18 MONTHS | 15 - 20 YEARS | "BEEF" CATTLE |
| 3 - 5 YEARS | 10 - 12 YEARS | PIGS (BREEDING SOWS) |
| 6 YEARS | 15 - 20 YEARS | "DAIRY" COWS |

In 2015, the World Health Organisation (WHO) classified processed meat as carcinogenic to humans (Group 1) and red meat was classified as Group 2A - probably carcinogenic to humans. The risk of cancer increases with the amount of meat consumed, and there was no conclusion about whether a safe level exists at all.²

Refer to our nutritional pamphlets or our website (vegetarian.org.nz) for more information on how to thrive on a plant-based diet.

TIP: watch the documentaries *'What the Health'* or *'Forks Over Knives'*



In New Zealand we kill a staggering 130 million farm animals annually. The average meat-eater is responsible for the deaths of about 30 animals a year – excluding fish. This massive scale of meat production would not be possible without factory farming. The lives of factory farmed animals are horrendous, as they are deprived of exercise, space, fresh air and social interaction.

Pasture-raised animals are not much luckier as they often suffer from extreme weather events (droughts, extreme heat etc.), stressful conditions during transportation to slaughterhouses and of course, in the end they are all killed at a very young age, many as babies.

No one needs to die for your dinner – go veg today!

TIP: watch *'Earthlings'* – available on YouTube

ENVIRONMENT

Eating animals contributes to:

DEFORESTATION

- The leading causes of rainforest destruction are livestock and feed-crops.³

WATER SCARCITY

- The estimated water required to produce a kilo of beef is 15,415 litres. When you consider that the global average water footprint for a kilo of wheat is 1,827 litres, and for potatoes is 287 litres, the waste is plain and obvious.⁴

WATER POLLUTION

- Fishing nets account for 46% of the trash in oceans.⁵
- Manure from cattle and other livestock pollutes groundwater, streams and rivers.

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Animal agriculture is responsible for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), more than the combined exhaust fumes from all transportation types.³
- In NZ, the agriculture sector is the largest contributor to greenhouse emissions (contributes 49.2% of NZ's gross emissions, while the whole energy sector contributes less, 39.8%).⁶

“A man can live and be healthy without killing animals for food; therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite. And to act so is immoral.

If a man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals.”

Leo Tolstoy

“Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet.”

Albert Einstein

BIODIVERSITY LOSS

- Vast habitat destruction is caused by clearing forests and converting land to grow feed crops and for animal grazing.
- Predators and "competition" species are frequently targeted and hunted because of a perceived threat to livestock profits (think bounties to kill Kea in NZ until the 1970s).
- Many wild animals are endangered due to pollution and GHG emissions.

OVER-FISHING

- For every 1 kg of fish caught, up to 5 kg of unintended marine species are caught and discarded as by-kill.
- Three quarters of the world's fisheries are exploited or depleted.⁷

TIP: watch the documentary ‘Cowspiracy’



MONEY

It's a common misconception that being vegetarian is expensive. There is lots of information available online on how to eat plant-based on a budget. Buy beans, brown rice and lentils in bulk, buy seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables, grow your own or buy frozen ones – they're cheap all year round.

You can find more detailed information, recipes and tips on how to go and stay vegetarian on our website, www.vegetarian.org.nz

"Every time you spend money, you're casting a vote for the kind of world you want."

Anna Lappe

VEG FOOD IS DELICIOUS!

Eating plant-based foods doesn't mean existing on lettuce and tomato. You can still eat all your favorite foods, including burgers, "sausage" rolls and pizzas but in a healthier, more compassionate way. For inspiration and ideas, check out our website, treat yourself to a veg cookbook or try a veg restaurant.



"The most ethical diet just so happens to be the most environmentally sound diet and just so happens to be the healthiest."

Dr. Michael Greger



References

1. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. (2016). Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Vegetarian Diets. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2016.09.025>
2. WHO (2015). Q&A on the carcinogenicity of the consumption of red meat and processed meat. Available at: <http://www.who.int/features/qa/cancer-red-meat/en/>
3. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2006): The Livestock's Long Shadow. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/a0701e/a0701e00.HTM>
4. Water foot print org: Product gallery. Available at: <http://waterfootprint.org/en/resources/interactive-tools/product-gallery/>
5. National Geographic (2018). The Great Pacific Garbage Patch Isn't What You Think it Is. Available at: <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2018/03/great-pacific-garbage-patch-plastics-environment/>
6. Ministry for the Environment (2018). New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Available at: <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/climate-change/state-of-our-atmosphere-and-climate/new-zealands-greenhouse-gas-inventory>
7. UN News Centre (2006) Overfishing: a threat to marine biodiversity Available at: <http://www.un.org/events/tenstories/06/story.asp?storyid=800>

There are more leaflets available, check out the resources on our website:
www.vegetarian.org.nz/about-us/resources/

WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT

www.vegetarian.org.nz
www.vrg.org
www.pcrm.org
www.nutritionfacts.org



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VEGETARIAN
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**FOR A KINDER,
HEALTHIER
WORLD**

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If you found this information useful, please consider joining as a member to receive further information and support, or donating to help us continue to provide resources for others.