Living in China
Marvellous Vegan Alternatives
Artistic Vegan

Are Eggs OK?

Faith, Food and Feminism

Rocking a Vegan Pregnancy

Kiwi muso’s baby will be vegan
It’s my favourite time of the year! Just warm enough, and with the first few blossoms appearing on the New Zealand Christmas pohutukawa trees, the holidays are just around the corner.

I hope you’ve all visited our new Vegan Society website, released on 1 November, World Vegan Day. In this issue, you’ll see a wrap-up of many World Vegan Day activities around the country.

There’s been a lot of much less happy news recently, from terrorist attacks to deaths of well-loved personalities. It is interesting to see how society and social media, led by the news media, weigh in on what is worth caring and sharing about. Who decides that an attack on France is worthy of a tidal wave of profile picture commemoration, but similar or far worse attacks in non-Western countries go unreported. And of course, trying to gain sympathy for the systemic slaughter of almost uncountable animals via social media can be the quickest path to scorn and debate anywhere.

We know humans are very capable of compassion; yet it seems a fickle resource.

Back to the good news! People regularly propose that veganism, etc., actually has no real impact on the number of animals raised and killed, given the size of the industry. I was extra pleased to see that “Official USDA figures show that from 2007 to 2014 there was a decline of 400 million animals being killed for meat in the U.S., which amounts to nearly a 5 percent reduction”.

In honour of those baby steps and all your efforts, I wish you happy holidays, and peace on Earth.

Jessica Parsons

Letters to the Editor

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.

Guidelines
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.
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Artistic Vegan

Kay Bird

My background
I am originally from Gainsborough, England, though I have travelled constantly since I was 18. There was always something so intriguing about the world for me and it seemed like there was so much to uncover.

My mother and father divorced when I was young, and I found that, as opposite as their characters are, I became both of them. My mum is incredibly kind-hearted; she has a stable job as manager of a shoe shop and enjoys feeling settled. My father, on the other hand, travels the world and works as he goes. I grew up in a town of 20,000 people with my mum and stepfather, my sister and two stepbrothers.

We always had pets, from goldfish to birds to rodents and dogs. I was an animal lover who didn't yet understand the nature of these species, but I was definitely on track.

The times when I felt most at peace in life was certainly when living in Rome, Italy, and enjoying the continuous cycle of art exhibitions. I was extremely drawn to interpreting the messages and to seeing an artist's true passion through their strokes, photography and colour.

My vegan journey
My vegan journey really began when I was expecting my beautiful half Kiwi, half English baby girl. I began to look for the way to be the healthiest I could be, for baby and myself, and the universe kept throwing vegan messages toward me. As I was getting heavier and heavier by the day, I wasn't at my most active. I spent all of my time working on new artistic projects, which I have never been able to resist, and watching documentaries about lifestyle choices, such as Vegucated and Forks Over Knives. I read books such as Eating Animals and countless nutritional information guides.

The meat industry always scared me, and I was reluctant to look at graphic images of slaughter until this point in my life. It's funny how you feel that you need all of the facts so that you can shield your unborn child from them!

Meat eaters may argue that 'we are all going to die' and 'they can't live a happy life eating animal products', but my message to them is quite clear: our children will see the way we choose to live and die and will more than likely follow in our footsteps. The energy we pass directly through our own pool of consciousness to theirs should be that of compassion and health, both physical and mental. The vegan options are endless! It's nice to have a night eating junk, like vegan hot dogs and fries, and to know that no being suffered for it. Let me tell you, if I wanted to be obese I could do it in about a week. Veganism isn't all 'rabbit food' raw based healthy lifestyle, for sure.

Evolution of style
I am a very bright and bubbly person, which comes as a surprise when people meet me after having seen my somewhat 'dark' art. Most vegans feel extreme pain at the thought of the current situation for animals, and I suppose this is an outlet for me to keep my personality and still get a message out there. My art is mainly black line work — aimed at getting straight to the point without beating about the bush.

The exhibition that gave me the most vibrant of memories wasn't one that you might expect. I've seen Mattise, Chagall, La Chappelle, National Geographic and Klimpt, not to mention endless small-end artists in the tiniest of spaces. But the one that grasped me the most was Body Worlds...
by Gunther Von Hagens. His extreme preservation of the human body showed me beauty, anatomy, the results of man-made disease and the beauty of a female gorilla’s body structure.

My portraits have evolved with my lifestyle; where they may have been of people beforehand, humans featured in my current works are usually in skeleton form. My message is quite clear — the majority of the human race is risking death in the worst possible ways: heart disease, cancer, not to mention mental illness. I portray animals exactly as I see them — sometimes that means that they appear expressive in their suffering, while other times it shows their innocent beauty. For me, anatomy is fascinating. The bones of us all, humans and animals alike, just show that it doesn’t matter who you were — did you make a difference to the next generation?

My goals

My art, evolving from all of these sources, and mixed with a strong message of veganism, is my only goal for the future. I am currently learning to tattoo after many requests to do so by clients of various art projects, and the demand for real art and tattoos is much higher in New Zealand where I plan to reside with my family by the end of this year.

I hope that people can spread their message of veganism through their own art. From masterpieces to silly sketches on toilet doors. The more we put out in the world, the less is contained within ourselves. Buying people’s art on clothing from the many animal conservation charities supports a higher good and I hope to be a massive part in that this year. I am currently working on a few charity pieces that will hopefully be seen around the country very soon!

I do hope that everyone finds an outlet, whether it be from art, a blog or public speaking. We are all doing such a wonderful job at making the world a better place — don’t lose sight of what you have done in the vision of what is yet to happen.
In the Winter issue, we reported the Vegan Society’s formal complaint regarding an article on TV One’s Breakfast show. The item referred to eating disorders and featured an interview with the Chair of the Eating Disorders Association NZ. Veganism was never mentioned; however, a banner heading was shown throughout saying “Fears teens/people use veganism to restrict food intake”.

A number of people complained to us about the piece and also discussed it on social media sites. Many non-vegan people came away with the idea that veganism was unhealthy. We submitted a complaint to the original broadcaster and were fobbed off with:

“The Complaints Committee has not identified any breach of the relevant standards and accordingly declines to uphold your complaint.”

We wrote back with evidence of a discussion which appeared on social media regarding non-vegans thinking that veganism was unhealthy as a result of the programme. We received no response from TV One.

We proceeded further with a complaint to the Broadcasting Standards Authority. This is a time-consuming process, and they only meet every 5 weeks. After considerable delay, their decision was still firmly on the side of the TV show.

“The Authority does not uphold complaints that the banners were misleading by suggesting veganism was an eating disorder and encouraged bullying of vegans. Viewers would not have been misled by the broadcast as a whole or encouraged to bully vegans. In any case vegans are not a section of the community to which the discrimination and denigration standard applies”

TVNZ did concede that the “singling out of veganism in the banners was regrettable”. The BSA thought that TVNZ was “careless” but felt that “reasonable viewers would have recognised that the banners had been shown mistakenly”.

We further argued that the banners breached the fairness standard and may have caused “panic, unwarranted alarm or undue stress” to parents of vegan children. The BSA said that the standards had not been breached because we “did not specify any individual or organisation who we believed were treated unfairly in the item” and that “the item could not have been reasonably said to cause panic, alarm or undue stress to viewers in the context of a breakfast news and current affairs programme targeted at adults.”

The result? Fully six months after the programme originally aired, we learn that vegans are not a section of the community that are protected by the broadcasting standards, and that careless showing of banners does not need any kind of apology.

We are not happy with the decision, but there is no further official process. However, I replied to them once more, outlining in detail how veganism is not simply making particular dietary choices but a strong stance based on ethical, health, and/or environmental reasons, comparable to other philosophies and organisations (and therefore entitled to protection from discrimination and denigration).

The Vegan Society of Aotearoa NZ will continue to defend vegans and veganism in the mainstream media in whatever forms we can. We also wrote a letter regarding the treatment of the vegan who appeared on the show “Come Dine with Me”, but I do not believe this was published.

Please do write or email us regarding any unfair treatment you may see of vegans in the mainstream media, and we will do our best to uphold and protest any poor treatment of vegans in NZ.
Jeff Masson’s Great Book Giveaway!

The Vegan Society continues to share in this bounty of great books that Jeff Masson donated to us. In this issue, we are offering two books!

One lucky winner will get Jeff Masson’s copy of Portrait of a Burger as a Young Calf, by Peter Lovenheim. “Recalling Upton Sinclair’s The Jungle, written in 1906, this book, too, carefully examines the deep disconnect between what we eat and where it comes from. “Scott McVay, President, the Chautauqua Institution.

The other will get Jeff Masson’s copy of The Great Ape Project edited by Paola Cavalieri and Peter Singer, including contributions from Jane Goodall, Douglas Adams, Richard Dawkins, and more. “This profound collection of thirty-one essays by the world’s most distinguished observers of free-living apes make up a uniquely satisfying whole, blending observation and interpretation in a highly persuasive case for a complete reassessment of the moral status of our closest kin.”

Thanks again to Jeff!

GIVEAWAY!

Enter to win by 31 January 2016 (or today, before you forget)

1. For Portrait of a Burger email amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line “Burger book” and your postal address.

2. For The Great Ape Project email amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line “Great Ape book” and your postal address.

Open to Vegan Society members only.

Your Healthy Food Store

• Vegan • Certified Organic Produce
• Gluten Free • Dairy Free • Nut Free

Shop In-store or Online

Northridge Store & Cafe Bar
Shop 23, Northridge Plaza
100 Don McKinnon Drive
Albany, Auckland
Ph: 447 3508
Open 7 days

www.naturallyorganic.co.nz 0800 567 888

Rosedale Store
Shop 9, Rosedale Plaza
215 Rosedale Road
Albany, Auckland
Ph: 914 2026
Open 5 days

Meredith Gallagher is a qualified Naturopath who practices in Auckland. She specialises in helping vegetarians and vegans to achieve optimum health and wellbeing through lifestyle advice, nutritional support and Herbal Medicine.

Atma.co.nz
meredithgallagher@naturopathy@gmail.com

Need a Naturopath you can trust who specialises in Vegan and Vegetarian health?
So you are thinking about veganism but are struggling with the idea of missing out on your favourite treats and takeaways? Fear not! Just about every food (including junk food) can be replaced or crafted in vegan form. Here I will share my favourite vegan alternatives from takeaways to body products and of course chocolate and cheese. There are too many to include here, so look out for further updates on this topic.

Being vegan doesn't mean you have to miss out on the good stuff. More and more companies are creating vegan products all the time, and you can too.

Here are just a few of so many vegan alternatives.

**Chocolate**

Chocolate was one of the reasons I stayed vegetarian as long as I did. Who can go past a row of dairy milk chocolate? Truthfully, we all can, including YOU!

This task is made easier by Green and Black's – makers of the best dark chocolate ever. Green and Black's do several chocolate bars, but I cannot recommend the Green and Black's Dark 85% highly enough. Melt-in-your-mouth, heavy-hitting cocoa taste that banishes even the most persistent chocolate cravings.

**Cheese**

The idea that a person “can't give up cheese” need not be an excuse to avoid veganism any longer. Angel Food has created a range of delectable vegan cheeses, much to the satisfaction of vegans everywhere. A serving of dairy-free cheese can be a real treat for the new vegan, searching for some normalcy in a whole new plant-based world.

There are plenty of vegan cheese alternatives out there, to make by hand and to buy, but the best I have come across is the Angel Food Mozzarella. Top homemade pizzas, pies, savoury muffins or Mexican food with a sprinkling of this creamy goodness, to add something special to your favourite dish.

Angel Food also makes a delicious parmesan alternative, so good it has to be tasted to be understood.

**Pizza**

Angel Food Dairy Free Mozzarella meets Hell Pizza vegetarian range. If you haven't yet tried this epic combination, don't wait another day. The fact I can buy vegan pizza with cheese is enough of a reason to have a cheat day.

**Nachos**

Nachos are a staple meal in my house. Every week we enjoy at least one Mexican feast, and I can honestly say I have never enjoyed nachos as much as I do as a vegan.

Introducing the best nacho meat alternative - Black Beans. Black Beans are the tastiest, most versatile bean that can be paired with sweet corn perfectly in any dish. Combine equal parts sweet corn, black beans and diced capsicum to make an incredible nacho mix, accompanied by homemade salsa, homemade vegan aioli, guacamole, salad and spices to taste. You could even add Angel Food Cheese to please the cheese-lovers!

**Body products and household products**

Choosing a vegan lifestyle encompasses more than just an animal-friendly diet. It also means using body and household products which are not tested on animals and are cruelty free. Lots of body products and household cleaners can be made at home. Two of my favourite homemade potions are:

**Make up remover (for eye makeup):**
- You will need:
  - One dropper bottle
  - Household oil of your choice (Rice bran or olive oil work well)

  Just put your oil in the dropper bottle and voila – homemade make up remover. It works like a charm, it's chemical and cruelty free and super cheap to make.

**Household cleaning spray:**

You will need:
- White vinegar and spring water (equal parts)
- Orange essential oil (10-20 drops)
- Spray bottle (500ml capacity or more)

Combine all ingredients directly into the spray bottle. Now go attack the grime, mould and build up you have been ignoring. This also makes a miracle kitchen cleaner.

There's so much more! For more ways to lessen your impact on the animal world, discover yummy vegan recipes, lifestyle tips and more, check out my future blogs on the www.vegansociety.co.nz website.
Chocolate Ice Cream

(Makes approx. 1 litre - vegan, gluten-free, soy-free)

Jana Kastner

Summer is here! So how about some easy, home-made, vegan ice-cream?
And the good news is that you don’t even need many ingredients! I have tried this recipe in my ice-cream maker as well as with the high-speed blender. Please see the different ways of making it below.

Ingredients
• 1 can (400ml) coconut-milk (alternatively 1 1/2 cup home-made, rich nut-milk)
• 1 cup (140g) dates
• 1/2 cup (50g) FAIR-TRADE cocoa powder
• 1 cup water
• 1-2 pinch salt

Instructions
1. Blend the ingredients to a fine cream. If you don't have a very strong blender, let the dates soak in the fluid before starting.

With Ice-cream maker:
2. Pour the blended mixture into the freezing bowl and churn until you are happy with the consistency. You might need to pop it into a container and into the freezer for a little longer if you like it to be more solid.

With high-speed blender:
This needs a little more planning...

2. After you have blended the ingredients to a fine cream, pour it into a large plastic container until it is finger-thick high.
3. Put the container into the freezer until the fluid is frozen.
4. Take the container out of the freezer, pop the frozen slab onto a plate. Break it into chunks.
5. Pop a few ice chunks into the high-speed blender and pulse briefly. Then keep adding ice chunks and use the temper to press them into the blades, blending on a relatively low speed. The ice ‘cream’ should be pretty smooth, but you’ll find it is a little more crunchy because of the ice crystals in it.

That’s it - enjoy!

This and other recipes can be found on Jana’s recipe page www.theveganmonster.com

GIVEAWAY!
Enter to win Jana’s new recipe book by 31 January 2016 (or today, before you forget) For Sweet Treats For Everyone email amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line “Sweet Treats Book” and your postal address.
Open to Vegan Society members only.
How’s it all going with the pregnancy?  
Pretty well. I completely hated being pregnant at first, but it’s grown on me (literally).

Has it impacted on your music career? Do you have plans for when the baby comes?  
After 12 years on the write-record-tour treadmill, it’s honestly been lovely to take a break. When you’re self-employed and self-managed, it can feel pretty relentless, so it’s been nice to pause, be present and stop thinking ahead for a moment. It’s good to get a little perspective. In saying that, I have been learning some old French covers, and I have some very loose plans to record a French EP next year.

What are your favourite foods? Are these any different since you’ve been pregnant?  
I love so many types of food, and I go through phases. Last summer I was all about middle eastern food, for example, but what I always come back to is simple Asian dishes. I’m never not in the mood for dumplings or noodle soup. At the start of pregnancy, I could barely eat; it was terrible. I knew food and cookery was important to me, but I had no idea how grim life would be if I was unable to enjoy cooking and eating. The days felt way too long. I couldn’t look at vegetables - especially green ones, which was very strange for me. Luckily my appetite came back slowly around 12-15 weeks in, and I’ve had a blast cooking all my weird cravings since! This was my first winter in five years, after living between Europe and NZ, so I embraced the novelty of winter vegies, stews, soups etc. My husband is Moroccan French so I used the cold months to learn some kick-ass tagine recipes and make harissa.

Have you had anyone, including health professionals, warn you against a vegan diet? If so, do you have an answer you use?  
I honestly don’t face as much negativity as some vegans describe. If people have issues, they’re usually pretty subtle about it and I shoot the conversation down pretty quickly - I’m not interested in debates with uninformed meat-eaters anymore. In general I find people so much more open to the idea of the vegan diet these days compared to when I became vegan (18 years ago). When I fell pregnant my lovely midwife did have special nutritional handouts for me, but I assume she gave something to meat-eaters too. She’s been very supportive.

Rocking a Vegan Pregnancy

Flip Grater

[Ed note – Flip Grater is a vegan musician and author who’s contributed to Vegan New Zealand before, notably as our cover in Autumn 2012 and also sharing holiday plans this time last year in 2014. Flip is now pregnant and keen to share how very possible a vegan pregnancy is.]
and confident in my understanding of nutritional needs in pregnancy. It helps that I'm an obsessive reader who eats more than I'm hungry for each day just to get extra super foods into my body! I think my family assumed I'd start eating dairy or even meat while pregnant, but if anything, I've become more vegan. My compassion meter is off the charts, and I've found myself ranting about the horrors of dairy production more than a few times lately...and rolling my eyes rather wildly at stories from people who 'just felt they needed meat during pregnancy.'

**VNZ:** Who are your sources that you trust to guide you in a vegan pregnancy? Have you looked into raising the baby vegan?

**Flip:** There's plenty of information online, and during my second trimester I did a ton of reading. In fact, it's no more complicated than being a conscientious eater in general - something vegans and meat-eaters should all be. There are a few vitamins and minerals that are especially important in pregnancy, so I stepped up my consumption of those and cut down on my vitamin C intake (I'm a regular vitamin C mega-doser and that's dangerous in pregnancy). I've been surprised how much of my iron stores this little baby has sucked out of me, so I've also stepped up my iron consumption. It’s a good excuse to indulge in spirulina smoothies every day.

There's no question that this baby will be raised vegan. I do have fears that will be harder when we're in France, especially since school menus don't cater for vegans and my husband has the misguided view that French cheese production is all small-scale and cruelty-free. I look forward to teaching this child about kindness to all animals, about valuing all lives equally and about compassion in the widest sense.

*We hope you join us in wishing Flip all the best! You can read more about her journey at ewyum.com.*

*Photos: Logan McMillan*

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**Flip’s Pulled “Pork” Recipe**

Pulled pork is so darn trendy. So trendy I didn’t want to make it. The fruit-as-meat trend on the other hand, is exactly the kind of kitchen geekery I will happily lose days to. Plus jackfruit is the craziest, most amazing thing.

### Ingredients

- 1x 280g can of jackfruit (available from most Asian and Indian supermarkets; in NZ it’s super hard to find fresh jackfruit. Jackfruit in brine or water, but not jackfruit in syrup.)
- 1 tsp chilli powder (or 1/2 fresh chilli finely chopped)
- 1 tsp sugar
- pinch of salt
- pinch of white pepper
- 1 cup of vegetable stock (or vegetarian beef stock such as Massells)
- 3/4 cup of BBQ sauce (find a good quality one)

### Instructions

1. Rinse jackfruit well.
2. Chop the hearts out (but don’t discard if they’re reasonably soft) and remove the seeds.
3. Cut jackfruit into bite-sized chunks and finely dice the hearts. Set aside. Preheat oven to 190°C.
4. Add some oil to a medium hot frying pan and cook onions until soft and taking a little colour.
5. Add garlic, spices, sugar, salt and pepper and cook for 2 minutes.
6. Then add stock, cover and cook for 10-15 minutes, or until the water has evaporated. Use a fork or spatula to crush and separate the jackfruit until it resembles pulled pork.
7. Spread the jackfruit evenly on an oven tray (I coat the tray in tin foil to save clean up) and bake for 15-20 minutes.
8. Add jackfruit and cook until coated and the whole thing smells great.
9. Spread the jackfruit evenly on an oven tray, pour over your BBQ sauce and mix until the jackfruit is well covered.
10. Return to the oven for 10-15 minutes until sticky and a little crispy around the edges.

Serve in soft, white buns or chopped baguette with a simple green salad or coleslaw and a spread of Dijon mustard. If you’re gluten free, wrap it up in a corn tortilla.
A Vegan Perspective of China

Having taken up a position at a Chinese University, Professor Michael Morris reports back on the realities of living a vegan life in the world's most populous nation.

China is a repressive totalitarian country that punishes any deviation from the orthodox view espoused by the monolithic government. It is a cruel state that treats people, animals and the environment as expendable tools to further its ideology of power expansion. Chinese nationals have no empathy with animals, and the main cities are choking in their own pollution.

Such was the impression of China I had been fed by people from all parts of the political spectrum, including activists. So it was with some trepidation that I accepted a position teaching biology and environmental science at China Agricultural University, Beijing.

True, the staff who interviewed me treated me with respect and empathy at all stages of the recruitment process, but maybe this just shows the way academics are persecuted by neo-Maoist thinking in society at large, so of course they would empathise with fellow intellectuals.

Nothing prepared me for the truth: China is not scary. People are not walking around with long faces bemoaning their lack of political freedom. Chinese people, especially the young people, are more cheerful and friendly than many New Zealanders. And from a vegan perspective, China is not an animal utopia, the Yulin dog festival certainly shows this, but nor is it a vegan hell. I would certainly not dissuade vegans from experiencing what the Middle Kingdom has to offer.

Treatment of animals

In Beijing it is illegal to kill dogs for meat, and you will not see dog meat on the streets. Dog meat is still available on the black market, and one of my students had her dog poisoned from some meat left out by an unscrupulous criminal dog-snatcher, but it is certainly not an acceptable part of Beijing life. There is a law being considered to make dog-eating illegal in the whole of China, but it seems even in a one-party dictatorship there are still delays in passing laws, as different factions exert their influence.

This is not to say that blatant cruelty is absent. The most obvious example is cruelty to aquatic life. Restaurants and supermarkets display the fish being killed in aquaria, and often these are overcrowded and the fish are already dead. Pet shops also keep fish and turtles in overcrowded conditions that would be unacceptable in New Zealand. I also see children fishing for goldfish at most of the lakes and waterways in Beijing. One Buddhist festival celebrates buying fish and turtles to release into Bohai Lake, a custom that paradoxically promotes animal cruelty as vendors capture animals to sell to adherents so they can release them. Nevertheless, when I recall the glee at which children show off their catch after fishing from the rocks around Mount Maunganui, I wonder if this is a particularly Chinese vice.

Eating vegan

In some other ways the Chinese are more vegan friendly than New Zealand. The influence of meat is growing, thanks to aggressive marketing by overseas agricultural interests (including those in New Zealand), but overall the amount of meat consumption per person in China is less than that in New Zealand, Australia or the United States. Meat is consumed more as a flavouring than a staple, and there are a great many totally vegan restaurants in Beijing offering the fake meats that originated in China. One of those close to campus is the suhu 素虎 (Vegetarian Tiger)
A Vegan Perspective of China in Wudaokou. Their fake spiced ‘fish’ and Beijing ‘duck’ is pictured. But even outside vegetarian restaurants there is no shortage of vegan options. If you want to be absolutely sure your food has never touched any meat, or the utensils have never touched meat, this is probably not possible, but such purism aside, vegan food in China is plentiful. The second photograph shows san xian chao fan 三鲜炒饭 (three treasures fried rice), with potato and eggplant, served up at the university cafeteria.

Standard food in the shops and restaurants is cheap in China, about a fifth of the price it is in New Zealand. Food in the university cafeterias is even cheaper, and there is a huge range of healthy and tasty options, including vegan fare. In contrast to the West, it is places like McDonalds and Starbucks where the food is expensive, which encourages healthier eating.

Scope for action

Protests and general agitation is rare in China, but some animal rights and vegan organisations are making an inroad. PETA Asia now has a presence in Beijing, and organised a vegan expo at Tsinghua University with plenty of vegan food on offer (see photo). An animal sanctuary 别吃朋友bie chi pengyou (Don’t eat friends) takes in stray and neglected cats and dogs. A visit to this place on the outskirts of the city with a vegan Chinese meal and a chat to the marvellous volunteers is an enriching experience. There are two Beijing vegan groups on Wechat, one in English for ex-pats and the other in Chinese for locals, with nearly 200 members in total.

In other ways too, Beijing is becoming a better place to live. Pollution levels are still higher than environmentalists would be comfortable with, about the same levels as Birmingham in the 70s, but the air is getting cleaner each year, and grey heavy days are now rare. It is easy and cheap to get around Beijing on public transport, and the city council has introduced a ‘carless days’ scheme to restrict private vehicle use, with more success than when the same initiative was trialled in New Zealand. In spite of the rapid recent economic growth, Beijing is still a city of bicycles, or more accurately two- and three-wheeled people-powered or electric-powered vehicles. There are special lanes for these vehicles making it easy to navigate Beijing by bicycle, but beware - road rules in Beijing (or the lack thereof) take a lot of getting used to.

In summary, Beijing is a liveable city in a country that is by no means perfect, but like all societies it has its strengths and weaknesses with regards to its adherence to the vegan ideal. Well worth a visit – or a longer stay.
I wasn’t new to veganism. I tried back in my earlier teens growing up in Singapura and encountered alternative zines on veganism, relating to Ahimsa and the straightedge lifestyle. But it didn’t last more than a few months, because I craved all the glorious meat-based flavours and aromas of Indonesian Malay cooking from my grandmothers’, aunties’ and mother’s kitchens. Plus, back then McDonald’s and Starbucks was a space for all the “cool kids”; so peer pressure got me back to eating cheeseburgers in no time.

But it was not until there and then on 7 February 2012, when I opened my heart to listen to the carefully researched and calmly delivered analysis of the animal production industry in Aotearoa, the gendered nature of how chickens and cattle are exploited, and the history of how British colonizers occupied and disrupted Māori land and ecosystems through the industrialisation of dairy farming, that it shook me. My mind, I guess, was decolonising.

Moment of truth

That night I couldn’t eat anything. I let all the facts, but more than that, the idea that my consumption is tied to a perpetual cycle of violence not just to animals, but also to the social, political and economic struggles of indigenous communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, settle within me. And it began to truly, for the first time, disgust me. And then I thought, all my life as a Muslim I have claimed to believe that everyone, human or non-human, has a God-created purpose in this world; what gives me the right to determine if an animal’s purpose is to enter my stomach?

I turned vegan the very next morning. No transitioning. No move to vegetarianism first. I was all in.

The very sudden change freaked out a lot of people I know. Even my own vegan friends, who were thrilled but concerned that I might get into it too hastily. There was obviously a lot about veganism that I didn’t know, like making sure I had enough B12 and the many codes of animal ingredients, on top of checking on standard grocery labels. I was also warned by other Māori and Asian vegan friends that the vegan community in Auckland particularly was “very white” and sometimes it can feel like you’re still a lone voice in a lone community. Of course, I thought. What’s new though?

Muslim veganism

That attitude to challenge stereotypes of gender and race that I brought to my music, poetry and advocacy work was embedded in my being as a Muslim feminist all my life, so I guess I became increasingly immune to racism, whether overt or covert. I can handle the racists for being ignorant – whether they’re coincidentally vegan or otherwise. But it was my family and cultural community that became my sacrifice. It is hard enough not having a lot of social support as immigrants in New Zealand;
Being vegan meant that it further cut me off from my own Muslim community.

Eid festivals where Muslims celebrate triumph over Ramadan fasting around the mid-year and the commemoration of sacrifice of one’s wealth and fortune (arguably symbolised by sharing meat), became torturous for me. For years, I had huge quarrels with my parents who were afraid that this entire not-eating-meat thing was another one of my rejection of Islam’s “original” teachings. If anyone out there has anxieties with people asking where you get your protein from, try being a Muslim woman who gets her entire existence doubted just by avoiding meat on the dinner table!

Fortunately, time and perseverance goes hand in hand to create change. My parents still don’t fully get it, and my younger siblings just roll their eyes when I even try to talk about reducing their KFC intake. However in more recent times, they have been somewhat more tolerant of my zero-animal diet. So tolerant that they let me cook up a 100% vegan Indonesian dinner for our Eid Adha!

Nusantara and indigenous food

In spite of our differences over food, I share pride in our language, culture and heritage. The word ‘nusantara’ is a very old, almost ancient word. It simply means “archipelago” in Bahasa Malay, and prior to nationalism and colonisation in the Asia-Pacific region, it referred to all the islands from Indonesia, Singapura, Malaysia, southern Thailand, and Borneo region. When I decided to conceptualise Nusantara Tea Cafe as an entity to revive the indigenous food traditions of my people and our ancestors, I knew that it would take time for people to understand my vision and the story behind it. I researched not just recipes, but also the history of farming, fisheries and agriculture, to really understand how the vegetarian and vegan habits of my people diminished. Once I was sure of who I am and where I came from, telling my multi-faceted story became important to gain support from all the different networks and communities that I have been part of in New Zealand.

And tell the story I did! That story was shared with The Wireless for a series called ‘Outspoken’, where I was featured as a Muslim feminist supporting the crucial indigenous struggle to be honoured and listened to. That same story was featured front page on North Harbour News when I spoke out about depression and how ethnic people must treat mental health seriously before it’s too late. While my story centres on the idea that food inspires and brings people together, I wanted people to realise that it is not just about saving animals, nor health for a few of us who

Nusantara Tasting Testimonial
Alice Shopland

We were out of town when Shasha did her first tasting session in April, but we were lucky enough to attend in May, where Shasha cooked up two absolutely delicious Indonesian dishes. The first was sambal godok: a coconut cream sauce with tofu and tempeh, which somehow managed to have a seafood-y taste and was reminiscent of fish chowder (in a good, vegan, way).

Shasha told us this dish is usually only cooked at home, rarely in restaurants. The second was 'beef' rendang, a rich and very tasty curry made with TVP and served on a banana leaf with a wedge of lime. Both dishes were great, but the general consensus was that the rendang was the star of the show.

Shasha and her team of helpers did a great job of making us feel welcome and keeping our glasses topped up with lemongrass tea.

I’m looking forward to the third and final tasting session in June!
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You can't go wrong celebrating World Vegan Day in Christchurch with 60 other vegans at the restaurant voted New Zealand's best vegetarian restaurant. The Lotus Heart is everyone's favourite; how could you go wrong with a menu of samosas, pumpkin and coconut soup, Moroccan spiced eggplant with kumara and basil falafel, sun burgers, ginger, beetroot and cacao tart, chocolate cake plus a lemon cheesecake?

We took over both up and downstairs, and while diners enjoyed the meal, CVC volunteers worked the crowds selling raffle tickets, eco soaps and marshmallows to fundraise for the Veg Centre. There were also gift bag giveaways to new members. Everyone came together to listen to my annual World Vegan Day speech which is a bit like the Queen's annual Christmas speech, but with more jokes and relevance!

World Vegan Day was a classy affair at the Heritage Hotel High Tea. The Vegan High Tea was crafted beautifully by award-winning chef Jinu Abraham – each item was a piece of edible art.

The High Tea included an elaborate tea menu which offered four courses of vegan afternoon tea delights. Gluten free options were also available, so everyone could enjoy. The foods offered ranged from dainty club sandwiches with creamy mozzarella cheese and tomato, to aquafaba lemon meringue baskets and raspberry macaroons. It truly was an afternoon of vegan delicacies. Thank you Hectors for the incredible vegan options available.

See Regan Northwood's full review at http://vegansociety.org.nz/Blog
World Vegan Day – Auckland

Apollo Taito

As some of you are aware, I’m in the army. What you do not know is my nickname is Big Bear (big, brown, islander, ambles quietly in the bush). Now after today’s Auckland vegan picnic, some of you will nod in understanding, after seeing me amble from vegan group to another, sampling and tasting what Yogi bear (a distant relative) calls delicious pic-a-nic baskets. There are other similarities I share with bears, namely I like to communicate using body language, sounds and smells. Today’s vegan picnic was a bear’s delight in communication; it pervaded and satisfied my senses. Imagine for a moment being a bear. I’m sitting contently next to Simone Kaho, eating her homemade vegan pizza, when my nose twitches and pulls me over to Dean Parker and Mel who introduce me to vegan ham sandwiches! I munch down three of those bad boys. From there, I amble over to the lovely Jennifer Spark (from Hamilton) who just finished the Auckland Marathon (not sure if she ran from Hamilton). I see Robin Steel (another marathon runner) chatting, smiling and limping. I pick up movement in the corner of my eye and quickly track down Carla Bryan Beardshaw and Allie; they feed and nourish me with more food and conversations (I love these two girls). My ears twitch of their own accord and I find myself pulled over to Julie Gunn, a wonderful lady. Inadvertently, my bear senses pick up a container of more vegan ham sandwiches! I politely ask the two beautiful ladies who own the sandwiches if they are selling them (probably sounded like, growl, sniffle, growl). To my delight, they give them to me freely! Thank you, flight attendants Emma and Beth! I can’t help walking over to Bryce Kehoe, the organizer, and give him a big bear grin; if he were a tree I would repeatedly rub my bear back against him in contentment. There are so many more people to thank for a great day, like Noble Glityatis, Shasha, Yoga Nicola, Mandy Carter, Jess and Erin Sanders. And Hell Pizza for the free 45 pizzas. It feels like I have sated my social hibernation, which can only come from engaging and sharing with wonderful like-minded souls. My World Vegan Day started with a cuddle from my cat Mr. Cuddles, and appropriately ends in the same way, as there is a resounding comforting purring, but I’m not sure if it’s from Mr. Cuddles or me.

World Vegan Day – Whangarei

Kayla Hutchinson

World Vegan Day 2015 was celebrated in Whangarei with a fundraising Spring Ball organised by locals Karl King and myself. We had great conversation in the company of likeminded people, whilst also raising money for the New Zealand Anti Vivisection Society and The Animal Sanctuary. Shawn Bishop, who co runs the Animal Sanctuary in Matakana with her husband, and Tara Jackson, Campaign Manager for NZAVS, both kindly agreed to speak about their experiences in animal rights and veganism. They shared their own vegan mission with inspiring words on living and breathing a lifestyle that truly values equality and compassion and reminded everyone why we continue the fight for the rights of animals. Ceres Organics, Rockburn Wines, Kereru Brewery and Eco Store donated awesome vegan products for our raffles with all proceeds going to NZAVS and Animal Sanctuary. The food was incredible, made entirely by Jana Kastner from The Vegan Monster; a showcase of how amazing vegan food can be! It was a successful evening, a fun way to celebrate World Vegan Day and meet other awesome people, because it can get tiring being awesome all by yourself.
World Vegan Day - Invercargill

Jordan Wyatt

INVSOC always has something exciting happening, and never more so than on World Vegan Day. We happily ceded our title of southernmost vegans in the world to our friends Sophie and Inga (of Dunedin) from Scott Base, Antarctica! The southernmost vegans wished those “in the Far North, Invercargill” and everyone on the planet a happy World Vegan Day.

3500 kilometres to the north, INVSOC members plastered our city with posters in two designs: our annual green poster and the official WVD NZ bobby calf design. Invercargill Vegan Society coordinator Jen created a 24-hour vegan display outside the Invercargill City Library.

Community paper “The Eye” ran an advertising feature for 1 November World Vegan Day, supported by local vegan friendly businesses.

We awarded WVD 2015 awards to three local businesses who really support our local vegan community.

Our World Vegan Day picnic (planned for the Otepuni Gardens) headed home to INVSOC HQ to be safe from the weather. AND we even shared muffins with passersby at Queens Park.

That’s just the basics; See www.invsoc.org.nz/wvd2015/ for the whole INVSOC WVD story.

World Vegan Day - Dunedin

Carl Scott


Amour de Chien

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Christchurch Vegetarian Expo

Anna van den Bosch

Christchurch’s ninth annual combined celebration of World Vegetarian Day and World Animal Day, the Christchurch Vegetarian Expo, was held on Sunday 27 September 2015. The Christchurch Vegetarian Expo is New Zealand’s largest vegetarian event.

This was our first in a new location as the previous venue, the Horticultural Hall, has been up for sale since last year and was unable to guarantee our booking. We found a new venue, the Student Association building of CPIT in Madras Street, which is more central than our former spot and has a pleasant grassy area with tables and seating that guests could enjoy outside the busy halls.

Fun for all ages
The kids’ zone was outside in a marquee, right next door to the bouncy castle, which made life easier for parents! The presentation room was a curtained-off part of the main hall, and the cookery demo room was in a student classroom at the end of a back corridor. It was a similar size to previous Expos and required some work on our part to relocate everything and place proper signage, but the end result was fantastic.

We were helped by the weather, a typical sunny Christchurch Spring day although a slightly chilly Easterly wind came up in the afternoon. The venue was extremely light and bright and overall was a huge success both with the stall holders and the public. There are of course some adjustments to be made and we have already noted a number of alterations for next year.

A recipe for success
We kept to our previous winning formula for the event. We had 45 stalls, both indoor and outdoor music, five cookery demonstrations and five talks held on the hour between 11am and 3pm, a film area, a café area, kids’ activities and a vegan sausage sizzle. Of all the stalls, 18 were completely new to the Expo and 22 were various food stalls. Our vegan-only rule was strictly enforced, and at least one stall was asked to remove non-vegan cookies from its sales table.

It would be hard to choose the most
popular stalls this year. Certainly No Bull Pies had a lot of praise for their delicious pies and quiches, and Haute Hippie Cakes made some wonderful cakes. South City New World was praised for their open-mindedness towards introducing new vegan options into their store, and both the Churros Sofia and Green Roots Organics had sold out by early afternoon. The Christchurch Vegetarian Centre’s own information, shop and group stalls were busy all day and a selection of non-profit groups for animal welfare such as SAFE, Sea Shepherd and Farmwatch were kept on their feet till closing time at 4.30pm.

Next year
We have considered renaming the event The Vegan Expo for future events, but our biggest problem would be replacing all of our signage; this would be just too time-consuming and costly. Next year’s Vegetarian Expo is already scheduled for 25 September 2016 at the same venue – mark your calendars!

For more information check out www.vegetarianexpo.org.nz; for all the photos see www.rocksteadyvisuals.com/?page_id=672.

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Tailor Skincare has brought all the amazing Native New Zealand ingredients together to create something fantastic. Before I left for Thailand, they sent me a mini skincare pack, the perfect size for my travels. They call these their “Little Blue Gems” and gems they are! How thankful I was to have a face wash that doubled as a deep clean mask, and an oil cleanser to take off all the harsh makeup I was wearing each day.

Hydrate, balance and moisturise your skin with naturally derived ingredients like kowhai extract, NZ hazelnut oils and NZ Kanuka oil. Little Blue Gems, the 6 piece set, RRP $49 as a Christmas special, available from www.tailorskincare.co.nz

With summer parties and BBQs to get ready for, your indoor decor may need a makeover as well. The soy candles and soy melts from Vixen & Co are the perfect accessory for your home. Lovingly handcrafted here in New Zealand and very affordable, these candles are my new favourite. ‘Green Tea & Jasmine’ has been burning during my bath time, and I can’t wait to try their other scents: ‘Black Raspberry & Vanilla’ or ‘Coconut & Lime’ RRP $28 for their large candles and $6.50 for their soy melts. Available at www.vixenandco.co.nz

Want to smell fresh & fruity every day? Of course you do! Original Source makes it super easy and affordable with their amazing selection of body washes, scrubs and hand soaps. Step out of the shower feeling revitalised with their skin quenching shower gels, to moisturise all day long. My favourite flavour for summer is ‘Vanilla & Raspberry’ and for men, try the ‘Mint & tea Tree’ scent. RRP $4.50 (sometimes 2 for $5 on special) available at New World, Countdown and other supermarkets.

PRITI NYC POLISH has a wide variety of colours to choose from. I took these polishes with me to Thailand recently and was so pleased with the way the nail varnish lasted. My new obsessions are ‘Purple Prince Tulip’, a hot pink colour, and ‘Old man Cactus’, THE metallic silver to heat up your summer nights. 100% Vegan and cruelty free, this brand is a must buy. They even have their own soy nail polish remover and best of all, it’s unscented!

Polishes RRP $25 each available from www.beautifullykind.co.nz
World Organic assigns you a specialist consultant to advise you on the best skin care items or makeup for you. Serena from World Organic absolutely impressed me with her knowledge and helpfulness. This company houses a few brands, and Serena demonstrated all the amazing testers and products. It was so much fun choosing and trying the products, and then I wanted to take them all home!

Their extensive range includes make-up, a baby range, sun care, body and bath, aromatherapy, massage and a men’s range. It’s hard to choose, but since it’s summer, we will first look at sunscreen.

World Organic present River Veda, a luxury rejuvenation and regeneration organic spa and skincare line. Their ‘Day Star SPF 30 UVA and UVB’ sunscreen is a full body protector, great for our harsh New Zealand summer. It goes on thick, typical for a mineral sunscreen. Usually mineral sunscreens go on white and stay visible, but this product absorbs really well. It has no nasty chemicals, no silicone or parabens, no colour or heavy scent – just a hint of the lavender oil and calming calendula. Unlike oily alternatives, it dries quickly and is easy to spread. I would highly recommend this sunscreen, and I am confident in its ability to protect against our harsh sun rays. Rating: 4 out of 5 stars – love the 99.6% Natural Ingredients and the large 150ml tube.

World Organic is also home to a beautiful range of cruelty-free make-up from The Organic Skin Co. (Note that only their Face and Eyes products are vegan.) In an eye shadow, I look for great colour, long lasting appeal and value for money. Luckily, this brand has all three!

I chose an amazing palette called ‘Twilight Star’ and would recommend this for your New Year’s Eve look. There are four gorgeous shimmer tones. ‘White Star’, an arctic white shade with luminous pigments, also great as a highlighter and base for building colour. I’m madly, deeply, in love with this shade. ‘Midnight’, the darkest in the set, has deep purple tones and is perfect for creating a smoky eye or adding dimension. ‘Solar’ provides an ultimate golden glow to complement your bronzed body this summer. And finally ‘Burnish’, an equally beautiful golden brown colour, darker for warmth; to suit green and brown eyes.

There are 6 palettes available, but you can also choose individual pots from their 18 pigmented shades.

5 out of 5 stars for consistent high quality, amazing colours and a luxurious feel.

Giveaway!
Enter to win by 31 January 2016 (or today, before you forget)

1. For River Veda Men’s Vital Moisturizer and Men’s Shaving Soap, email amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line “River Veda Mens” and your postal address.
2. For The Organic Skin Co. “Twilight” eye shadow palette email amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line “Twilight” and your postal address.

* Open to Vegan Society members only.
Eggs have traditionally been seen as an essential part of the human diet. Many health magazines and publications tout the benefits of eating eggs. In this edition of High Carb Health Talk, I delve into the scientific research completed on the consumption of eggs and provide you with a perspective on eggs and allow you to consider whether or not they aid our health.

Regarding cholesterol, diabetes and the way eggs are marketed, what does the science tell us?

**Eggs and Cholesterol**

Eggs are loaded with high levels of cholesterol. In fact, eating one egg will put you over the recommended daily intake for cholesterol.

Dietary cholesterol is not required as the human body is able to produce sufficient amounts through the body’s own metabolic processes. In fact, the Harvard Nurses’ Health Study found that the daily consumption of the amount of cholesterol found in a single egg appeared to reduce life expectancy in the same way as smoking 25,000 cigarettes. You can see a similar exponential increase in arterial plaque build-up for smokers and egg-eaters. This tells us that contrary to common belief, eggs are definitely not a heart-healthy food; the evidence indicates the opposite is true.

**Eggs and Diabetes**

In the Spring Edition of Vegan New Zealand magazine, I wrote about diabetes and how excess fat is the real cause. Since eggs have a high caloric percentage of fat (1 egg contains about 5 g of fat), do they affect diabetes risk? The answer is yes; researchers have found a stepwise increase in risk based on how many eggs people eat. Eating just a single egg a week appeared to double the risk, and one egg a day tripled it! Remember Type 2 diabetes is one of the leading causes of death and amputations, blindness and kidney failure. What happens if we eat eggs when we already have diabetes? Studies show eating one egg a day or more appears to shorten one’s lifespan and may double the risk of death for diabetics.

**Egg Marketing**

Eggs have long been marketed as healthy and full of necessary nutrients and protein. Dr. Michael Greger has a series of videos about eggs (nutritionfacts.org), and as a result of the Freedom of Information Act in the USA, we recently got to see what egg companies there are restricted from saying when using taxpayer dollars to market eggs. (Individual egg companies are allowed to say whatever they want if they are using their own funds.)

**Forbidden phrases**

Because of existing laws against false and misleading advertising, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) did not allow egg industry professionals to describe eggs or egg products as:

- **healthy, healthful or nutritious** - because eggs have high amounts of cholesterol (186 mg in a large egg), as well as high amounts of saturated fat, and therefore can contribute to the leading killer in the United States, heart disease
- **aiding in weight loss** – they can't be portrayed as a diet food because of the fat and cholesterol content, and they have nearly twice the calories allowed for the USDA low-calorie guidelines
- **“nutritional powerhouse”, “egg-ceptional nutrition”, “pack a nutritional wallop”, “have high nutritional content”, “contribute nutritionally” or containing “healthful components”** – see “healthy or nutritious” above

The message is clear. Even phrases like “Eggs are an important part of a well-balanced, healthy diet” would be considered misleading due to eggs’ fat and cholesterol. They can’t even refer to eggs as safe. “All references to safety must be removed,” because more than a hundred thousand Americans are poisoned with salmonella every year from eggs.

**What’s left?**

After those mighty efforts, advertising was finally approved for:

- “find true satisfaction”
- “can reduce hunger”
- “fresh”
- “affordable”

**How this advice affects vegans**

As we have seen, the reported health benefits of eggs that we may see are not justified. There is no valid reason to eat them. It is good to know that as a vegan, regardless of all the dogma circulating around society about eggs. We do not need them for our health; in fact, the opposite is true.

Ethically also, eating them goes against the values of veganism. In vegan circles, the question is regularly asked whether backyard eggs are ethical. Our non-vegan friends may tell us that they only eat free-range eggs. While these discussions may continue, eggs are definitely not nutritious, healthy or safe to eat. They increase our risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes, and for these reasons, should only be found under a hen and never on our plate.
Join The Vegan Society Today!

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 a vibrant, visible, and influential community, and by providing information and resources.

We offer individual and business memberships. Go to our webpage www.vegansociety.co.nz and choose Support Us to join today!

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In the interests of trees, we prefer not to print recipe books, but have made our cookbooks available online. Please go to www.frysvegetarian.co.nz to download yours.

Look for our green boxes in the frozen food section of leading retail outlets!