Vegetarian New Zealand
Health, Ethics, Environment
WINTER 2014 | $8.50 RRP

GIVEAWAY!
- World Peace Diet Book
  + Weleda & Radiance

Treating Allergies
Cooking Classes
IVU Conferences

Trailwalking vegans

Tuttles on tour

Say cheese-
vegan mozzarella

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vegan society

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It’s time to welcome winter again and the opportunity to slow down and come closer together. While I will miss picnics and summer fruits, I also love warming vegan soups and roast pumpkin, kumara and potatoes!

When we work together, we have power. So I was disconcerted to read an online article in a large mainstream forum from a vegetarian (ex-vegan) admonishing vegans not to “be jerks.” In summary, any confident vegan message presented without prior permission may put us at risk of being a preachy jerk.

Quite literally, we vegans have the role of conscientious objectors to the powerful and very objectionable animal industry. Many may boycott specific brands like Nestlé (as I also do) because they cannot support the conditions under which such companies trade, yet fail to accept the parallel with vegans who have simply declared a lifelong boycott of all animal products for similar reasons. Because these products underly our entire culture and economy, we know any vegan statement can automatically raise the discomfort level. Where then is the solution?

One vegan who has committed himself wholeheartedly to his message is author and musician Dr Will Tuttle, who toured Australia and New Zealand in February. We are very happy to bring a taste of that experience to you in this issue.

Our vegan message can range from always bringing the tastiest vegan cupcakes to the bake sale, to wearing a Go Vegan T-shirt to a big event, to painting Go Vegan in huge letters on your roof. The bottom line is that we get through the day knowing our messages have remained true to our principles. While I cannot stand up and declare exactly how the vegan message can be presented so that it will succeed, I can certainly celebrate how many more vegans are out there every day trying.
Dr Will Tuttle, author of the bestselling book, The World Peace Diet, not only spoke in venues across New Zealand from 20-26 February, but also was kind enough to answer a few questions for us.

Vegan Society: Is this your first visit to New Zealand?

WT: Partly because Madeleine really loves New Zealand – the country and the people – and wanted me to see it. Also, as the following for The World Peace Diet book grew, we got specific requests from readers to come tour in this part of the world. This was mostly in Australia, at least one from New Zealand, and also many requests from Taiwan, so I wanted to do a tour. At first all our tours were in our mobile home and on the east coast of the USA, but when we bought a home in California, it was much easier to visit all of the USA and now overseas.

VS: Why did you decide to visit Australia/New Zealand?

WT: Mostly because Madeleine really loves the country and the people – and wanted me to see it. Also, as the following for The World Peace Diet book grew, we got specific requests from readers to come tour in this part of the world. This was mostly in Australia, at least one from New Zealand, and also many requests from Taiwan, so I wanted to do a tour. At first all our tours were in our mobile home and on the east coast of the USA, but when we bought a home in California, it was much easier to visit all of the USA and now overseas.

VS: What differences have you noticed in Australia/New Zealand compared to your home and other places you have visited?

WT: Obviously, the language and culture are different. I was pleased by the lack of hostility to the message, as I wondered whether there might be some since both New Zealand and Australia are so heavily dependent on animal agriculture. All the people I’ve met have been very supportive, including the Maori people here and the Aboriginal people in Australia. The vegan movement in Australia and especially in New Zealand is much smaller, with a family feel to it. Everyone knows each other, like it used to be in the USA about 20 years ago. I was quite dismayed to see how much land in New Zealand has been cleared for logging, dairy farms or monocropping, like corn. This does happen in some places in the USA, as well. New Zealand is the most laidback – in Taiwan, there was a big welcome celebration for us, which included important dignitaries.

VS: Have you had to deal with hostility about your message from established interests that feel threatened, or even just from individuals?

WT: No, I don’t think I threaten existing institutions; instead I propose creating new systems based on a healthy societal perspective. I mainly suggest that people have to change themselves, at a grassroots level.

VS: Your website shows your appearances from the 1990s almost without a break until now, initially around the United States and Canada and now on tour in several other countries. How do you do it?

WT: At first, it was Madeleine and I in our mobile home, so it wasn’t too hard to travel as we were together and brought our home with us. It is a lot of work! We have always had really good health with our vegan diets, and we can’t think of anything more important that we could do. We always make sure to meditate and get out into nature regularly, so we have a rest from the touring. Having a meaning and a purpose is very inspiring and keeps us going. Madeleine did a lot of painting from our mobile home, and we also held sessions where I played music and she would paint. I don’t think we’ll stop touring anytime soon; we’re not tired of it yet. I do have other projects that I work on, and I think I have plenty of material already for another book. A new book could perhaps expand on the ideas in the World Peace Diet and also provide more of a simple How To so people can act on the ideas. We also love to garden, and now that we have our home in California, we are always keen again to do that – even an edible forest.

VS: Travelling worldwide has a large carbon footprint – how do you feel about that tradeoff with touring the world with such an important message?

WT: It would be nice if we could do more via Skype, or webcasts, but really I am drawn to face-to-face interaction for this message as I think it is vital to get people to change. As a musician, I know live performance has power, and I don’t always want to hide behind words on a screen or in a book. Vegans have a very small carbon footprint anyway, and it is just worth it to come in person – as a return on investment.

VS: Do you find your audiences have an interest in both your music and your diet message, or is there a separation?

WT: That is hard to answer definitively. When I first took about diet, the audience is usually very responsive to the inclusion of music in my talks. Music brings the feelings to the words I’m saying. But when I have an audience expecting music, they are often not happy when I talk about diet because it makes them uncomfortable.

VS: Do you see a real change happening in the way the world views and treats animals?

WT: Things are definitely better than they were. There is a lot more questioning about the way we treat animals. We have to be careful, because industries are pretending very positively that they are making things better, which makes a lot of people think everything is now fine. So the movement needs to focus on vegan education and how our whole society supports the animal industry – question subsidies for the animal industry, farm education, etc.

VS: Some vegans argue for ethical veganism as an ideal to be protected against dilution, and others say that we need to welcome all paths. What are your thoughts on this?

WT: In fact, most people go vegetarian first, and then vegan, so we need to acknowledge that this is a good path even if veganism is always our ideal. And then vegans should progress to being vegan advocates.

VS: You talk about the three progressive stages of veganism: new vegan, angry vegan, deep vegan. A lot of new vegans and angry vegans, for example, Gary Yourofsky, are out there doing advocacy, but I guess that’s probably not how you imagine a vegan advocate?

WT: I think vegan advocates need to be careful about blaming and shaming. To me, veganism is radical inclusion. I have seen one of Gary’s videos, and it is very good. But he has also talked about wishing that violence could happen to people who eat meat, and I think we need to move away from violence. There is no need to punish people, and when you wish violence on others you are also harming yourself.

VS: What else would you like to see vegans do as well as being vegan?

WT: I hope they can understand the big picture of veganism, as discussed in The World Peace Diet. They can mentor new vegans, help with VegFest-type festivals, share videos of compassion – always expanding our vegan awareness through networking. Also, it would be great to see more opportunities for vegan employment, because being rewarded for the time spent on these actions is a positive step.

Beyond veganism itself, I would love to see more vegan food-in-the-garden gardening to grow their own food, eating organic and whole foods as much as possible and fewer “animal replacement” foods. Also, I don’t think each and every industry and think vegans could look into alternative healing methods that are more natural supports for immunity. Alternative energies like solar are a great step forward. Basically, anything that promotes independence within the vegan community is desirable.

VS: You speak of the freedom and peace we gain when we realise the harm in eating animals and stop doing it. However, then we end up separate from the majority of society, which is stressful. What are your thoughts on this?

WT: Take time each day to recharge: read, speak to other vegans, see the beauty in nature, meditate, write a gratitude journal and generally find something that helps you relax. Try to turn negative feelings into positive action, like starting a World Peace Diet study group. Just one vegan in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, began a study group, and now there is a whole network of them there.

VS: Animal agriculture is particularly damaging – if we abandoned that, is there still a risk that plant farming would continue to be quite damaging because of the current systems of capitalism and land ownership?

WT: My vision is that when we move away from animal agriculture, our consciousness will change. Animal agriculture has an innate element of force instead of working with nature, because naturally an animal does not want to be used by humans. We largely plant by force now too, with monocropping, fertilisation, irrigation, etc., and we need to move back to a natural way of planting.

GIVEAWAY!

Will Tuttle has kindly provided us with his work to give away to some lucky readers.

1. Enter to win a copy of The World Peace Diet by emailing Amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line World Peace Diet by 31 June 2014 (or today, before you forget!). Open to Vegan Society members only.

2. The first two people to join the Vegan Society and mention this Tuttle promotion will win! One of you will get a copy of The World Peace Diet Audio Book and one will win Conscious Eating: The Power of Our Food Choices Video DVD. Find the Membership form at the end of this magazine and at www.vegansociety.co.nz under the Support Us button.

Will Tuttle Speaks
Stephanie Wynn

On a glorious summer’s morning this February, I had the privilege of picking up Will and Madeline Tuttle from Auckland airport and hosting them for the next three days. I was a little apprehensive and hoped we all got along well as we were about to spend a lot of time together, a fair bit of it travelling in my car.

Immediately it became obvious that these guys do not stand still! Every moment is put to good use, either in advocating for the animals or in resting up and preparing to do so. They are driven and passionate and have been doing this work for over two decades now and don’t look like stopping anytime soon. I was really taken with the Tour from Will’s website, and he has also arranged by the Vegan Society. Everywhere we went, peoplegravitated and wanted to talk to me and we arranged the interview. She wanted me to record it, but I did not have the facilities to do that. I suggested that she could record it online, but she got caught up in other phone calls and missed it.

As it was my first on air interview over the phone, I was a little nervous. Fortunately Will wasn’t. He had just given a fabulous talk at Gentle World and was very relaxed and happy. I had just four simple questions to ask him:

What is the World Peace Diet?

He spoke eloquently and at length on this subject. He discussed how our bodies have evolved to eat plant products and how by choosing to eat animals we are throwing back into the face of the Creator. He believes we can look after the Earth better through a vegan diet. In particular, he feels that animals are living beings with their own emotions, etc., and are not simply pieces of meat or objects.

I am fortunate enough to have my own radio show on my local community radio station Classic Gold, which airs on 91.9 FM in Alexandra and 107.7 in Cromwell (you can also listen online on www.classicgold.co.nz).

On my show, which airs on Sundays between 4 – 7pm, I talk about good positive news stories for animals and the environment, and I also give out a vegan recipe every week. I am in Central Otago, prime fishing and hunting country.

When I saw on Facebook that Will was touring New Zealand and looking for radio stations to be interviewed on, I invited him to come on my show, as well as suggesting a few other shows such as Kim Hill on Radio NZ. To my delight, he was more than happy to come for an interview on my show. That day he was due to be giving a talk at Gentle World in Kaitaia. His PA for the tour got in touch with me and we arranged the interview.

Will Tuttle on the Air

I asked him:

- What inspired you to write the book?
- Where can you buy the book?
- Does the book contain any recipes?
- How long have you been vegan?

He shared his life story… how he was brought up on the standard American diet, and how his experiences with a community helped him change his diet. First he stopped eating meat, then 5 years later he stopped consuming all animal products. He kept looking for a book that made the link between violence in our society and violence in our diets… he couldn’t find such a book and his wife said to him, well maybe you should write it! So he did.

Does the book contain any recipes?

Although the book does not contain recipes, he told us about the website he runs and all the options on the website for getting recipes. (http://worldpeacefood.org) And of course, he also mentioned how the internet is now full of great resources for vegans and new vegans.

Where can you buy the book?

One way is from Amazon - he mentioned the book’s release on Amazon and how it had been the best-selling book when it first came out in 2010. [Ed note: you can order them from Will’s website, and he has also recommended http://www.bookdepository.com/]

Sowing the seeds

It was wonderful to be able to broadcast what for many of the listeners to Classic Gold will be very strange and weird views. I felt vindicated in my beliefs, and it was lovely to feel like I wasn’t a weirdo. I was able to say that I had been vegan since 2000 and vegetarian since I was 15 and for it to be in context. I mentioned that I gave out vegan recipes every week, and he was delighted to hear this.

It was fantastic to get on-air feedback about this. As I had been getting some flack from other DJs about the meatless recipes, I was very pleased to be able to show these people that I wasn’t so weird and maybe, just maybe, the small seed of a new idea will have entered into those DJ’s heads and perhaps for my other listeners too. From little acorns, mighty oaks grow, as the saying goes.
Surviving Varsity as a Vegan

Claire Insley

So you’ve just completed your first term at varsity and there have been a few (or many!) remarks, comments, possibly even shouts across the campus at you because you’re different. You’re a vegan and it stands out like a sore thumb. There’s nothing the mob mentality likes better than someone who looks different, maybe even wears a few badges, has piercings in odd places and/or wears clothes without labels or T-shirts with political messages.

So how do you cope? What can you do?

Student groups

If you’re at a large campus, there is almost certainly a vegan or vegetarian society you can join. They will be able to support you and give you some helpful tips. If not, you can start one. You may be surprised how much interest you get. What if, like me, however you’re “only vegan in the village”? Then what?

Human Rights Policy

It can be good to know where you stand. All university and college campuses will have a Human Rights Policy. Check what yours says. It will no doubt say something along the lines of “You have the right to a safe learning environment. You should not be made to feel uncomfortable due to your gender, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs or race…”

I emailed the president of my campus student union to ask if they could include veganism as part of their harassment policy. The president asked if I wanted her to include it in the university’s Human Rights Policy. Check what yours says. It will no doubt say something along the lines of “You have the right to a safe learning environment. You should not be made to feel uncomfortable due to your gender, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs or race…”

I emailed the president of my campus student union to ask if they could include veganism in their policy, as I was having difficulty with one particular individual on my course who in spite of saying, “I know you’re doing your best to be a vegan” and “I think it’s great you’re vegan”, was doing his students a disservice with his attitude, as vegans and vegetarians also eat out and would expect to be catered for. Also, in the South Island eating out as a vegan is all but impossible in most small towns. Often if you speak to the chefs, they will try to accommodate you. But sometimes you are simply offered a salad, which just doesn’t cut it for me. I can make that myself and not spend $15+ for the privilege, thank you!

So, knowing that the student union president was prepared to support me and did not want me feeling uncomfortable in my lessons, I felt more willing and able to challenge this student next time it occurred.

Proactive steps

I think it would be great progress if all universities and colleges were to include veganism as part of their harassment policy. Do your bit and ask your student union about theirs.

Do talk to your lecturer about the issue too; they want to encourage all students to study in a safe environment and if you explain that it isn’t a safe environment for you, they should be quite willing to support you. If your lecturer doesn’t take you seriously, take it to the student union. They have to represent you.

Persistent problems

OK, so what if it continues? I do support a continuation of not giving energy to these people. It is a reaction they are looking for, after all. If there is no reaction, they will get bored and find some easier target to pick on. I can also understand if you want to reply with a witty one-liner though. Personally, I think something along the lines of “I know pigs who are more intelligent than you,” is a great put down – it has the added advantage of also being true! Google “sentience in farm animals” and you will find some interesting facts you may not know. Think about it beforehand, so you have an example ready to use if needed. Practice saying it.

If someone thinks its hilarious to offer their burger or bacon sandwich to you, it can be quite good to say “Yeah, no one’s ever done that to me before.” You can even go on to say, “In fact, the tofu in my sandwich is probably more intelligent than you,” which will no doubt get their friends laughing at them and you off the hook.

Try not to get sucked into an argument. People who are genuinely interested in your diet will ask about it in ways that don’t abuse or make fun of you. Please take your time to explain to them your reasons why you became vegan. Most of us were brought up eating meat, and it’s a journey to get to the point of not doing so. The meat-eater of today could be the vegan of tomorrow, especially if you remain calm and measured. Those who are abusing you have no interest in becoming vegan and are simply trying to stir up trouble or good a reaction from you. Together we stand.

Good luck with your studies and I hope this small guide has helped. Do check out Facebook for vegan groups and associations, we are always ready and willing to help.

Sometimes simply knowing you’re not alone is a great help.

(Photo: Avril McIntyre and Nicola Davies, co-presidents of the University of Auckland Animal Rights Group at their vegan sausage sizzle)
The history of Ethiclee

I started my career as a software programmer and went on to become a solutions architect and digital product expert. Despite being successful in my career, I felt disillusioned and unsatisfied with life. I decided to pursue further studies in the hope that it would quell this growing dissatisfaction and embarked on my 3-year academic journey for a Master of Business Administration (MBA) at the University of Auckland Business School. By the end, the dissatisfaction was stronger, but this time, I had a plan.

I had quit my job 6 months before my MBA was completed partly due to a lack of fulfilment, and partly due to my own existential inquiry into a search for meaning. As a response to this search, I eventually embarked on an entrepreneurial venture to launch an e-commerce store in the ethical consumption space. I was driven primarily by a deep love for animals and a commitment to ethical living.

Ethical consumerism

I have always been fascinated with ethics, and as part of my MBA thesis, I combined ethics with consumerism and focused on the topic of ethical consumerism. This seemed logical to me, as ethics is useful whenever we have to make a choice, and consumerism has choice inherent in it as a fundamental component.

In addition, consumerism is an extremely powerful force and has the potential to bring about large-scale changes quickly. The challenge though is in collectively harnessing this force, as it is often driven by a desire to make a choice, and consumerism has choice inherent in it as a fundamental component.

The research for my thesis confirmed that there is indeed a new breed of consumers termed ethical consumers, who do not make their purchasing choice based solely on self-interest as all the business textbooks were telling us. Instead, they also take into account the impact their choices have on the greater world around them. These ethical consumers faced 3 key barriers:

1. Information Access – information asymmetry is prevalent in consumption where manufacturers/producers protect information that would not work in their favour.
2. Trust – availability of credible information to base decisions on.
3. Information Fatigue/Overload – too much information to sift through which paralyses decision making.

The key drivers of ethical consumption behaviour were identified by scholars to be:

1. Self-identity – a sense of moral integrity in yourself. For example, veganism is a very strong form of ethical consumer identity.
2. Ethical Obligation – a sense of responsibility to society. For example, buying organic due to concerns of pesticide usage on the environment.

Supporting ethical consumers

I saw these ethical consumers as the early adopters of ethical products (like the early adopters of technology products), who are curious to try new things and brave enough to go against social norms. In the process, they support the fledgling new industry and pave the way for the rest.

With my strong background in digital software products, I realised that the barriers faced by these ethical consumers can be minimised in the digital environment using technology aids. These findings led me to finesse my business idea with the purpose being to empower the ethical consumer and make it easier for them to do the right thing.

Starting up Ethiclee

After I completed my MBA, I incorporated my business – Ethiclee. The next 3 months were spent building the e-commerce website, acquiring stock and setting up logistics. For

High Voltage Nutrition

Check out our range of VEGAN products online at
www.highvoltagenutrition.co.nz
Or email Diane on
diane@highvoltagenutrition.co.nz

All our products contain CornEnzyme the most highly certified minerals complex containing 72 naturally occurring minerals from the Great Salt Lake. 99% sodium reduced. Solar evaporated using a patented solar process and reducing water usage by 80%. Good for you, good for the environment! Good for all the family. More Vegan products to be found on our website!
my website, I focused on providing a simple and clean shopping experience for the consumer. I also sourced beautiful product images as I wanted a highly visual experience to allow the consumer to feel as much of the product as possible. Each and every product sold is vetted with the supplier, and for many of them, I provide in-depth information over and above the product labels. Ethical qualities for the product, such as organic, vegan, Fairtrade, sustainable packaging and independent certifications are highlighted, and in such a way as to not overwhelm the user with information. We provide more product detail than the consumer would otherwise get at the supermarket.

Logistically, food is especially challenging, especially the cold food products such as the frozen and chilled items that we sell. I partnered with a delivery provider that does refrigerated transport to ensure the frozen and chilled items that we sell, especially the cold food products such as organic and delicious!

Ethiclee – now and the future

The first shop to be launched under Ethiclee is EthicalShopper.co.nz - an online boutique store specialising in ethical food & grocery products be it organic, vegan, fair-trade, non-GMO, eco-friendly or sustainable products, all delivered direct to the consumer’s door.

I am currently working on my next shop – EthicalPets.co.nz. This shop is inspired by my kids, the eldest of whom is Khush (Buddha word for ‘happy’), a Doberman that would do anything for carrots; followed by Bertie and Beatrice, the two cheeky chooks; and finally Muskkaan (Buddha word for ‘beautiful smile’), who is a Bombay cat who thinks she’s a dog.

Action and making a difference

The most important thing I have gained by embarking on this venture has given me a sense of purpose. I have always been on a personal crusade: telling anyone who hadn’t yet considered ethics as part of their purchasing decision to give it greater thought.

Ethical Shopper is just the first step. I am a proud Kiwi, and I love this country and its people. I am very much aware what an integral part the dairy and meat industries are for us and how dependent our economy is on them. The ultimate goal for Ethiclee is to help us innovate away from meat and dairy and produce meat and dairy alternatives made right here in New Zealand. Our future depends on this.

Ensuring success

To attract our customers, we want to keep the message authentic. At the moment, we are using social media (with already over 1.6k likes on our Facebook page!) to help generate word of mouth testimony. We ask consumers to try us for themselves.

We are two weeks in since launch and ahead of targets, so we’re very happy! I am currently working full time on EthicalShopper.co.nz, but I hope to hire staff as well as grow to allow us to focus on other Ethiclee ventures.

If you want to start a vegan business...

Compassionate capitalism is an extremely effective way to bring about change. Go for it! And remember, it’s not who you are that holds you back – it’s who you think you are not. So cast aside all doubts and just do it.

Ed Note: Shama was kind enough to send us some samples of the available products. I can confirm they arrived well packaged in recyclable packaging that encouraged reuse. All the food was still nice and chilled...and all organic and delicious!

See what’s it all about at EthicalShopper.co.nz

Trailwalking Vegans

John Loftus

I chose the vegan way of eating in 2007 after my wife, Julie, suggested we trial a raw vegan diet for a month. She had attended a talk on this subject and was quite taken with the idea, as she was eager to bring a more healthy option to the table. Back then I was a member of the SAD group (Standard Australian Diet) and I was also keen to try something different. However, when Julie elaborated on the raw vegan diet, saying it meant eating only fresh, whole, unrefined, living, plant-based foods, I became a little nervous. But I said I’d try anything once and then committed to do it for a month. It meant I would have to say goodbye to all processed foods and anything containing animal derivatives. At the time, it seemed like it could be a long month!

Results!

That was seven years ago, and I’ve never felt fitter or healthier. I have always been physically active, and it’s taken me to new heights as an ultra-marathoner. Julie’s health also went through the roof – weight loss and high energy levels sufficient to see her take up marathoning. We were 100% raw for the first two years, but now we occasionally add a few cooked meals to our repertoire, including soup (mainly in the winter to keep warm), steamed vegetables and the occasional baked potato.

In 2004, I did my first ever Oxfam 100km Trailwalker in Adelaide, South Australia, and since then have done every one every year. In April this year, I completed my 10th event in Taupo New Zealand, and what’s incredible is that it was my fastest time ever – 19 hours 27 minutes, 23rd place from 264 teams of four.

I am 62 years young and honestly believe my way of eating is why I am excelling at such a demanding event. Sure, I train for six months leading up to a race, but my fuel is what drives me. My training program includes walking hills and mountains on surfaces similar to the event with increasing distances and degrees of difficulty plus cross training with swimming and bike riding.

Oxfam

Apart from being driven by a passion for good health and challenging myself, I am particularly attracted by the event and Oxfam because the Trailwalker is Oxfam New Zealand’s major fundraiser to support its work throughout the Pacific region making positive and lasting change for people living in poverty. To learn more about their work visit www.oxfam.org.nz . Over the 10 years of my involvement, the teams I have walked in have raised more than $50,000 for this great cause.

The event is gaining popularity around the world with over a dozen countries staging it. It has caught on big time in New Zealand with almost 300 teams of four signing up each year, and what’s really impressive is the number of “repeaters.” Yes, number 11 awaits me next year. It’s an awesome team event supporting an awesome cause! Check out the NZ event details at www.oxfartrialwalker.org.nz

Trailwalker 2014

This year I was in Team “13 Vegans & A Sausage” – our plan was to convert the carnivores! I was the father figure, with Aucklanders David, Jason and James being young enough to be my sons. Our vision from the very start was to cross the finish line together in under 20 hours. We had amassed 23 trailwalker events between the four of us, so we had the experience; however, three of us had never broken the 20 hours. Two months before race day, David came off his bicycle at high speed. Spending three days in hospital with seven broken ribs, a punctured lung, etc., would mean the end of the road for almost anyone else, but not so. He was there with us and in fact became a real motivator, giving us the belief that despite obstacles we could do it. I’m a green smoothie junkie, and along with soups, carrots, celery and raw nuts, Julie kept the fuel coming. My water is always topped up with freshly squeezed orange and lemon juice.

Moving to a vegan way of living has increased our overall health and wellbeing, and when you’re onto a good thing you “stick to it.”
Vegetarian Cooking Classes
Nichola Bathurst-Jones

I grew up in Christchurch and moved to Auckland ten years ago to do my BA degree in Performing and Screen Arts, majoring in Directing. I have been vegetarian for ten years and vegan for five years. My partner Russ and I have a lovely vegan home where we bring up our two beautiful children: Tyler, 5, and Aurelia, 16 months.

About the classes
Whenever I would chat to friends about my meals or baking, they would often tell me I should start vegan cooking classes. Taking my cooking and baking for granted, I had thought most people found it just as easy to veggie dishes. When I finally realised people genuinely wanted guidance, I answered the call.

I recently started a Vegetarian Social Cooking Class, Russ takes great photos of the food and people, which then get posted on meetup and Facebook.

We like to emphasise the social aspect of our cooking classes and have a few themed event ideas up our sleeve that we hope will attract more participants.

In a recent class, our March event was our first one and we had 18 guests! Our kitchen/lounge was packed with lots of smiling, social cooks, ready to embark on a three-course meal experience. Everyone had a great night, we began with our entrée homemade hummus with breads and dips, devoured vegan lasagne with side salad and ended the night with my specialty, coconut vodka chocolate brownie with soy ice cream (my signature brownies with an alcoholic spin inspired by Russ).

Results so far
Our first month was extremely sucessful, while the second month was a bit quieter but still a wonderful social night with many eager participants.

In the two weeks leading up to each class I spend about 5-10hrs in total advertising, emailing and then purchasing the food.

Check out upcoming classes on www.facebook.com/groups/vegcooking or www.meetup.com/Auckland2030SocialGroup/ If you have an idea for an activity to promote vegetarianism and help people, go for it! Don’t shut out nonvegans as the more they see we are, mostly, just normal everyday people. And a lot of us used to be nonvegans ourselves so everyone needs to start somewhere.

Method:
1. Drain chickpeas and set aside liquid from can.
2. Combine remaining ingredients in blender/ food processor (or with a blending stick).
3. Add ½ cup liquid from chickpeas
4. Blend for 3-5mins on low until thoroughly mixed and smooth.
5. Place in serving bowl, and create a shallow well in centre of the hummus.
6. Add a small amount of olive oil in the well.

Serve:
Serve with olive bread, toasted pita bread or as a dip.

Variations:
For a spicier hummus, add a sliced red chilli or a dash of cayenne pepper.

Storage:
Hummus can be refrigerated for up to three days and can be kept in the freezer for up to one month.

Add a little olive oil if it appears to be too dry.

Chocolate Brownie Delight
(Serve with Coconut Vodka and Ice Cream)

Serves: Approx. 10 desserts
Time: 35mins
Ingredients:
• 2 cups flour (wholemeal, all-purpose or GF like rice flour)
• 2 cups raw sugar (or your choice of sugar)
• 1 cup cocoa powder
• 1 tsp baking powder (Edmonds is GF)
• 1 tsp salt
• 1 cup water
• 1 cup rice bran oil or vegetable oil
• 1 tsp vanilla extract or essence

Method:
1. Preheat oven to 180°C
2. In a large bowl, stir together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Make a well in the centre.
3. Pour in water, oil and vanilla, mix until well blended (a whisk works well for this).
4. Spread evenly in a baking pan (approx. 15cm x 20cm is a good size)
5. Bake for 25-30mins in the preheated oven, until the top is no longer shiny. Let cool for at least 10mins before cutting into squares.

Serve:
Serve chocolate brownies squares with a scoop of ice cream and drizzle over 1-2 tsp of Smirnoff Coconut Vodka

Variations:
Dazzle Kahlua and add a little milk for difference.

Storage:
Chocolate Brownies store really well in an airtight container for 3-5 days.

Homemade Hummus
Serves: Approx. 15-20 entrees
Time: 10mins
Ingredients:
• 1 can chickpeas
• ½ cup liquid from can of chickpeas
• 3-5 tbsp lemon juice (depending on taste)
• 1½ tbsp tahini
• 2 cloves crushed garlic
• ½ tsp salt
• 2 tbsp olive oil

Cheese Sauce
1 Mix cornflour to a paste with a little of the milk.
2. Heat remaining milk, with the Olivani, until nearly boiling.
3. Add cornflour paste to milk, stirring constantly.
4. Simmer 2-3mins.
5. Add savoury yeast and mix well.
6. Season with salt and pepper.

Assembly:
1. Preheat oven to 200°C.
2. Spread about ⅔ cup of the nutmeat sauce on the base of lightly greased baking dish (our baking dish of 330mm x 230mm x 50mm is the perfect size).
3. Place a layer of lasagne sheets on base of dish and cover with ⅓ of the remaining nutmeat sauce.
4. Layer ⅔ of the sliced courgettes, layer ⅔ of the sliced mushrooms and spread ⅓ of the cheese sauce on top of the veggies.
5. Cover with another layer of lasagne sheets and repeat with ⅓ of nutmeat sauce, remaining veggies, ⅓ cheese sauce.
6. Place final layer of lasagne sheets and top with remaining nutmeat sauce and cheese sauce.

Cook:
1. Cover with tinfoil and cook for 30-35 mins.
2. Remove foil and reduce heat to 150°C and cook for a further 10 minutes or until cooked through (best with fork).
3. Let stand for 5-10 mins before serving.

Serve: with salad greens or grilled eggplant.

Creamy Vegetarian Lasagne
Serves: Approx. 6-9 mains
Prep Time: 20mins
Cooking Time: 30-45mins
Ingredients:
• 375g Packet of San Remo Instant Lasagna Sheets (or GF Variety)
• 1 can Sanitarium Nutmeat
• 1 tbsp Olivani (or similar)
• 1 onion, chopped
• 1 clove of crushed garlic
• 1 can Watties Mushroom Pasta Sauce
• 1 can Crushed Tomatoes
• 2 Medium Courgettes, sliced thinly
• 10 Mushrooms, sliced thinly
• 4 tbsp Edmonds Fielder’s Cornflour
• 600mls Oatmilk
• 2 tbsp Olivani
• 2 tbsp Savoury Yeast, ground
• Salt, pepper to taste

Method:
Slice courgettes and mushrooms.

Nutmeat Sauce
1. Dice and mince up nutmeat.
2. Spread about ¾ cup of the nutmeat sauce to the well in centre of the lasagne.
3. Let stand for 5-10 mins before serving.

Serve:
Serve with olive bread, toasted pita bread or as a dip.

Variations:
For a spicier hummus, add a sliced red chilli or a dash of cayenne pepper.

Storage:
Hummus can be refrigerated for up to three days and can be kept in the freezer for up to one month.

Add a little olive oil if it appears to be too dry.
The IVU and World Vegfests

Cathie Duffield

Every the International Vegetarian Union (IVU) hosts many events that provide enriching experiences and exciting travel opportunities. The IVU is a non-profit global network of independent organisations, whose main objective is to promote veg*fnm (vegetarian/vegan) around the world. Rather than promoting veg*fnm to individuals, it wants veg*fnm to work together to promote the cause. Thus, it encourages the formation of organisations, the promotion of international gatherings, fundraising, information sharing, and anything else that helps achieve that objective.

Despite its title, the IVU is a vegan organisation and all its events are vegan. John Davis, IVU Manager, explains that historically a vegetarian or “vegetable” diet did not include eggs or dairy. Nevertheless, the IVU is an inclusive organisation, and vegetarian societies, including the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, make up many of its approximately 120 members. Certain groups and individuals also belong as associate members and supporters. The IVU has contributed hugely to the vegetarian movement since its formation in Dresden, Germany, in 1908. Prior to that, vegetarian societies had formed in a number of countries, and when the Manchester Vegetarian Society celebrated its diamond jubilee (50 years), it invited all the known leaders of vegetarian societies from other European countries. At that meeting, the President of the French Vegetarian Society proposed they form an International Vegetarian Federation.

Dresden was chosen for the inaugural meeting as it was expected that a number of vegetarians would be there attending an Esperantist conference (at that time, vegetarians and Esperantists had much in common). During the meeting, they named their new organisation the “International Vegetarian Union” and decided to hold World Vegetarian Congresses regularly. Since then they have been held on most continents. Initially the congresses were held annually, then every three years, and in the 1950s, they became a biennial event. In 2012, the IVU decided to again make the congresses an annual event and to change the name to World Vegfests - as John Davis said, the term congress sounds like something to do with government. It was also decided to rotate them around the world’s continents, and this year it will be held in Africa for the first time.

In recent years, Vegfests have become open to the public and are often linked to other vegetarian events in the host country. For example, the Vegfest in Kuala Lumpur was combined with a VegFood event. Thousands of locals sampled food from over one hundred food stalls. In Indonesia in 2010, a vegan food fair attracted over 5000 people. And following the Vegfest in Kuala Lumpur, some members of the Malaysian Vegetarian Society and a group of foreign delegates travelled by bus to Penang to help promote veg*fnm during its annual Nine Emperor Gods vegetarian festival.

Cathie Duffield

“Each country puts on its unique cultural stamp on its festival...”

The presentations at the World Vegfests are always interesting and informative as the organising committees bring in extremely good (and often well-renowned) speakers who talk on diverse topics. Dr Wil Tuttle, John Robbins, Dr Michael Klaper, Colleen Patrick-Goudreau, Dr John McDougall and Dr Michael Greger, were amongst those who gave passionate and inspiring presentations at the San Francisco Vegfest.

However, the time spent with vegans from other countries is what many delegates at the Vegfests value the most. Dixie Mahy, President of the San Francisco Vegetarian Society, summed this up well when she said that the Vegfests “bring people together and provide the opportunity to meet vegans from a huge number of countries at one event.”

Sharing conversation with others working for animal rights - a movement which transcends political boundaries, is both enjoyable and empowering. Many IVU delegates stay in touch, either by email, or Facebook, or both to facilitate sharing planned initiatives, raising the numbers involved and creating a greater force for change. An example of this is a fund-raising project set up by Roger Roberts from Cambridge, a fellow delegate at the Malaysian World Vegfest. He emailed us, and no doubt others he met in Malaysia, about a sponsored ride he is undertaking to raise funds for the Dr Hadwen Trust. This charitable trust supports replacements to animal experiments and funds non-animal medical research projects into the study of cancer, Alzheimer’s, asthma and other diseases. The knowledge gained from this research will benefit animals and people worldwide. ***(NOTE: it would be great if Cathy could put in how much was raised or some other outcome from this)**

The 2014 World Vegfest will be held in Accra, Ghana, this October. Four vegan men from Ghana attended last year’s Vegfest and indications are that they will organise an informative, colourful, lively, and hands-on event. All aspects of the festival will be consistent with vegan philosophy. It will be a six-day event with varied activities - visits to two orphanages to donate food, to spend time with the children and to give vegan recipes to the caretakers; an Awareness Walk to the Ministry of Health to present the Minister with a letter on the state of the nation’s health from a veg*fnm perspective; a “Vegan Youth Day”, especially dedicated to the upcoming generation; a day of presentations incorporating a food fair and a health products’ exhibition; dinners to bring delegates together (with one held at a children’s park). The musical entertainment will convey to the public the need for a healthy lifestyle. The sixth day has been set aside to visit tourist attractions outside Accra, such as the Kakum Forest Canopy Walkway, the Aburi Botanical Gardens and the Tetteh Quarshie’s original cocoa farm.

Ghana sounds an interesting country to visit. It has a turbulent and fascinating history, as it was the centre of the slave trade in Africa. October is the time of year, a number of traditional festivals occur in various parts of the country. Ghana also has a number of national parks and beautiful beaches, and activities such as trekking and cycling are possible. One benefit of combining travel with a Vegfest is that the organisers will happily dispense useful information on travelling as a vegan in their country.

If you are tempted to attend this Vegfest, or future ones, visit the IVU website www.ivu.org. There is also an article on the Malaysian IVU World Vegfest in the Autumn 2014 issue of “Vegetarian Living New Zealand.”

The World Vegfests are not the only IVU events. The IVU has six regions, based on continents, and each regional organisation is responsible for planning activities, including congresses, under the IVU ambit. In Kuala Lumpur, the World Vegfest was combined with the 4th Asian Congress, and we, as the only New Zealand delegates, and Australian delegates, were invited to a meeting of IVU Asia. A resolution was passed to include Pacific countries in their organisation so New Zealand veg*fnm societies will be invited to join IVU Asia-Pacific. The 7th Asian-Pacific Congress will be held in Battlogk, Thailand, in 2015, and there may be some events in Australia in the next few years. While there is a cost involved in attending overseas IVU events, the IVU Facebook site and monthly online newsletters are free - and contain information on topics of interest to vegans. John Davis’ well-researched e-book “World Veganism - past, present, and future” can also be downloaded free from the internet.

Thus, the IVU is definitely worth checking out if you wish to learn more about, or to participate in, the international vegan movement.
Get Involved
If you would like to learn more about AUARG and its campaign, join the group, come to the Rat Cuddles Day, sign the petition, or attend the art exhibition and auction. Search for the Auckland University Animal Rights Facebook page and get involved!
If you would like to submit a piece of art to the auction, email auanimalrights@live.com with your proposal for your piece and attach a few images of your previous works. Submissions close Monday 30th June, are subject to approval by the gallery, and will be silently auctioned for HUHA.

AUARG members look forward to meeting more like-minded people and continually working towards a better world for animals.

Caption: From below to left, Group member Sharon Yirong Li and Co-presidents Avril McIntyre and Nicola Davies. Caption: One image from Rat Poster Campaign, designed by group member Julia Holden

Student AR Group Launches Major Campaign

The Auckland University Animal Rights Group, or AUARG, is the only animal rights group at the University of Auckland. It is active and growing, gaining almost 400 members since its conception in mid-2013.

Anti-testing campaign
2014 has been a fast-paced and productive year for the group. Amidst our regular vegan sausage sizzles, volunteering trips to the Animal Sanctuary in Matakana, meetings, and social nights, we have launched a major campaign in motion to reduce the amount of heinously wasteful animal ‘manipulation’ on campus grounds. Last year alone, 14,217 animals were recorded as being used by the university, as a result of which 9,669 died.

Poster campaign
The first phase raises awareness of both the huge animal use figures at the university and the sentience and various personalities of the animals used. Three different poster campaigns are underway, and on Thursday 22nd May, a Rat Cuddles Day on campus will allow students to interact and bond with pet rats. This will help students to make a connection between the cuddly animals they meet and those who are not so lucky, thus encouraging empathy for the lab animals.

Media, debate, and art
The second phase involves several media releases about the petition and a talk/debate on animal rights with the UoA Reason and Science Society on Friday 1st August.

We will hold an art exhibition and auction at Te Karanga Gallery entitled Animal Exploitation and Liberation from 4th to 8th August. The Friday final night features music, vegan wine and nibbles, Be Good Organics goodie bags, and the completion of the bidding. All the money raised by auctioning the works will go to HUHA.

The top two artists win $500 of vegan, cruelty-free prizes each, donated by Lush, Red Seal, Angel Food, Blue Earth, Ceres Organics, Pricedilly Shoes, Apotheka, Hectors, Trade Aid, Eco Store, Matakana Super Foods, Klin Isi, Sukin, SFT Sylvia Park, Oasis, and Bluebird Café.

March and petition
The third phase entails a march from city campus to Grafton campus, and the presentation of the petition to the university. This will be followed by meetings and negotiations as to the terms of the petition:
1. UoA surrenders 30 rats to AUARG at the end of 2014 for rehoming and rehabilitation
2. UoA allows students the choice to opt out of dissection exercises
3. UoA removes all requirements of dissection from first-year papers
4. UoA reduces the numbers of animals killed annually by 20% by the end of 2015.

AUARG want the University of Auckland to consider the petition and catch up with the times. Otago University and Canterbury Polytechnic no longer need dissection in their courses, and numerous alternatives exist to animal dissection, testing, and research that are not only more effective and accurate but cruelty-free. All students are capable of ethical choices, and these should not be undermined (as they currently are) by the killing of an animal regardless of the student’s choice to opt out of the dissection exercise.

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Angel Food Launches First NZ-made Vegan Mozzarella

After two frustrating years of development, Angel Food is launching New Zealand’s first locally made vegan ‘mozzarella’

“For about the last six months we kept thinking we were very close to being able to launch,” says Alice Shopland of Angel Food. “And then we’d discover another hurdle. We’ve been saying it’s ‘coming soon’ for such a long time it was getting rather embarrassing!”

How hard could it be to make a melty vegan cheese?

“Creating something that was firm enough to grate but would still melt beautifully on a pizza was very very challenging,” says Alice.

“We literally tried hundreds of variations. I’m not a patient person, but I have to admit it was worth the wait. The final result is mild and creamy and very melty. Perfect on pizza, lasagne and toasted sandwiches.”

Speaking of pizza, Angel Food (which has stopped importing and is now committed to having their own products manufactured locally) is also quietly working on vegan salami, cream cheese and sour cream. Looks like an exciting and delicious year!
www.angelfood.co.nz

Submitting a Letter
If you have thoughts to share on what you read in Vegan New Zealand or some other vegan topic, please send a letter to editor@vegansociety.co.nz.

Letter rules
Letters should be 300 words or less [or consider submitting an article]. Letters may be edited for sense, style, brevity, or suitability. The Vegan Society reserves the right to abridge or withhold correspondence.

Letter rules


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Citrus Hydrating Body Lotion

I have always been a fan of Weleda – how could I not? From their organic production and their fair-trade partnerships to their efforts to have the tiniest of carbon footprints… for me their products have always epitomised gentleness and quality, and they smell like nothing could be healthier for you.

Their Citrus Hydrating Body Lotion might just be the product that finally gets me taking daily care of every inch of myself. Brimming over with skin regenerative ingredients like aloe vera, coconut oil and sesame oil, this light, creamy lotion is super easily absorbed.

It's scented with lemon essential oil, which I found refreshing and gently invigorating in the morning. If I used it again at night and just be left easily absorbed the next day. Not anymore. I now look dull and haggard and it takes me all week to catch back up.

So, catching me very conveniently in one of these episodes (I'd already been bright eyed and bushy tailed lying in bed for two hours), I whipped out of bed and I think I ate two. I rolled over once and promptly went to sleep. I did not expect that.

The magic ingredients in these wee jubes are Montmorency Tart Cherry and the herb Zizyphus (originally from India, Persia and Southwest Asia). Montmorency Cherry is full of sleep-producing melatonin, and Zizyphus in Chinese Traditional Medicine is believed to be amongst other things “calming to the spirit.” There is plenty more to learn about these ingredients, so it is well worth doing more reading on these if you're interested.

I gave a packet to a notoriously poor sleeper and he didn’t feel any real results, but alternative products are sometimes like that. The complete answer for one person can give no results to another. I didn’t expect the amazing results I got.

I have used them more than once, and I would recommend these to anyone who may need a little help with their sleep (or even just a bit of relaxation before heading into a job interview).
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There is no magic formula for a successful business. Choosing to be in business means it’s essential to be successful in a financial sense. If you’re also motivated by something deeper, perhaps even ethical, then your success can also be measured in other ways.

Wise Cicada, Newmarket’s famous organic and natural food store, is just such a business. It provides healthful plant-based meals and a range of organic and eco-friendly products (many hard to find elsewhere) for conscious shoppers, all in a relaxing atmosphere.

Helping out

The owner, Babak, is motivated by another type of success too, but you’ll not find him shouting this success from the rooftops. He and his small team of trustees and willing volunteers do what they can to “provide a few kids a better life” through ongoing direct donations to children’s charities around the world.

Rewards and awards
Success has come in many forms for Wise Cicada. This year, it received even more awards from the Newmarket Business Retail Association, building on last year when they were awarded the Newmarket Retailer of the Year 2013.

Of the thirteen awards presented at the dinner in 2014, four were awarded to Wise Cicada. I was privileged to be at the dinner and was surprised and delighted when the awards just kept coming.

Wise Cicada entered and won:
• Creative People - Service Excellence.
• Supreme Business of the Year.
They also won the Judges’ Choice for:
• Retail Business of the Year
• Most Sustainable Business of the Year

It is most gratifying to have Wise Cicada’s efforts rewarded with these presentations, especially the Newmarket Business Association’s Most Sustainable Business. It is possible to be successful while also being ethical and sustainable in business, and that is great news for all of us.

Wise Cicada can be found at 23 Crowhurst St, Newmarket, Auckland. More at www.wisecicada.co.nz
Treatting Allergies

Dr Leila Masson, MD, MPH, DTMH, FRACP, FAAP, IBCLC

of moisturizing the skin well and using steroid creams. There is nothing wrong with moisturizing the skin, but steroid creams can have unwanted side effects, for example, they cause the skin to become paper-thin over time, and they also suppress the adrenal glands that produce natural steroids. Even some of the moisturisers commonly prescribed irritate the skin and contain mineral oils, parabens and phthalates and other unhealthy ingredients. Antihistamines are prescribed to reduce itching.

For asthma, the standard treatment consists of inhalers: a mixture of preventers (usually steroids) which reduce the risk of having an asthma attack, and relievers (such as ventolin) which stop an asthma attack once one has started.

For anaphylactic reactions, the treatment is an immediate adrenaline injection through an Epipen injector and then going to the hospital, as fast as possible, often by ambulance.

From a nutritional and holistic point of view, there are additional steps you can take for yourself and your children to reduce allergy symptoms and increase the chance of boosting the immune system to the point where it could overcome some of the allergies.

Nutrition

Eat a wholesome diet. That means foods that are largely unprocessed. Processed foods like white rice, white bread, and white pasta are not made white for your benefit - they have almost all the nutrients extracted to make it easier to store this food for months or even years. You want to avoid white rice and replace it with brown rice, which is filled with healthy oils, fibres, minerals and vitamins that our system needs. Same with bread; don’t eat white bread; choose whole-grain or whole wheat instead. Instead of white pasta, choose quinoa, corn or brown rice pasta. Make sure to eat plenty of vegetables.

Try to include some fermented foods in your daily diet; tempeh, yoghurt, sauerkraut, kimchee, kefir, kombucha, pickles and miso are good examples. These foods contain live bacteria that benefit your gut flora. (For the importance of gut flora, see previous article).

Avoid foods you are allergic to. If you still have symptoms – whether it be abdominal pain, wheezing or headaches, do more allergy testing to see if you are still consuming foods you react to. Give your body a break from these foods so it can recover. Reinstate them one at a time under medical supervision, when you feel better and when the tests show that you have overcome the allergy.

Avoid sugar, as this affects your immune system. Drink plenty of water.

Probiotics

Research has shown that probiotics given to a mother in pregnancy and to the baby afterwards can reduce the risk of allergies in the child, whether you can cure an allergy with probiotics is not proven. Nonetheless, an optimal gut flora is essential for a good immune system. That is why I generally recommend a course of probiotics in children with allergies: they are safe, will do no harm and may help.

There are many different brands on the market. The best-studied probiotic strains for allergies are lactobacillus rhamnosus GG (LGG).

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin, is vital for your immune system. Many studies have shown that the lower the vitamin D level is in the blood, the higher the risk of asthma exacerbations and the worse the eczema gets. In our latitude, vitamin D deficiency is very prevalent in the winter (80% of children in Auckland are vitamin D deficient!).

The optimal range of vitamin D is around 120 nmol/L. If you get a blood test for your vitamin D level and it is below this, then you need a supplement – or spend more time in the sunshine (always make sure not to get sunburnt).

Calcium and vitamin C can stabilise the membranes of mast cells, which reduces the release of histamine from these cells during an allergic reaction. It is the histamine that causes itching; keeping the histamine within the cell stops it. Foods high in calcium include nuts, seeds, green leafy vegetables and tofu. Vitamin C is found in most fruit and vegetables.

Our New Zealand soils are very low in zinc and selenium. These minerals are essential for the immune system and also for skin healing. Zinc deficiency can cause skin rashes and also recurrent infections (including of the skin) and ringworm. White spots on the fingernails can be a sign of low zinc stores. If you have these, it may be a good idea to talk to your doctor about increasing your zinc intake. The only food that is high in zinc here, are system – but they are also high in salmonella, so not a safe choice. You can get zinc supplements as drops, capsules or tablets.

Selenium is found in Brazil nuts. Eat three a day, if you are not allergic to them, to cover your daily needs. Otherwise, you can get selenium supplements in a good multivitamin or on its own as a drop.

Herbal Remedies

Quercetin is a natural antihistamine found in the skin of apples and onions that stabilises mast cells in a similar same way to conventional medicines such as loratadine or cetirizine. Butterbur root extract is a well-researched herb that has a similar effect to leukotriene inhibitors, such as Singular. Some studies showed that it relieves nasal congestion as effectively as cetirizine without causing sleepiness, a side-effect of many anti-histamines.

Research on pycnogenol has shown that if people with allergies to birch take this pine bark extract before allergy season they may well reduce their symptoms. In New Zealand, we have an excellent pycnogenol product called Enzogenol.

Skin care for eczema

It is extremely important to keep eczema-prone skin well moisturised by applying a lotion at least twice daily. This helps to reduce the scratch-itch cycle, but also to keep the skin barrier intact.

If the prescription skin care is too harsh for your child, I would choose a natural, non-toxic moisturiser. Good brands include Shikai Borage Lotion for Kids, Weleda Calendula lotion, Essenchi Aquaderm or the Eco Store Baby moisturiser. Make sure that your child is not allergic to any of the ingredients – so for example if you are allergic to coconut, do not apply a lotion that contains this.

In addition, I recommend a cream for the eczema patches. If needed use the prescription hydrocortisone, always using the lowest strength that works and only small amounts, as steroid creams may thin the skin over time and suppress the adrenal glands. If you can get away without steroid creams, try Weleda eczema cream or Quintessence Eczema Cream.

Some ingredients in skincare can affect the skin barrier. I recommend avoiding products that contain SLS, parabens, phthalates and propylene glycol as these can all irritate the skin.

Staphylococci are skin bacteria and live all over us. One of the problems with eczema is that the staphylococci overgrow and produce chemicals to kill other bacteria on the skin. These chemicals can damage the skin barrier and start the cascade that ends up in eczema.

Staphylococci also cause skin infections, such as infected eczema, boils and school sores. That is why some doctors recommend adding jenole to the bath: the bleach kills off bacteria, including staphylococci. It is harsh and toxic though and there is a gentler, more natural alternative: tea tree oil or Manuka.

Manuka is a very potent anti-staphylococcus agent. It kills it more effectively than most antibiotics. You can add a few drops of Manuka oil to the bathwater or one drop to a moisturiser and then spread it all over the body.

Asthma

If you suffer from asthma, you should get tested for allergies (skin prick tests are a good start), to see if you are allergic to anything that can exacerbate asthma. Common triggers are dust mites, grasses, moulds, animal dander, and hair. If you are allergic to any of these, avoid exposure to the allergens.

In addition to the abovementioned vitamins, minerals and herbal remedies, magnesium may be helpful. Severe asthma exacerbations are treated with intravenous
Join The Vegan Society Today!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Vegan Society offers businesses and retailers 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 communities and by providing information and resources.

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magnesium in the emergency department, as this will help relax the small muscles around the constricted airways and allow air to flow through them again.

About 60% of people in Australia and the US are magnesium deficient, and in Europe this is one of the most commonly taken supplements. Symptoms of low magnesium include sore muscles (especially the calves) – think of athletes, they all take magnesium after their workout to avoid muscle cramps, muscle twitches, constipation and sleep problems.

Breathing training

The Buteyko breathing method has been clinically shown to reduce asthma exacerbations and the need for medication. Buteyko breathing exercises and lifestyle guidelines are specifically designed to reduce hyperventilation and normalise breathing. Paradoxically, breathing less actually increases oxygen supply to cells.

The Buteyko method also trains you to breathe through your nose. This way the air gets filtered by the small hairs in your nose, so you don’t get as many allergens into your lungs. Check it out at www.buteykobreathing.co.nz

Dust Mite Precautions

1. Get dust mite covers for the mattress, doona and pillow. You can get these from Allergy New Zealand. If you are going to buy a new mattress, check out dust-mite-proof ones, such as from innature.co.nz. You can also buy dust-mite proof pillows and duvets.
2. Vacuum at least twice a week with a vacuum with a HEPA filter.
3. If you can, get rid of carpets, at least in the bedroom.
4. Dust with a moist cloth around the bedroom at least twice a week.
5. Take away dust catchers, such as stuffed animals, from around the bed. If your child is very attached to them, choose a couple to stay around the bed, but either wash and dry them once a week or put in the freezer for 12 hours once a week.
6. Consider getting a room air purifier, which filters the dust mites out of the air.

How To Cope With An Allergy To Grasses

1. Do not let your child play in freshly cut grass.
2. Close the windows to your child’s bedroom at night to avoid the pollen drifting into the room.
3. Do not hang washing outside, as the grass pollen can stick to it.
4. Consider getting a room air purifier for your child’s bedroom.

[Ed Note: Dr Masson’s articles were originally published in Tall Poppies, the magazine for the NZ Association for Gifted Children and are republished here with permission.]
GREAT NEW FRY'S VEGETARIAN PRODUCTS AVAILABLE IN-STORE

Fry’s Vegetarian has been an innovator in the vegetarian food market for the last 20 years and can now offer you four great new products. The Fry’s Country Mushroom pies and Pepper Steak-Style Pies are delicious and easy to prepare. The Louisiana Tenders and Meat Free POPS will be a hit with your kids because not only are they a flavour experience, but they are also free from trans fats, cholesterol, added preservatives, MSG and artificial colours while still offering all the goodness and protein needed for a growing child. The home-grown Fry’s range is available in the frozen food section of all major supermarkets.