Film Festival
Animal Rescue In Action
World Vegan Day

Holidays with Vegan Stars

GIVEAWAY!
Konjac sponges, My Gentle Barn book and Lifestream!
It's the holiday season again (so quickly)! While we wait for the warmer weather, we are also facing a lot of societal traditions that often contradict what veganism is all about. Much of what is advertised as important may seem trivial compared to what we know about animal (including people) suffering – close to home and around the world.

Traditional holiday mealtimes with nonvegans are one major area with the potential to lead to conflict if you are unprepared. But there are lots of vegan ways to handle holiday food. There are also some great ways to make the gift giving tradition a vegan friendly experience.

If you are a keen shopper, there are heaps of choices of vegan gifts that will please vegans and nonvegans alike. The Cruelty Free Shop, Angel Food, and the Christchurch Vegetarian Centre shop all have food and gift ideas that anyone will enjoy receiving – and they all have online shopping!

If you are creative and feeling frugal, hit the local second hand shops and be amazed at the selection of preloved items that can be personalised, decorated, or otherwise improved into a special gift for a special person. Even if you’re not the creative type, you might still find the perfect gift all ready to wrap and go.

Last but certainly not least, there are gifts of service. Your time spent helping out a friend or family member in need can make a much happier holiday for everyone.

For your own holiday wish list, there are also many vegan and animal rescue organisations desperately needing donations – tell your friends and family to give you a present by giving the animals a present!

What’s your favourite way to say “Happy Vegan Holidays”? Wishing everyone a happy holiday season with lots of vegan enjoyment!

Jessica Parsons

WINNERS!

Congratulations to the winner of the Trilogy Rosehip Oil, Danielle D and of the Lifestream Aloe Mint, Loretta W!

WINNERS!

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Vegan Camp - What's that?

Alison Brizzell

When I go to vegan events in Christchurch, the questions are starting: “Are you going to Vegan Camp next year?”

The reminiscing is happening, “I had SO much fun at the last camp. The food was delicious.” The encouragement is coming in, “Oh you’ve got to go. You’ll love it!” So…

What is Vegan Camp?

Vegan Camp is a 4-day event open to anyone from NZ (or around the world) who would like the pleasure of being in a vegan space for a long weekend, and who has been on a vegan diet for a minimum of 2 weeks.

Personally (as someone who hasn’t been to a Vegan Camp before) I think this sounds wonderful: to be in a space where other people are on the same wave length, and won’t even think twice about where you are getting your protein from.

I also like that it will be fully catered by a chef who fully understands what the word vegan means. Barry Mathers is our new chef for 2015. He has catered the Convergence festivals and is veggie himself with vegan kids so he knows the vegan score. Special diets can be catered for too. So the best thing of all about Vegan Camp for me - no cooking! Bliss! (We are asked to volunteer at some point over the weekend to help keep costs low so there could be a kitchen shift for volunteers.)

Who can go to Vegan Camp?

It’s aimed at vegans so any vegan of any age is welcome. Non-vegans are asked to be vegan for at least two weeks before attending or to come with a vegan friend. It’s not Vegans 101 Camp and not the place to learn to be vegan or to convince others. It is the place to just be vegan without having to justify it or constantly check what we are eating the way we often have to do in the non-vegan world. It is a family friendly event and is wheelchair accessible with discounts given to Kāi Ake card holders.

What to do at Vegan Camp?

Whatever you like. There are some organised activities such as Vegan Speed Updating (where you get to know other people there in a “Speed Dating” format meet and greet), workshops (offered by anyone with a skill who is happy to share – in the past there have been yogurt making, yoga, donut making etc.) and walks. There is also plenty of time to chill and do what you want. Hanmer has lovely shops, cafes and heaps of outdoor activities. There are regular shuttles to the village for vegans visiting without cars.

Where is Vegan Camp?

It is held in Hanmer Springs, which is about 1½ hours’ drive from Christchurch. Hanmer Springs is one of my favourite places to visit. I love the hot pools and the walks in the area, I’m already sold on the idea, just by the wonderful location.

Accommodation options include motels, cabins and camping – something for every preference and budget.

When is Vegan Camp?

It is held every two years. The next Vegan Camp is only a few months away – yippie! I don’t have to wait a whole two years before I can go.

It will be held over the 2015 long Easter weekend from 3rd-6th April 2015.

Registered are open between January 12th and March 1st 2015.

What if I have more questions about Vegan Camp?

Vegan Camp is being hosted by the Christchurch Vegetarian Centre. They have a Vegan Camp Facebook page that people can join. There is also a website with lots of helpful information www.vegancamp.org.nz

Will I see you at Vegan Camp?

I hope so. Please say hi to me – I’ll be new. I’m looking forward to the whole experience.

Above: Enjoying vegan camp 2014.
**Pig Farm Exposé 2014 & More!**

Carl Scott

On 29 June 2014, TV’s current affairs show Sunday screened an exposé of a Christchurch pig farm. SAFE worked with the journalists on the story, using footage that had been covertly obtained by Farmwatch. Among the multitude of horrors, the NZ public saw dead pigs lying in filthy concrete pens with live pigs, a wheelie bin of dead piglets, farrowing crates which were even more tiny and cramped than usual, and hundreds of rats crawling all over live piglets.

This was the same farm that Farmwatch had investigated and officially reported to the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) in 2013. Despite assurances that the farm was being monitored, we found it no better five years later. The NZ public was quite unsurprised, having seen so much. The Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) in 2013. Despite assurances that the farm was being monitored, we found it no better five years later. The NZ public was quite unsurprised, having seen so much.

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**With the election fast approaching, we knew that we had to use this unprecedented opportunity to make the most of the pig farming exposure and Labour’s new stance, plus the positions of the new parties: Internet and Mana. With this in mind, a group of people decided to promote factory farming as a significant election issue.**

**Rallying for the cause**

“The Dunedin crew including myself, other members of DARC (Dunedin Animal Rights collective) and some Dunedin SAFE volunteers, among others, decided we would hold a “Stop Factory Farming” rally in the Octagon. We wanted to help voters who care about animals realise that they had a significant opportunity to make their vote count for them this election. It also became an opportunity to showcase and encourage the parties who had stepped up, and to put pressure on those who hadn’t.”

We invited speakers from Internet, Mana, Labour, and the Greens as well as speakers from the various Dunedin animal advocacy groups, plus musicians, stalls, and banners (which were made at a couple of banner making workshops), etc.

Then, with a few urgent discussions and last minute work, four more protest rallies were also organised in the other main centres. On 26 July we had five rallies: in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin.

We had some VIPs at a few of the rallies, including Bob Kerridge from the SPCA, Mandy Carter from SAFE, MPs Marama Davidson, Jane 道, and电池和 colony cages. This was a major and important election result. The parties all had replied, except for Act and the Conservatives. John from Farmwatch and Catriona then used the information to rate the parties. The Internet party, Mana, and The NZ Green party all scored well.

Labour wasn’t too bad either. Sadly, the others did not rate well at all.

But we were particularly surprised and delighted when Labour, for the first time ever, indicated a commitment to our goal of rapidly dismantling factory farming in New Zealand and its worst practices, such as farrowing crates, and battery and colony cages. This was a major and important development, and the then Labour leader, David Cunliffe and their Animal Welfare spokesperson Trevor Mallard were interviewed on TV about it. Exciting stuff indeed. Could the end finally be in sight for the factory farms of NZ?

Farmwatch are continuing our work of course, and we totally understand that not everyone wants to do what we do. But you don’t need to! We only need a few people doing that work. However, we need as many as we can get doing all the other stuff.

Keeping a difference

You don’t have to go into farms in the dead of night, or chain yourself to anything to make a difference for the animals. Like drops in a bucket, we can each do our own thing in our own way to make a difference. If you want to do something beyond just ‘being the change you wish to see in the world’ by living vegan, then please consider joining your local SAFE group, or one of the other AR groups in your area.

And I would love to see a lot more NZ vegan advocacy groups like the wonderful Invercargill Vegan Society and the Go Vegan organisation. They inspire me so much. It is my intention to do a lot more like myself in future (as well as continuing to work with Farmwatch).

If there’s no Animal Rights or Vegan Advocacy action group where you live, then you can at least get your own group up and running. And if you absolutely cannot be involved for some reason, then perhaps you can donate some money to help the existing organisations.

Do your bit. Start by vegan. Then go deeper. Get active. Be involved. Speak up for the defenceless and the voiceless. Working together, we can make a difference for the animals. They are depending on us!

Opposite page: Silo process support team.

Below: Carl Scott on Dunedin factory farm silo.
Adrian Rogers

On a fine Sunday in October, I had the pleasure of attending the Vegan Film Festival at the Trades Hall in Grey Lynn, Auckland. The event was hosted by the lovely people at the Vegan Society of Aotearoa. Thanks to them, about 50 of us enjoyed a laid-back season involving three back-to-back screenings of vegan-themed movies with an intermission featuring several slices of delicious vegan pizza.

Vegan Love
We started with a short film called Vegan Love. Alex is a newly-singe vegan who agrees to his friend’s suggestion that a documentary be made about his quest for love. The film was amusing and light-hearted, but it presented some very real scenarios that many vegans face in the dating scene. It was an appropriate amount of comedy to preface the two very serious documentaries that were to come.

Speciesism
The second movie was a documentary called Speciesism: The Movie. It follows Mark Devries on a journey of discovery as he tries to get to the bottom of why animals are seen as being less important than humans, and it provides a deep look into the way speciesism is deeply engrained into society. Mark asks some hard-hitting and sometimes uncomfortable questions by the interviewer actually spelling out the message. The facts laid out will raise the eyebrows of any environmental activists that the European chef turned into the decision to leave Paris for vacation season. Luckily, I love Paris in holiday season. With lots of friends around, I started planning on taking a break to explore the city.

The holiday season in New Zealand conjures up images of beaches, Pohutukawa or rata blossoming, pristine blue skies, and the joyful company of friends and whanau sharing good food. We asked some of the vegan stars we’ve featured in previous issues of Vegan New Zealand about their holidays and favourite holiday recipes.

Elaine Brent
Elaine is a vegan triathlete who has represented New Zealand internationally in this sport. She trains for 30 hours per week and manages this on top of her administrative job. Elaine is UK-born, NZ-raised, and gave up animal flesh at the tender age of 9.

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Vegan for the Holidays

Diane Smith

Courgette and Petit Pois Salad with Lemon Dressing

Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh or frozen peas
- 1 or 2 courgettes
- Lemon (for rind and juice)
- Fresh red chilli (optional)
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Flaky salt
- Olive oil

Instructions

1. Lightly steam some fresh peas and let cool (or defrost frozen peas).
2. Use a speed peeler to create thin, wide ribbons of courgette (use both green and yellow courgettes for a great look).
3. Very finely slice a small amount of lemon rind (make sure you avoid any white) and fresh red chilli (optional).
4. Roughly chop a few mint leaves.
5. Combine courgette, peas, lemon, chilli and mint in a bowl, add a good pinch of flaky salt, a splash of good quality olive oil and a squeeze of lemon juice, and gently toss with your fingers.
6. Rest for 5-10 minutes until courgette softens slightly and serve.

Alternatives:
- Replace mint with parsley.
- Use steamed, double-podded broad beans instead of peas.

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One of my favourite summer memories is visiting Kerkari on the end of a road trip from Wellington with my mum and Nan who was visiting from England. Staying with my partner’s parents, we were spoiled with home-made cooking and a ‘brain-un-needed’ tour which is right up my alley.

Then just before leaving, a wrong turn led to accidentally stumbling upon Palmco Gardens on Kerkari Rd, best mistake I ever made. The gardens were spectacular and I would have stayed all day if we did not have a journey awaiting. We started to head back to the car when we found the path actually led us to a cafe. Never able to resist a coffee, we decided to sit and have a bite to eat which the European chef turned into the...
most delicious, impromptu vegan/gluten free breakfast! I have ever experienced and the whole visit really topped a great road trip.

‘With thanks to my new favourite book by Aleisha Wyllie, I picked her rice salad for my summer recipe, equally good served cold and with a barbecue.’

Rice Salad

Ingredients:
• 2 cups brown rice
• 1/2 cup walnut pieces
• 1/2 small red onion
• 2 celery stalks
• 1/2 bell pepper
• 2 tomatoes
• 1 tablespoon fennel seeds
• 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
• 1 tablespoon of soy sauce
• 1 shallot
• 1/2 teaspoon of cumin

Instructions

1) Cook rice, following instructions provided on packet
2) Rinse walnuts. Use paper towels to dry
3) Finely dice walnuts, onion, celery and bell pepper.
4) Place ingredients into a bowl. Add rice, oil, vinegar, soy sauce and a sprinkle of black pepper.
5) Toss gently before serving.

Plum Green and Missy Love

Plum was born in the UK, raised in New Zealand, and currently creates and plays music in foreign lands. Plum’s most recent album was the debut Flushing, released in 2012.

“This year has been crazy for me so I don’t want to do too much over summer. I plan to read a lot of books, to eat a lot of fruits, drink beer and watch dogs being cute in the park. I’ll also be recording my EP Karma named after my song Karma, which you can find on Youtube and Soundcloud.

Missy is a New Zealander currently living in Australia. She has been vegan for 7 years and loves creating and sharing vegan food with people. Missy is a photographer, runs a few online vegan Fair Trade magazine and is working towards having her own vegan Milk Bar café in the near future.

“This summer I’m looking forward to enjoying the warmth while making raw sweet treats to share at picnic gatherings, bike riding, watching movies, eating tropical fruits and making heaps of banana ice cream!”

Missy’s Lemon Blackberry Cheesecake

This is a creamy sweet raw treat inspired by the colours and tastes of New Zealand summer. If you do not have blackberries, you can substitute any fruit you like; strawberries, raspberries, peaches, or figs would all work well with the lemon.

Enjoy summer with a homemade glass of lemonade, a good book and a slice of this refreshing cake!

Hints

• Use a cake tin (8”) lined with baking paper, and a springform cake tin if you can, to make it easy to get the cake out.
• Before beginning to make the cake, you need to soak 2 cups of raw cashews at least 24 hours and up to 48 hours, and soak 10-13 Medjool dates in a cup of lemon juice for about 20 minutes.

Cheesecake base
• 1/2 cup of melted coconut oil (optional, for a rustic look!)
• 2 cups of blackberries
• 1/2 cup of coconut oil

Decoration

• 1/2 cup of lemon zest
• 2 tablespoons of melted coconut oil (melt by placing it into a bowl placed in a second bowl filled with warm water, it will eventually melt)

Instructions

1. In a food processor, pulse together all the ingredients.
2. Press the mixture into your lined cake tin.
3. Finely dice walnuts, onion, celery and bell pepper.
4. Place ingredients into a bowl. Add rice, oil, vinegar, soy sauce and a sprinkle of black pepper.
5. Toss gently before serving.

Broccoli and Asparagus Stir-fry

Ingredients:
• 2 tablespoons of Asian sesame oil
• 2 garlic cloves, chopped
• 2 bunches of asparagus snapped in half
• 1 tablespoon of grated ginger
• 1 tablespoon of fresh lemon juice
• 1 tablespoon of soy sauce
• 1/2 teaspoon of black pepper
• 1/2 teaspoon of salt

Instructions

1. Combine in a bowl: 1 tablespoon Asian sesame oil, the BBQ sauce and soy sauce and set aside.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large non-stick wok or pan over medium-high heat. Add garlic and stir 30 seconds.
3. Add asparagus, broccoli, and sesame oil, the BBQ sauce and soy sauce and stir fry for 3 minutes. Transfer vegetables to bowl.
4. Cover and cook until vegetables are crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer vegetables to bowl.
5. Serve with rice or noodles.

Cheese Sauce

Ingredients:
• 1 cup of grated cheddar cheese
• 1/2 cup of almond milk
• 1/4 cup of nutritional yeast
• 1 teaspoon of dijon mustard

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients until smooth and set aside.
Sarah McCalden

£21 per year, but they had a special deal: if you signed up for a direct debit, you got 15 months’ membership for the price of 12 and a great big goody bag full of vegan treats to go home with.

I spent practically all day talking to people explaining the special deal and the membership benefits, including a subscription to the Vegan Society’s quarterly magazine, a discount card that can be used at many vegan-friendly shops around the country, and an invitation to the AGMs each year you are a member. The books on sale flew off the shelf. It was great to see so many people interested in veganism.

I spoke to a lot of vegetarians who were really interested in going vegan but just needed that extra push. It was interesting to hear their stories. I am hoping that the magazine articles they receive as part of their membership will convince them to go and stay vegan. Over the course of the weekend, we recruited 75 new members and raised £4,715.16.

VegFestUK overview

There were over 10,000 visitors to VegFest over the whole weekend. There were 200 stalls and 100 speakers and so many food stalls that on my break I had a tough time deciding where to eat. Eventually I chose the shortest queue and was pleased with my £3 green veggie burger. I saw many familiar names around the place — Vegquits selling vegan hotdogs (the line was enormous), Moo Free Chocolate, Ms Cupcake selling her most amazing cupcakes, and I even laid eyes upon New Zealand’s very own Angel Food products, which was a delightful surprise!

The interesting thing to me is that this festival is called VegFest — not VeganFest or VegetarianFest. Just VegFest — attracting both members of the vegan and vegetarian communities and those interested in the “veg” lifestyle. They even had one website dedicated to vegans and another to vegetarians to engage with both communities. Opposite the Vegan Society stall was a stall about vegetarianism, but still they were selling things like the Vegan Passport and recipes without cows’ milk or eggs.

The best part of the whole festival, I thought, was that I could eat anything there, and if you were there, you could have too. Everything was vegan, including the clothes, makeup and other items for sale. It was a caring, friendly and non-judgemental environment for vegans to network and enjoy, and for non-vegans to enjoy and explore veganism in their own way and time. Hopefully, they have gone away more educated about animal rights and wrongs in the world and inspired to live more compassionately in the future.

More information about this and other VegFestUK events can be found at http://london.vegfest.co.uk/.

Konjac Sponges
Reviewed by Eve Stewart

A natural product with a 1500-year-old history of medicinal use in Japan (a country long associated with exquisite levels of beauty) will always get my attention. Add to this that the old product can be composted and I stopped to find out more.

I had seen the At One Konjac Sponge stalls at a number of shows and had never been able to stop, but I noticed the constant crowds several people deep every time I passed. I’d been looking for a way of adding luxury to my cleansing regime, but thought I’d heard somewhere that sea sponges were actually animals, not plants (they are). But Konjac sponges are actually made from a type of yam.

Konjac (or Amorphophallus konjac) is the yam used in lots of Asian jelly sweets like Nata de Coco (try this someday soon) and vegan ‘seafood’ products. It is known to be a natural exfoliator, but without any harshness or drying effects normally associated with exfoliation, and it left my skin feeling super smooth and polished.

I get psoriasis sometimes when my stress levels in my diet are more than is sensible. Using my body sponge didn’t bother it in the slightest, which was a major plus as psoriasis is extremely itchy. They do mention you can use these with eczema, and they can be used on the most delicate of skin like a baby’s.

I went to a neighbour on the birth of her new little one, knowing with their huge extended family she had everything she would need, but that these would be a useful and unique gift. At One offer twelve different facial sponge types and six types of body sponges.

GIVEAWAY!

Enter to win one of At One’s vegan face or body sponges (check their website www.konjacsponge.co.nz for details) by emailing amanda@vegansociety.co.nz by 15 January 2015 (or today, before you forget) with the subject line One and which sponge you’d like. Two sponges will be given away. Open to Vegan Society members only.
Auckland
Janie Thompson
The Lobby Bar at the Heritage hotel in Auckland has an all-vegan tapas menu as well as an array of animal-friendly drinks. It was the perfect location for our World Vegan Day celebrations on the eve of World Vegan Day! There were 10 of us enjoying the relaxed atmosphere, great company, and delicious food.
Most of us ordered at least one thing off the tapas menu, and just as we were beginning to think this wasn't quite enough, Chef Jinu from Hector's restaurant sent us out a couple of platters of complimentary snacks. We had a great night meeting new people and old friends.

Christchurch
Yolanda Soryl
Forty people came to celebrate World Vegan Day 2014 in Christchurch; a fundraising dinner organised by the Christchurch Vegetarian Centre (CVC) was held at the Lotus-Heart restaurant. This was the 11th consecutive year the day has been celebrated in Christchurch with a special dinner. It was also the same day the Lotus-Heart was announced as winner for the second year in a row for best vegetarian restaurant in New Zealand; so there was even more cause to celebrate. We had the beautiful upstairs dining room to ourselves. It was great to have a dedicated space for a proper welcome to the event. Yolanda’s World Vegan Day speech included constant reminders for vegans to support the CVC by buying raffle tickets! The set menu consisted of an entrée of antipasto tasters and a choice of mains: either a tempeh burger with lettuce, tomato, barbecue mango chutney, and cashew aioli; or a South Indian Malabari curry with kumara, potato, eggplant and green beans simmered in a tangy tomato, coconut cream, and tamarind gravy. Dessert was a choice of two raw vegan ice creams from a selection including cookies and cream, lemon cheesecake, black sesame, and mango. Raw vegans were also catered for with their own special plate.

The Lotus-Heart has always been very supportive of the work of the CVC and made a 100% vegan menu that night for all their other patrons in recognition of World Vegan Day. Lovely venue, lovely food, and lovely hosts made World Vegan Day 2014 in Christchurch a day worth celebrating.

Invercargill Vegan Society
Jordan Wyatt and Jen Stone
The Invercargill Vegan Society (INVSOC) celebrated the 70th anniversary of veganism on 1 November 2014. Jen and I fell in love on World Vegan Day 2012 giving tofu to butchers, plant milk to dairy executives, and vegan sausages to slaughterhouse executives. Jen moved from Queenstown to Invercargill in 2013, and this year we married on 1 November — World Vegan Day. We are so lucky to have found each other. Together we aim to fully veganise Invercargill within our lifetimes or die trying. With so many interested people getting in touch with us each day, veganism has never been stronger in the South.
For World Vegan Day, our activists unveiled public art of a hen and dove mosaic called Peace of Chicken. With Queens Park being one of the most beautiful public gardens in the country, we are very honoured to have such a work of vegan propaganda installed. Located in the playground area, the avian duo will surely infect children with an appreciation for veganism. Only three years earlier, I felt I was the ‘only vegan in the village’, being thrilled by seeing a vegan bumper sticker and gaining the Invercargill Vegan Society a second member. Now we have four ads for veganism across the city:
the WVD 2014 mosaic in Queens Park, the “Welcome to Invercargill!” sign, which lists our monthly vegan politics; our WVD 2011 huia memorial tree in the Otepuni Gardens; and the INVSOC spot in a community garden plot.

Hell Pizza Invercargill supported World Vegan Day with their ‘Convert-a-Carnivore’ promotion, offering two vegan pizzas for the price of one. Our vegan society had two displays outside the Invercargill Public Library, and World Vegan Day posters went up around the city. INVSOC featured in the nightly television news giving out chocolate, Nice Cream, and pizza. We gave awards to local people and businesses who support veganism: local Indian takeaway, Bombay Palace; Hell Pizza for stocking Angel Food vegan cheese; and health store ComplitWellness for their Nice Cream. In particular, local fashion emporium owner, Julie Bryce, was blown away by our vegan award. We love her signage, which asks passersby to ‘please be kind to animals’. Julie eagerly shared news of our award with her customers via Facebook. We are glad to reach out to people who embody the essence of veganism.

Honestly, we are touched with the progress of veganism in New Zealand. Surely we are close to a vegan world, with vegans and vegetarians seemingly everywhere! During the street giveaways we noticed the two vegan-owned shops nearby; our World Vegan Day posters, and friends wearing ‘Team Vegan’ shirts. How special it was when the television cameras rolled and twin vegan four-year-old girls ran over to hug us with a warm ‘HAPPY WORLD VEGAN DAY!’ What a wonderful feeling it is to live in such a warm vegan community — Invercargill — the vegan capital of New Zealand.

For more photos and videos, check out the Invercargill Vegan Society website: http://www.invsoc.org.nz/wvd2014/
Christchurch Vegetarian Expo 2014

Anna van den Bosch

“The perfect family day out for vegetarians/vegans and anyone who has an interest in health, well-being and animal welfare, or just enjoys great food,” said one attendee of the 2014 Vegetarian Expo. This was the 8th Christchurch Vegetarian Expo and the 7th at this venue, so it would be fair to say that as at the Christchurch Vegetarian Centre (CVC) are old hands at this. I was amazed how smoothly it all went. This year I actually had time to plant things in my veggie garden in September, something which has never happened before. The fortnight leading up to the Expo was full-on as usual, but the friendliness and helpfulness of many people made the difference, especially one of our volunteers who went out of his way to get an accurate map of the hall, which was hugely instrumental in our new floor plan.

This doesn’t mean that we didn’t make mistakes, that there weren’t things out of our control and that we weren’t in panic mode in the preceding week! This is the largest expo of its kind in New Zealand and an enormous amount of pressure falls on the organisers, as people who have organised events will understand. The weather is always an unknown; this year the parking was limited due to the new Cricket Pavilion next door, and a number of key volunteers and stalls were absent for various reasons. So we were as apprehensive as ever after the big day approached.

Expo Day
Cut to 28th September, and it all turned out fine on the day – literally and figuratively! Although it was raining early on and there was a spot shower or two late, the day was mainly fine and the weather was no deterrent to a well-attended event. We were able to welcome a large number of newbies – 18 stallholders were first-timers (just under half of the total number), and 13 new volunteers made up the 80 or so who helped us on and before Expo day. We are delighted with all the “new blood”, which prevents the Expo from becoming same old same old, whilst we are also happy to welcome back our regulars, such as the Welcome Café, SAFE and Angel Food, who travel from Auckland every year for the Expo. Both new and old favourites are necessary to maintain an organisation and an event such as the Expo. The coffee cart staff were exceptionally helpful and vegan - they even waved the extra charge for soy milk to support our event. And I have to mention the lovely spiral potato people, who always give me a free potato and are so accommodating! I enjoyed more time on the floor this year - chatting to friends who are guests, stallholders or volunteers and getting a feel for the event and its lovely, positive ambience.

“it was great mate, I’d rate eight out of eight,” said a member of the Vegetarian Youth group, when asked what he thought of the Expo. Approximately 3,000 people came to the 6½-hour long day, an increase on last year’s numbers that was very pleasing for the CVC. Thanks for making it happen.

We have so many people to thank:
• Our major sponsors - the Christchurch City Council and VegFund.
• Vegetarian Delights who donated the sausages for our sausage sizzle.
• Our volunteers, including our cookery demonstrators and speakers, who gave their time with pleasure; some of them did a massive amount of work for no tangible reward beyond the satisfaction of making the day happen.
• The stall holders for a veritable feast of taste sensations and a great array of interesting and quirky stalls.
• And of course, the public, the people who attend and enjoy our event every year and make it all worthwhile.

Vegetarian Expo 2015
We considered having this event every two years because of the huge amount of effort required from the community and especially the organisers, but there will be a Vegetarian Expo on 27th September 2015. Mark the date in your new 2015 diaries now!
Solo Vegan Parent Travels in the Coromandel

Bridget Holland

Last summer I’d been separated from my husband for a year and stayed at home with the children during their six-week end-of-year break. Toward the end of January we were becoming a bit bored at home, so I planned a short trip, using the great little North Island travel guide I have that lists interesting places that are slightly off the beaten track.

I love the Coromandel and have visited there often, but this holiday also needed to interest both children, then aged 8 and 12. I booked a cabin inland from Hot Water Beach, an area I know quite well. It looked like a good central place to day trip from, and there were free bikes. Our most exciting outing was to Driving Creek Railway on a gorgeous sunny day. It is situated in Coromandel Town, where there are two vegetarian cafes with vegan food options. They both have free WiFi, which kept my 12-year-old happy. I particularly liked Driving Creek Cafe and have since found that several of my friends feel the same way. I always visit vegetarian cafe Sola on my way through Thames, usually just for a soy flat white and maybe a hot chocolate or smoothie for the kids. I found Driving Creek Railway was enough for them in terms of an organised sightseeing experience. Food wise, in the area where we stayed around Hot Water Beach, cafes seemed happy to make vegan pizza (lots of vegetables, no cheese) and falafels (hold the yoghurt and mayonnaise). We also self-catered.

Next time we will stay in Coromandel Town and visit Waterworks. Certainly, it would be good to revisit the 309 Road and the lovely friendly pigs who roam there.

Photos: Bridget Holland

Vegan Degustation at Hectors

Amanda Care

In celebration of World Vegetarian Day I had the pleasure of experiencing a special five-course Degustation Menu at Hectors Restaurant in the Auckland Heritage hotel on Saturday 4th October 2014.

Hectors’ head chef, Jinu Abraham, is an award-winning genius who is known for creating beautiful, decadent plant-based meals. I’ve been lucky enough to have dined here on a number of occasions over the last couple of years. For this special dining event, the restaurant was fully booked, and the manager informed us that there was even a cancellation list of people who had been turned away. Upon arrival, we received a champagne glass of refreshing hibiscus and elderflower kombucha. My dining companion wasn’t familiar with kombucha and fortunately it wasn’t too tart or fermented tasting, making it the perfect introduction into this marvellous beverage for first timers. From the moment we took our seats through the next two and a half hours of dining, the restaurant was buzzing with excitement.

Starter

We started with an amuse-bousche of a mini taco with red cabbage kraut, guacamole and gigante beans, which was light and summery and the perfect appetiser to leave us eagerly wanting more.

Next was the creamed spinach and coconut in a crispy cannoli shell with coffee-roasted carrots, citrus vinaigrette, black garlic and pickled onion. My dining companion found the spinach and coconut filling a little too sweet, but I enjoyed the way the accompaniments on the plate cut through the sweet and balanced it out perfectly. The palate cleanser of mango ice with lime and ginger syrup did exactly as intended, and then before we knew it, the main was served.

Main

We were treated to pease and organic tofu-stuffed potato, roasted pepper, onion and tomato medley with caper and raisin punce, salsa verde and sprinkles of pomegranate seeds. [Ed note: this award-winning recipe appears in Vegan New Zealand, Spring 2014] As it was presented as two round cakes on the plate, I wasn’t sure if the main would leave me satisfied, but I’m glad to say I was wrong. Delicately spiced and combined with a gorgeous reduction of tomato, roast pepper and onion on the side, when combined with the bursts of tangy pomegranate seeds, this dish ticked all the boxes.

By now, we were over two hours in, and my fellow diners were all a lot more quiet and subdued enjoying the moment of being in vegan-dining nirvana.

Dessert

That was until dessert started making its way out. Dessert is my favourite course, and I was hoping so much that Jinu would make his signature dark chocolate sorbet that my heart sang when I saw it on the plate. Named ‘Textures of Chocolate’, this dish did not disappoint. The sorbet sat on a Valrhona chocolate pudding, and it was presented spectacularly, garnished with a small parsley and with a date and pistachio nib truffle on the side. There are no words for how good this dessert was, I may have even stolen some from my companion’s plate.

A choice of tea or coffee followed dinner, and then the manager brought out the talented kitchen team so we could show our appreciation. He also informed us of the raw plant-based breakfast bar initiative that they are rolling out to some of their Heritage hotels throughout the country starting in Auckland (available now).

I hope that Hectors will repeat their vegan degustation nights more frequently in the future, as they truly are masterpieces for both the eyes and taste buds. In the meantime, I will make the most of their current vegan food and wine options on the menu and will visit again soon, and if you love vegan fine dining, then you should too.

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Be Cautious with Iron

Lynene Onderwater

Disclaimer: I am not medically trained and this article is based on my own experience, internet research and contact with other people who suffer the disease. I take no responsibility for anything that people do as a result of this article.

You may have heard the warning about not taking iron supplements unless medically required, but of course, we also hear: Vegan? Where do you get your iron from? Here I will try to explain a bit about why even vegans should not take iron supplements unless proven deficient.

This is because of the disease haemochromatosis (HC), or for the layperson, Iron Overload. Although my mum was always unsure about this, other than that it was a “blood disease”, I am convinced now that my grandma died of it in the early 1950s when she was 53. Back then, they didn’t know how to treat it. There is no permanent cure.

In the family
Haemochromatosis is an inherited gastrointestinal disease, which affects the liver, the heart and many other parts of the body. The genes were only discovered in 1996. Three genes can be involved. The most common one (as in the illustration) is C282Y, but there is also H63D and the even rarer S65C.

My brother was diagnosed with the disease about 10 years back. It started with a wrenching hand. A friend has juvenile HC, which is also inherited but develops in people under 30. We (family members) were all recommended to get our genes checked. My (then) doctor would only get my blood tested for ferritin and other iron “studies”, but luckily, another doctor a few years later was keen to find out my genes. It turned out that I carry both C282Y and H63D and that there is a chance of developing it. Although my blood tests were still fine at that time, it made me alert to the fact that that could well change as I approached menopause. I was mostly vegan, I needed all the iron I could get. I guess that is ironic! My first attempt was unsuccessful as I have another genetic problem that has given me poor circulation and fine veins. But the second time, after running up and down steps dressed like a Michelin man (down jacket and many other layers underneath) to bring out my veins, it worked. I am due back for a blood test in January, by which time I will have hopefully donated twice.

Haemochromatosis symptoms
Here are some of the symptoms of HC:

- Fatigue (Yes! Low and high iron can both cause this – confusing!)
- Excessive pigmentation (yellowing or bronzing)
- Tummy aches
- Sore joints
- Quite a few more symptoms that are often not immediately recognised as HC.

Summary of recommendations

- Do not take supplements or foods fortified with iron unless you have been diagnosed as being iron deficient
- If you are aware of HC in your family get your genes checked (doctors are somewhat reluctant to do this, as it is costly, and could set a precedent for people wanting to be checked for all kinds of conditions)
- Men of European descent should have their ferritin levels checked regularly, especially once they reach 30 or so
- Women of European descent should do this when they approach menopause

Further resources

One of several online haemochromatosis articles specifically for vegans is Jack Norris, RD’s http://veganhealth.org/articles/iron. One of several online haemochromatosis articles specifically for vegans is Jack Norris, RD’s http://veganhealth.org/articles/iron.

Further resources

One of several online haemochromatosis articles specifically for vegans is Jack Norris, RD’s http://veganhealth.org/articles/iron.

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The Vegan Society offers business outlets and retails the opportunity to display Vegan New Zealand magazine in-store for their customers at an affordable rate. We offer two magazines for the price of one as a special offer to business members.

The Vegan Society of New Zealand aims to raise the profile of veganism, as well as support new and existing vegans. We facilitate a vegan lifestyle and plant-based eating by creating vibrant, visible, and influential community, and by providing information and resources.
My Gentle Barn

Where animals heal and children learn to hope

By Ellie Laks; reviewed by Jean Dorrell

My Gentle Barn is a non-profit farm animal rescue sanctuary in the US.

Growing up

Ellie Laks first connected with animals during a challenging childhood rescuing and befriendng pets and wild animals. “I made it to adulthood intact because animals were my witness.”

When she was 11, Ellie realised that chickens that cluck were the same chicken as the chicken in “chicken and rice” at her dinner table, and so she refused to eat meat from that evening onwards, much to her family’s confusion. They could not understand how chicken soup could be considered meat.

Animal rescue

Ellie started a dog rescue (Rover Rescue) in her twenties but decided to put her rescue efforts on hold when she had her first child. However, she found herself unable to ignore animal cruelty when she saw troubled animals in horrific conditions in a petting zoo, and so she rescued a goat... and then another goat... and My Gentle Barn began.

As well as being a story about loving and respecting animals and people, this book is also a story of resilience. “At the core of every human being is a resilience that buoys us back to the surface of life.”

Ellie believed that at-risk kids would benefit from spending time with rescued animals as they (the abandoned animals and the abandoned humans) had something in common. From the first group of at-risk children visitors, she felt she was making a difference and was determined to continue The Gentle Barn despite a number of difficulties that arose.

The stories and photos in this book left me in no doubt that farm animals feel emotions and are capable of connecting with other animals of both the same and different species. Photos include a hugging cow and a laughing sheep.

Recommendation

I found the book inspirational as Ellie kept going back to her dream of running a non-profit rescue organisation despite not having funds, animal knowledge or business expertise. The Gentle Barn is now one of Ellen DeGeneres’ pet (pun intended) charities.

I found some of the marketing ideas very clever: I particularly loved the idea of a Thanksgiving dinner where each year a turkey is purchased and gets to be the guest of honour, while guests eat a vegan Thanksgiving dinner and feed berries to the turkey.

This book is a lovely read as well as being thought-provoking.

Enter to win a copy of My Gentle Barn by emailing amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line Barn by 15 January 2015 (or today, before you forget). Open to Vegan Society members only.
Huge Hen Rescue

Tayla O’Driscoll

Hens dream, and I would bet that hens kept in cages dream of freedom. It makes me emotional to know that we made those dreams come true.

Our dream

My friends and I initially wanted to buy Brougham Park and turn it into a rescue sanctuary for animals. It was a romantic thought: creating a haven out of a hellhole. But we found out that this wouldn’t be necessary, or possible, since someone was interested in purchasing part of the property and didn’t want to keep the farm. We knew that the hens currently living there would be “culled” (killed). So we decided to shift the focus of our project to rehoming as many of those hens as possible, to give them a chance at life.

None of us could just take all the hens and permanently rehome them, so we had to be upfront with the farmer. I called the farmer to talk to her about whether she would be open to allowing us to put the word out on social media and around town about these commercially farmed hens needing homes.

Spreading the word

We distributed a poster and shared the information around on Facebook. Within half an hour, my phone was flooded with calls. Although I was only referring people on to her, it gave me an opportunity to find people with no-kill homes, who would love and care for the hens despite their egg production rate. These hens, like any on commercial farms, had been through a rough time. Most of them would require extra TLC. It was absolutely crazy for the first few weeks. We shared the information around on social media in bursts to try and attract new people, and often after doing that my phone would get busier for a few days.

We managed to get spots on the local radio station, television channel, and in the newspaper, which boosted interest. Community power

SAFE also jumped on board and advertised the rescue. We had a lot of people from outside of Dunedin who were interested, but it just wasn’t feasible to get hens to all of them with our limited resources. However, Jordan Wyatt and Jenny Stone (of INVSOC) re-homed 465 hens in Invercargill; Michelle Blair and Pippa Newshead also transported some hens to their new homes. It slowed down over the last couple of weeks though, and thankfully that was when HUHA stepped in to save the rest of the hens.

When we began, my personal goal was to save a third of the hens. I told myself that I was not allowed to be disappointed if we managed that. It was a daunting task. When we got closer to saving every single one of them, my heart soared more. Perhaps the most terrifying moment in the entire process was towards the end, when we only had a few hens left to save. I didn’t want anyone to be left behind. This was when HUHA took over to carry out this project to its end.

Measuring success

There are varying degrees of “success” if measured by the numbers. But that’s not how I measure success in animal rescues. Every life is important, and I think that respecting this is one of the key aspects of animal rights and veganism. Every rescue is successful, if a single animal is saved. One life among thousands, or compared to the millions of animals killed every day, is an entire life. All animals cherish life with intensity. I think any example or action of kindness is a success in a world that often seems so greatly unkind.

Some of the hens we rescued died, we knew it would happen. More of them may die soon from their previous treatment. At least they had the chance to taste freedom, to experience love and compassion.

Lastly, I want to say something to all you readers. I am not special. Please don’t put me (or any of my friends) on pedestals. You are all capable of doing amazing things for animals.

We are all “normal” people. I want this mass rescue to be inspiration or reason for people to question the choices they make. One less farm in New Zealand is a victory, but there are still so many more. Start saving animals every day by not consuming or using their flesh or by-products. Choose to adopt an animal companion who has been rescued and is looking for a home. Next time you are in the supermarket, or out for lunch at a cafe, question the food you are buying.

We are not always capable of saving the animals suffering right now, but we can all help prevent the number of animals that are born into lives of suffering.

There are people throughout New Zealand who want to get involved with rescuing animals. Projects need leadership, and animal rescues are no exception. It requires a really strong voice to oversee and represent the entire rescue. Rescuing animals invites people with many different strengths to get involved—social connections, media connections, design skills, animal care skills. However, everyone involved needs passion and energy for the rescue and the animals.
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