From the Editor

On the brink of summer and 2017, my volunteer tomato plant survivor through autumn/winter 2016 is now repotted and starting to grow.

Surviving in adverse conditions is on everyone’s mind now. Conflicts and disasters overseas are regular news, Christchurch has not yet fully recovered from the 2011 earthquake, and now the Kaikoura 7.8 magnitude earthquake, aftershocks, and severe storms have robbed many New Zealanders of their security. Many have been evacuated from their homes, cut off from water or power or their usual roads, or even stuck on those roads for many hours trying to get to safety.

It’s a popular theory than nonhuman animals can sense natural disasters beforehand, yet their suffering usually takes the backseat in disaster reporting. However, a stranded cow family on a land island surrounded by devastation drew international attention and eventually rescue for those cows. The fate of the popular Ohau Point seal colony is a hot topic. While the cow rescue allowed Peta Australia to plead for the cows’ future, the show of concern has been for animals with industrial human use, from farming to tourism.

We vegans have some advantages when modern conveniences fail, as our food can stay edible and safe for longer than animal-based foods. I hope in an upcoming issue to report some firsthand experiences of Kiwi vegans in the affected areas.

If you have a photo you would like to share with us, please send it with a brief description to editor@vegansociety.org.nz

Jessica Parsons
Our first vegan MP? 4
Growing Vegan Kids 6
Summer in Hectors Kitchen 9
Why New Zealand? 11
Vegan Artistry 14
Eating with Kindness 16
Governors Bay Review 17
The Quest for Vegan Kiwisaver 18
Jeff Masson Book Giveaway 19
Stop the Otago Animal Research Lab 20
Soulshine Review 21
The Christchurch Vegetarian Expo 2016 22
Christmas Beauty Picks for Summer 16/17 24
Invercargill 25
Dunedin Potluck 25

Cover photo: Freya by Lynda Bell - The Freedom godmother cares for the animals used for testing

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Our first vegan MP?
Shanti Ahluwalia

To the best of my knowledge, New Zealand has never had a vegan Member of Parliament. While former Green MP Nándor Tánczos was known to adopt the lifestyle at one point, he never did so during his nine years in Parliament. Elsewhere, Mojo Mathers does incredible work for animals, but she is not yet fully vegan either. Vegetarians are scattered throughout the political parties, but no one seems to be vegan.

Upon realising Parliament’s apparent lack of an outright vegan MP, I began asking around on the subject. No one knew of a vegan that was even running for Parliament. So naturally I’ve taken it upon myself to have a crack at entering Parliament as the very first vegan MP this country has seen.

Early years
My name means peace. It’s why you hear “Shanti” chanted in yoga halls. I’d like to think much of my time is spent championing benevolent causes like veganism, and it’s thus ironic I grew up in the place responsible for the atomic bomb, Los Alamos.

In spite of its chequered past, the remote New Mexico town remains a beautiful place. Located in the mountains, Los Alamos teems with wildlife. I spent my childhood chasing after lizards and snakes (which I now recognise was a cruel thing to do). Coyotes, bears, and mountain lions were also present, though rarely seen. I did not chase them.

I was fortunate enough to be raised vegetarian. This instilled in me a strong sense of morality from an early age, particularly in regard to animals. At sixteen I rejected this heritage and started eating meat. That lasted all of three months before I realised that I did not actually want animals to die for my meals.

Of course, every argument applicable to vegetarianism also applies to veganism. Over the next year or two, I wondered about where my milk came from. I tried to research it on the internet, but companies were not terribly keen to share that information. Back in 2003, this information was not as readily available.

Then, in my first year of university, I met my first vegan. Thinking if she can do it then I could too, I suddenly went vegan with no warning. My family and friends were convinced I could not make up my mind as to what to eat and wondered how long this phase would last. I think it is now safe to say it wasn’t a phase.

An activist at heart
I first came to New Zealand at age 20; Christchurch to be precise. I wanted to get involved with animal rights, so it is fortunate I arrived in the city where SAFE’s headquarters are located.

SAFE couldn’t get rid of me. I volunteered every day for months. This eventually led to employment, and I spent a total of eight years with the organisation. These were the most formative years of my life. I learned from some of the most talented people in the animal rights movement, like Hans Kriek. I benefited from decades of experience in just a few years.

Learning about campaigning and animal rights awakened an interest in politics. If we were seeking to get laws changed, I wanted to know more about how to make that happen.

Destined for politics
Shortly after joining SAFE, I wanted to study politics. Enrolling at the University of Canterbury in 2009, I began my degree in the field, realising that previous study elsewhere paled in comparison. Having a reason to study politics meant I took everything in. Practical campaign experience and rigorous tertiary study made for a potent combination.

My skills developed over the years, and I eventually became SAFE’s Policy Advisor. This meant I spent significant amounts of time engaging with government bodies and Parliament itself. I was fortunate enough to work with Green MP Mojo Mathers a great deal, and her insights were to prove invaluable across a personal understanding of affecting political change.

In 2014, the Green Party put out a call for applications to become a candidate. That was the first time I seriously considered running for Parliament. In the end, I decided not to. I knew that at the time I did not have all the skills I would need to succeed.

The next few years found me learning as much as I could. I continued to gain campaigning wisdom under the tutelage of Mandy Carter, SAFE’s current Head of Campaigns. I taught myself regulation law and consumer law, searching for further avenues in which to push change. I gained more media experience during this time, doing interviews regularly throughout and spending as much time as possible at Parliament itself.

In 2016, the Green Party again put out a call for applications to become a candidate. That was the first time I seriously considered running for Parliament. In the end, I decided not to. I knew that at the time I did not have all the skills I would need to succeed.

Standing up for veganism
I’ve spoken to a lot of knowledgeable people in preparing my campaign as an aspiring MP. These people all agree on one thing: that I ought to downplay the fact I’m vegan. Our community is subject
to much dissent as it is, and a vegan MP marks an easy target for anyone looking to take vegans down a notch. Though in the end, I decided to be ‘out’ about my diet and lifestyle.

My decision was partly strategic. Veganism is growing fast and becoming increasingly known to the mainstream, particularly among our young people. In a few years’ time, I may find myself well placed to capture all of those votes. In effect, I’ll be able to say I was vegan before it was cool.

The decision to be transparent about my lifestyle was partially about community too. Almost every vegan I know is hugely disillusioned with politics. They’ve given up. I want to remind the community that together we can make change.

Yet another factor was the desire to promote veganism. While it would be disingenuous to use my position with the Green Party to promote veganism, the mere fact I’m vegan will function as promotion in itself.

But ultimately, it came down to what kind of politician I want to be. Politicians must be pragmatic and must compromise. But all too often this means giving in too easily. Making too many compromises means losing that vision of a better world, and pandering instead to the status quo. At the end of the day, I’d rather fail because I stood too close to my values than because every I stood too far from them.

Serving our community
There are so many reasons for vegans to be involved in politics. I hear so many complaints from parents about schools failing to cater to the needs of their kids. Doctors have incredibly poor information on vegan nutrition, particularly around newborns. These are simple things that are easy to fix, but someone needs to get in there and do it.

So let’s get to it!
Contact Shanti and keep up with his campaign progress via:
Admin@shanti.org.nz
Facebook.com/ShantiNZ
Twitter.com/ShantiAhlu

Raspberry Ice-Pops

Perfect for those warm summer days, these ice-pops will refresh you. The flavour combination of raspberry and chocolate is divine! It works with other berries too!

Please note: The chocolate ingredients make enough chocolate to drizzle one side of each ice pop.

For approx. 10 ice-pops you’ll need:
- 2 cups (approx. 200 g) raspberries
- 1 cup (140 g) dates, pitted
- 1/2 cup (70 g) soaked cashews (for a nut-free version omit the cashews and use plant-based milk instead of water)
- 1 1/2 cup (375 ml) water

For the chocolate:
- 40 g cacao butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon and 1 teaspoon finely ground coconut sugar
- 2 tablespoon FAIR-TRADE cacao or cocoa powder
- cacao nibs if desired

Instructions:
1. Blend all ingredients for the ice pops in a high speed blender until smooth, but add the greens towards the end.

2. Pour into ice pop molds, place lid on top, insert ice-pop sticks and place in freezer until set.

3. Once ice pops are frozen, take them out of the molds and place in freezer.

4. Prepare the chocolate drizzle by mixing all ingredients in a cup that has been placed in a bowl with hot water. Stir well until dissolved.

5. Take ice pops out of freezer, drizzle with chocolate (using a teaspoon), sprinkle with cacao nibs if desired. Please note: the sauce will be enough to cover one side of each ice-pop. If you wish to cover both sides better double the amount.

6. Place in container in freezer or serve immediately.

This and other recipes can be found on Jana’s recipe blog theveganmonster.com
My heart went out to that poor child in Italy who was hospitalised for struggling to get by on next to no food. As a parent I feel terrible when hearing about cases of child neglect and abuse. The vegan diet was certainly not to blame; his parents were clearly starving him and feeding him strangely. I certainly don’t know any parents who would behave like that, vegan or otherwise. Every vegan parent I know ensures their children receive an abundance of sensible, healthy food and importantly, plenty of nourishing breast milk when they are infants.

My vegan journey
I’ve been vegan for 15 years and was vegetarian for 25 years prior to that. I’m vegan for ethical reasons primarily, though I’m reassured my choices also have a lower impact on the environment and am happy to know that my family and I are also receiving incredible health benefits. All my life I’ve been concerned about cruelty towards animals, but I hadn’t given much thought to what lay behind my consumption of eggs and milk. When I learnt the true cost to animals for the milk I’d been drinking and the eggs I’d been eating, I didn’t feel being vegetarian was enough anymore. I felt I’d been betraying animals all that time and causing them just as much harm and cruelty as if I’d been eating them. I found it too disturbing to ignore. Calves are dispatched to the meat works to prevent them coming between our appetite for their mother’s milk. That felt perverse when I examined it, and it certainly doesn’t sit well now that I’m a mother. And eggs? I felt appalled that for every free-range hen that produced eggs, there was a male counterpart, who was put through a mincing machine just after hatching! That just wasn’t right for me anymore.

My son and veganism
My son has been vegan since birth. I’ve always known a fair amount about food, nutrition and cooking, so I didn’t need much more expert assurance to know that our diet contained everything we would need. I did a bit of research online and from books just to be sure. I knew the same nutrients exist in the plant world, and it only requires a bit of imagination to find the equivalents. When he was a baby, I fed my child breast milk primarily, before introducing solid foods. These included: avocado, mashed fruit and vegetables, refined cereals with soaked dates and other dried fruit for iron; mashed tofu and red lentils for calcium and protein; tahini and peanut sauce, pasta, crackers, almond milk, soy yoghurt, a little flax seed oil. I sought high calorie, high nutrition, low fibre foods until he could eat more of the whole foods that we were eating.

Now that he’s nine, he’s eating pizza, pasta, burgers, macaroni cheese, lentil soup, tofu, falafels, sushi, vegan sausages, chips, hummus, curry, lots of veggies and fruit, porridge, muesli, peanut butter sandwiches, nuts, dried fruit and the list goes on.

Barriers
I can’t think of any health issues he’s ever had besides chicken pox and colds. He’s very healthy and super tall. We supplement with B12 because it is absent in plants. You can easily find it in fortified foods like plant milks and marmite, but I happen to not like those brands and it’s no
biggie for us to use a few drops under the tongue.

It’s hard in a social sense, given I’m not raising my child the way I was raised. I’m breaking from tradition and so only have my peers and common sense to guide me. My family support our lifestyle and many of them have since adopted it themselves for health and ethical reasons. When my son Rata, was young we did have to self-cater quite a bit. I always put a bit of thought into ensuring his diet was providing everything he required, sometimes checking a vegan nutrition chart to be sure we had covered all the food groups over the day.

Sometimes friends and family don’t understand, and may serve him eggs and cheese in a meal because that is vegetarian. Strangers are generally curious and their attitude can sometimes come across as judgmental and critical. They often can’t imagine what it is we eat. I can generally win people over by cooking for them and showing them the variety and great taste of what we eat!

**Child’s eye view**

He’s pretty blasé about food most of the time and doesn’t focus that much on it. He is proud of taking a stand against cruelty and relates well to vegan role models in music and film. Lollies however, can be his undoing, as well as cakes when other kids are eating them. At his age, he’d rather eat the cake than check if it’s vegan. I leave this kind of thing up to him to choose as it can be a tough area for kids, and we can’t always be pushing uphill. At home it’s strictly vegan, which is the majority of his food intake. I know vegan kids who are very good at self-monitoring and adhere very well to being vegan everywhere they go. I think personality plays a part. I know he would never eat meat, but he probably finds the cruelty of eggs and cheese less obvious right now.

I know he would never want to try meat, but on rare occasion he has eaten some eggs and cheese when they have been prepared for him outside the home.

**Message for aspiring vegan parents**

Veganism is a lifestyle choice that is definitely on the rise. More and more places are catering to people who are seeking to eat tasty, exciting plant-based meals. A vegan diet is healthy for us all and this is backed up by the ADA, who say that "well-planned vegan and other types of vegetarian diets are appropriate for all stages of the life-cycle including during pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence". (American Dietetic Association (2003) www.bit.ly/29FihLF)
Hectors Restaurant - The first hotel restaurant in New Zealand to be approved by the New Zealand Vegetarian Society.

Heritage Auckland
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WWW.HERITAGEHOTELS.CO.NZ/HECTORS
Summer is here with an abundance of fruits, vegetables and edible flowers. Rich in flavour this time of year, the ingredients are ripe in their prime, needing only the final steps of preparation for a perfect presentation.

To source the early picks of summer, look for bargains in vegetable stores and at farmers’ markets, since they provide better buys than supermarkets. Or even better, grow your own.

So what is available in summer? Simply an endless list of crisp salads, flavoursome herbs, sweet ripe tomatoes, capscicums, eggplants, courgettes, beans and sweet corn. Berries are at their peak during these months, full of healthful antioxidants.

Summer is the time for barbecuing, with charred vegetables a divine addition to any outdoor fry-up since they have a natural sweetness. Eggplant, onions and bell peppers are just a few examples of succulent veggies worth their place on the hob.

I’ve prepared a series of dishes that can either be eaten course-wise or on their own. The recipes are gluten-free, vegan and nut-free, while enough to satisfy a table of four.

Please feel free to use the following as a guide and adapt the recipes to your own needs.

Roast beetroot & watermelon salad
A crunchy salad combining sweet and earthy flavours, including textural elements from the puffed amaranth and a minty freshness contrasting with the sour taste of the onion pickle.

Ingredients
• 2 whole beetroots, medium size
• 1 watermelon quarter
• 1 tbsp amaranth seeds
• Mint leaves
• 2 oranges, juiced
• 1 tbsp cider vinegar
• 5 tbsp oil (extra virgin olive oil)
• Sea salt

For Pickling
• 4 Pickling onions
• 2 tbsp sugar
• 1 cup White vinegar
• 1 tsp salt
• Half cup beetroot juice

Instructions
If you prefer a raw version, then julienne (grate into thin strips) the beetroot instead of step 1 below.

1. Foil wrap the beetroot individually and roast in the oven at 160°C for about 45 minutes. Insert a skewer to check if done. Peel and dice once warm.
2. Dice watermelon and remove seeds.
3. To pickle the onions, remove the individual leaves of each onion. Boil sugar, white vinegar and salt before pouring over the onions. Let them cool down overnight, and the next day, this will be a pickle. Add diced or juiced beetroot in the pickling liquor to ‘stain’ the onion with the signature beetroot colour.
4. To prepare the dressing, heat and reduce the orange juice to about half, then let it cool down. Once reduced, add olive oil slowly and whisk, introducing salt and cider vinegar as needed. This dressing is great when used at room temperature.
5. Heat a sauté pan at medium temperature and add the amaranth seeds. Stir the seeds over the heat until the amaranth pops. Add salt. Use a coarse sieve to separate out the unpopped seeds.
6. To assemble the salad, toss the watermelon and diced beetroot together before adding mint, the pickled onions, and the dressing. Add salt to taste. Place on a plate and arrange the shaved cucumber on or around it. Finally, garnish with the popped amaranth.
Chickpea waffle with grilled mushroom & coconut yoghurt

This is a brunch take on the savoury waffle using fine chickpea flour such as Besan (found locally at Indian food stores). If you don’t have a waffle iron, this recipe can be pan fried. At Hectors, we add flavourings like herbs and spices to the batter for a richer flavour. Gluten-free and light on the stomach, this waffle goes very well with avocado or cauliflower puree. The balsamic glaze and dehydrated watermelon lend sweetness to the dish.

Ingredients
• 180 gm chickpea flour
• 1 bottle (330 ml) soda water
• Sea salt
• 1 tsp baking soda
• 1 tsp lime juice
• 4 watermelon slices, half cm
• 16 Portobello mushrooms
• 1 tbsp thyme, chopped
• 1 tsp soy sauce tamari (gluten-free)
• Sea salt
• 1 handful of sprouts
• Olives, green

150 ml coconut yoghurt
Salad leaves
Balsamic reduction

Instructions
1. Slice the watermelon, removing the seeds before dehydrating at 41°C overnight, creating intensely sweet ‘dehydrated watermelon. If you don’t have a dehydrator, then simply leave at low heat for 3 hours.
2. For the chickpea batter, begin by mixing flour, soda water, sea salt, baking soda and lime juice. Whisk thoroughly until lumps disappear.
3. Pour one small ladle into preheated waffle iron. Do not overfill however as the waffle mix will pour out as it heats.
4. Dice the Portobello mushrooms and sauté into the pan, adding sea salt and thyme. Remove from the pan once crisp and sprinkle tamari soy sauce on top.
5. Serve the waffle with grilled mushrooms, sprouts, dehydrated watermelon, balsamic reduction and a side of coconut yoghurt.

Rice pudding with rosemary marinated oranges

Rosemary and vanilla work well, although it is an unusual combination. Remember to use only fresh rosemary when marinating the oranges. Marination takes just five minutes, so be sure to avoid lengthy marination over a series of hours – doing so results in bitterness. The sweetness of rosemary is best when used fresh. Likewise, be sure to sample the oranges ahead of use as this dessert relies on their sweetness too.

You can replace oranges if needed with grilled peaches or apricot, while fresh passionfruit and mangosteens also work well. A berry salad is also a good substitute, though I would use mint instead of rosemary with berries.

Ingredients
• 100 gm Calaspara rice or sushi rice
• 1 L coconut milk
• 1 vanilla bean, scraped
• 50 gm coconut sugar or NatVia crystals
• 3 oranges
• ½ tsp rosemary, finely chopped

Instructions
1. Take a saucepan and mix the rice with 900 ml of coconut milk, then bring to a slow simmer while mixing occasionally to turn the grains and distribute heat evenly.
2. Once the liquid is absorbed, add in scraped vanilla beans and coconut sugar, then mix well and remove from heat.
3. Let the mix return to room temperature before adding the rest of the coconut milk, mixing well.
4. The rice pudding is ready (can be served hot or cold).
5. Segment the oranges and mix with rosemary. Serve with the rice pudding.

Heritage Auckland offers vegan menu options from breakfast, lunch and dinner. www.heritagehotels.co.nz/hotels/heritage-auckland/dining/hectors-restaurant
Tyranny of distance

At the time they said it was the world’s longest flight of just under seventeen non-stop hours.

After a few feeble attempts at getting some proper shuteye, paired with less-than-stellar in-flight meal options and about four movies later — piercing through the darkness, point-blank from the back of the headrest in front of me — I’d finally landed in one of my top destinations in the world: New Zealand.

Stepping out into Auckland’s cool September air, I felt invigorated and immediately at home. There was a sense of calmness as I scanned the arrivals terminal for signs to public transit into the city.

Sitting deliriously happy and utterly tired on the red-clad SkyBus, my eyes open only briefly enough to focus on a blue and red Australian flag waving in the spring breeze, I closed my eyes slowly and took a deep breath in. Love. “I’m in love with this place already,” I thought.

Winning world travels

As the bus hummed along, I recalled the last few months in reverse order: A day in Dubai, a week in Dublin, Amsterdarn, Cologne, five weeks in Berlin, the Czech Republic, Poznan, Athens, and Istanbul. My three months of sponsored travel through Vegan Travel, the very reason I was able to get to New Zealand at all, was nearing its end!

Back in April I’d entered an around-the-world contest on the Vegan Travel website (vegantravel.com). Happily, I’d come in second place, which meant I won three months’ worth of financial support in exchange for creating vegan-centric video and written content for VeganTravel. “Is this really my life?” I asked myself.

New Zealand would mark the close of my formal sponsorship as part of that contest, but would aid in the continuation of my self-guided travels. These had already taken me through all 50 of the United States, some of Canada, and back across the US on a sponsored book tour, the whole of which spanned nearly five years now.

Lifestyle changes

You see, in 2011 — after a bit of research, uncertainty, and inspiration from people who were “really making it happen” in their lives — I decided to quit my nine-to-five job, got rid of almost all my stuff, hosted a crowd-funding campaign to raise money, bought a cargo van (revamped with the help of my dad and a friend), and set out with the goal of eating at every single vegan restaurant in the US. The project, ‘Will Travel for Vegan Food’, was born.

What I thought would take one year (and then I’d go back to my “real life”) turned into a complete lifestyle upheaval, the development of love found in nomadism and minimalism, and a journey that continues to this day.

Now, having arrived in New Zealand, I was more ready than ever to explore what I’d only ever heard was the most beautiful and welcoming country in the world.

Exploring Vegan New Zealand

After spending three weeks in New Zealand, split among Auckland, Tauranga/ Mt Maunganui, and a road trip from Christchurch back to Auckland, I had the pleasure of dining at the following vegan and vegan-friendly eateries:

Auckland: Raw breakfasts and the fully-vegan lobby coffee bar at Hector’s Restaurant; crispy rice-topped, chocolate shell-covered chocolate chip ice cream from Giapo Ice Cream; late night vegan pizza from Il Buco; filling and colorful vegan hash at Kokako Organic Coffee; passionfruit cheesecake from Little Bird Unbakery; hearty mushroom burger at Revel café; all the sweets ever at Tart Bakery; unique grocery and clothing items from The Vegan

Why New Zealand?

Kristin Lajeunesse

[Ed note: We warmly welcomed Kristin to New Zealand on the final leg of her worldwide vegan food tour. Kristin drew New Zealand media attention to veganism, in particular with her heartfelt video response during her interisland ferry trip, when she hoped to record beautiful scenery and instead discovered sheep in a stock truck for transit. Kristin has kindly written about some of her New Zealand experiences for Vegan New Zealand.]
Shop; raw takeaway delights from Well + Good; and fantastic, filling tofu scrambles, cheesecakes, and lattes at Wise Cicada.

Mount Maunganui: The combustion tofu meal at Burger Fuel; mushroom onion tart and soy flat white from Grindz Café; colorful stacks of veggies at Mount Social Club; amazing smoothies and coffee from Vitality Organics; crazy pies at The Pizza Library Co.; and the most beautiful breakfast pancakes I've ever laid my eyes on from Wild One Whole Foods Eatery.

Christchurch: Beat Street Café had some vegan sausage rolls and great coffee; the loaded vegan nachos (off menu, so you gotta ask) at C1 Espresso were fantastic; I enjoyed a delicious dosa at The Lotus-Heart; and some of the best pizza I've had in a while, at Tutto Bene.

New Brighton: The company and kindness of the head chef, and her partner, at Antidote Juice Bar; and colourful, filling fresh veggie plates from BearLion Foods.

Wellington: The buddha bowl at Southern Cross Garden Bar; and the vegan breakfast platter from Fidel's Café.

Greytown: A road trip from the bottom to the top of the North Island wouldn't be completely without stopping at James Cameron's family-owned Food Forest Organics (menu rotates daily with the fresh veggies they've sourced from their family garden).

Taupo: Raw Balance has got some essential and hard-to-find grocery items as well as some snacks and freshly pressed juices.

Hamilton: Dough Bros' incredible vegan pies and unexpectedly awesome desserts (hello vegan affogato) were spot-on; and the vegan brunch option at Punnet couldn’t be in a better setting (strawberry patch!).

Amid all the food inhalation, I had the joy of visiting with one of the volunteers and a couple of the rescued calves from the Starfish Bobby Calf Project; attending the Vegan Vibes festival in Tauranga; hiking The Mount; trying No3 healthcare products; eating heaps of Zespri kiwifruit; renting one of those ‘car relocation’ camper vans for just $5 a day; walking along the Ohau Waterfall just north of Kaikoura to see the baby seal pups; taking the ferry from Picton to Wellington; checking out Bridal Veil Falls; swimming in the Wai-O-Tapu hot springs; visiting the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) sanctuary; and enjoying some homemade mac ‘n’ cheese featuring locally-owned Angel Food vegan cheeses.

It was a jam-packed few weeks to say the least!

Veganism in New Zealand

Despite a clear unease from the country's animal agriculture businesses (that story is for another time), I believe 100 percent that New Zealand is moving toward being a more vegan-conscious and eco-friendly country.

From what I understand, there have been two vegan festivals so far, the vegan communities (like the Auckland Vegans Facebook group) are high-vibing with great energy and supportive dialogue, and everyone I have met who is vegan or a part of the movement in some way was so incredibly kind.

I have no doubt that veganism and compassionate living will continue to grow, in both awareness and in practice, within New Zealand. As the world continues to understand how detrimental animal agriculture is to the planet, a country that prides itself on being eco-conscious and clean will surely heed the calls of our suffering earth.

Stay strong, New Zealand vegans. Things are indeed shifting and it is because of you.

Check out all of Kristin's travels at wtfveganfood.com
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My background
I was born in Nelson and mostly raised in Christchurch. I have lived in many places around New Zealand and lived in Australia, USA and England as an adult but returned a year and a half ago to Christchurch with my family. My family consists of my husband (also a vegan and an artist when he has time!) and two children: Kalika is 13 and Toby is 12. Both children were brought up as vegetarians and have been introduced to the vegan diet and ethics behind it, after my husband and I became vegan. We also have a dog named Poppy, and a cat (Lily), 2 rabbits (Miku and Freda) and a guinea pig (Gustav).

I have wanted to be an artist since I can remember. My goal as a young child (kindergarten age) was to create children's books, and this is still a goal of mine. Art and writing were my favourite things at school, but when I left school I decided to train to be a teacher as I loved children and wanted to help people. I taught primary school for three years in Auckland, and my last primary teaching job was as a performing arts teacher. My hunger for art was too strong, though, so I moved to Wellington and studied art at the Learning Connexion. Since then I have studied a lot...I have an Honours diploma in art and creativity, a diploma of painting, diploma of arts and media, a graduate diploma of Early childhood education, a Bachelor of Visual Art and a Masters of Arts in Arts Therapy.

When I became vegan
As a child I grew up surrounded by animals. My mother rescued many stray cats and dogs and we also had a duck, chickens, mice, birds, fish, guinea pigs, rabbits, and, when I was very small, even a sheep. Even though I was brought up eating meat, I was taught to love and care for animals so I never felt good about eating them. I remember making an association as a child between my chicken dinner and my pet hens in the back yard. I didn't like that. So as a teen I made a decision to be vegetarian. At this time (early 90s), I knew nobody else who was vegetarian and the term 'vegan' was unknown to me. In my 20s I decided to cut out dairy after I read that it was unhealthy for human consumption, but I did not become fully aware of the cruelty involved with dairy and eggs until about four years ago, and that was thanks to Facebook and an article I read in the NZ Vegetarian Society magazine. I was sitting in a vegetarian café, and I read a short article about how/why a man became vegan. It really resonated with me when he wrote (something like): 'How would we feel if an alien race came down to earth, put us in fenced areas and cages, killed off most of the males, impregnated the women, stole their babies and their eggs and milked them daily and then killed them when they weren't useful anymore.' I became vegan that day and haven't looked back. I regret that I didn't become vegan much sooner.

Veganism in my art
My art has always been colourful and happy. I don't enjoy seeing negative images and I don't enjoy creating them. I hope that through positive imagery I can inspire love towards all animals and encourage reflection. For many years, my art has been purely intuitive storytelling, and in many ways it still is. But in the last few years I have become stronger in my vegan/animal-rights belief system, and a stronger theme of animal rights and paintings has emerged that I hope will inspire people to love and protect animals. In art school and in art therapy training, I was fascinated by how embedded animals are in our lives, especially as children: they are characters in stories and movies; they are pictures on clothing and represented in soft toys. I looked at the hypocrisy of parents teaching children to be kind and compassionate and to love their pets and at the same
time, serving up meat for their meals. This research and thought process fuelled a lot of my artwork. My first solo exhibition was called 'The Heroes Tea-Party' where I painted and illustrated visual reflections about animals as heroes and people as animal-heroes.

I became very inspired to create more vegan-inspired artwork when I joined The Art of Compassion group, which is a group of international vegan artists. So far the group has put out vegan calendars and vegan dining-out cards and has taken part in exhibitions in Europe. A book is being put together in the near future that will feature artists and their artwork. All money raised from all of these ventures goes to vegan/animal rights organisations. I have been inspired and humbled by the talented and motivated humans who create art to make people think about how animals are treated.

**Art reaching people**

I feel like the first painting I created that gained the most attention from people and inspired others was 'The Protector' – this was shared all over the world on social media, and I still see the image of it pop up on people's profile pictures on Facebook. The Protector is like an earth Goddess who protects and nurtures the vulnerable animals of the earth – the hunted, the eaten, the tested-on. It seemed that many vegans related to this image because they feel that they are the protectors of animals, and I had messages from people saying that my art was inspiring them to 'go vegan'. This is the ultimate compliment and makes me feel that I am on the right path. Finally, my art has real meaning, and I am so motivated to keep creating in this theme.

My latest series has gotten similar reactions – it describes my journey to veganism in relation to common themes within well-known fairy tales. This series, like all my paintings, is painted in bold colours with lots of activity and has a happy undercurrent. I hope that viewers from all different backgrounds and belief systems will look at it and feel some kind of inspiration, even if it is only a tiny seed that is planted for future germination.

**Plans for the future**

I have one more exhibition to paint for this year (at Selwyn Gallery in November), but after that I plan to concentrate on illustrating my own stories, which I hope a publisher will accept. I want to inspire young people to care for animals and to make positive changes in the world, and I hope to do this through picture books aimed at all age groups.

I also hope that one day I'll be asked to exhibit in galleries in the North Island, Australia and in other countries where my art has gained the most attention, such as the USA. When my art is providing enough money for me and my family, I can then use it more to help sanctuaries and worthy animal organisations. I have donated art and prints to many places, but I would like to be in a financial position to do even more in the near future.

**Art makes a difference**

I feel that anyone who is interested in using their creative skills to help animals and to educate people about animal rights should definitely do so. People respond to visual imagery emotionally, intellectually and subconsciously. It can sometimes say more than words and can affect people in many ways. We are at a time on Earth where veganism is growing and becoming stronger, but we may feel that we are on a battlefield. Creating art with a message is one of the ways we can face this battle and become part of the change we want to see. I ultimately want people to look at my art and feel happy - I want it to encourage thought and to facilitate joy. When people feel good, they feel inspired. Every viewer is capable of making a change, and every human has a conscience and the ability to know the difference between right and wrong. All hope is not lost for this world, even though it can sometimes feel like it. Humanity is waking up, and I am just one of the millions of people helping to make that happen.

www.facebook.com/lyndabellart
Eating with Kindness
New Starter Guide to Veganism

Krysta Neve, Campaigns Assistant, SAFE

The recipes are. This is the result we are looking for – we know how amazing vegan food is, but it can be so hard to get people to try it.

One of my good friends made a meal for her partner recently, and he literally went through it searching for meat, then refused to eat it when he realised it was a vegetarian meal. The thought patterns can be crazy sometimes, but we are aiming to change that and inspire others to change their thinking, expand their palates and have some compassion for the animals and the planet.

Spread the word!
If you know someone who is interested in living a more compassionate lifestyle but needs a nudge in the right direction, then jump online and order a free guide to pass on or encourage them to do so for themselves. If they want to take some action, get them to sign up to our challenge so we can fill their inbox with inspiring reasons to go and stay vegan. We can also provide bulk orders of the guide, upon request.

Order
Visit SAFE’s website to order a free copy of our guide and encourage your non-veg friends to sign up to our challenge at www.goveg.org.nz

We’re so excited to introduce SAFE’s new FREE ‘100% Vegetarian Starter Guide’, alongside a 6-week challenge to help compassionate New Zealanders throughout their journey to a kinder lifestyle.

This is a new overhaul of SAFE’s current vegan campaign. The new materials are bold, bright and beautiful, appealing to a wide audience. Our programme is designed to answer the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of veganism, make New Zealanders more aware of what they are consuming and what industries they are supporting, and ultimately guide them to reduce and cut animal products from their diet for the sake of animals, the environment and health.

Inside the guide
The guide is the perfect ‘how to’ tool for those considering a kinder way of eating and is great for vegans to give to others who are interested in and have questions about a plant-based diet. It is full of delicious and easy-to-cook-recipes, inspiring animal rescue stories and nutritional information to get people started on their new journey.

The guide says ‘100% Vegetarian’ but it is, in fact, entirely vegan and promotes a plant-based diet. It was a controversial move that was backed up by extensive research to make sure that we get the best outcome for the animals. Research shows that the guide is far more likely to be picked up with the wording ‘vegetarian’.

I found it easy to stick to being vegan once I made the decision for ethical reasons. However, the guide is not aimed at those already vegan; it is aimed at those interested in trying, or currently transitioning to, a vegetarian or vegan diet. This makes it super important to get the guide into the right hands to make the biggest positive change for the animals.

Results
So far we have had huge success with both our guide and our challenge. I hear from people every week about how great the guide is and how delicious and easy the recipes are. This is the result we are looking for – we know how amazing vegan food is, but it can be so hard to get people to try it.

One of my good friends made a meal for her partner recently, and he literally went through it searching for meat, then refused to eat it when he realised it was a vegetarian meal. The thought patterns can be crazy sometimes, but we are aiming to change that and inspire others to change their thinking, expand their palates and have some compassion for the animals and the planet.

Governors Bay Review

Eve Wingerath

As a vegan who doesn’t drive, when I told my friends that I was moving to Christchurch, New Zealand from London, I was asked (repeatedly) two things: “What will you eat?”, “Isn’t New Zealand the land of lamb and pavlova?” and “how will you get anywhere without a car?” I confess that their second question has proven to be apposite, and I’m often reliant on the (luckily infinite) kindness of others. However, my friends’ first concern that I’d starve to death, is happily unfounded. Christchurch, I’m finding, is something of a vegan haven.

In a bid to meet new people in a foreign city, I joined the Vegetarian Society’s Vegan Dining Group and it was through this that I enjoyed an exquisite meal at Governors Bay Hotel last weekend. When the initial email was sent out, I did what non-drivers always do and Googled how to get there by public transport. However, part of Governor’s Bay charm is its remoteness and it seemed that without walking for around three hours from Lyttleton Harbour, it would be impossible for me to get there. For a sad moment I thought, ‘I’ll have to give this one a miss’. But when I read the menu attached
to the email I was determined – if I had to walk for three hours and take a loan out for a taxi back, then I would (as it happened I was offered a lift by one of the infinitely kind Cantabrians, but I digress).

For the first course, we were offered a choice between roasted pumpkin and kumara soup, Vietnamese rice paper rolls, roasted stuffed pepper with vegan cheese and carpaccio of beetroot with vegan feta. Quite the choice, no? But I'm a sucker for the light crunch of a salad roll. What arrived were three perfectly formed and colourful rolls with a side of dipping sauce. I couldn't fault their presentation or the freshness of the ingredients – they tasted like summer on an autumn evening and the sauce was tangy, salty and just sweet enough. Although personally, I'd have liked a little more chilli and I'd always go for a peanut sauce if given the choice, they were thoroughly enjoyable and a lovely introduction to the meal.

The second course was even more difficult to make a choice about: roast pumpkin risotto, frijatas with a range of fillings, vegan pizza with fresh veggies, cheese and cashews or spaghetti made from shredded vegetables, with a garlic, coconut and mushroom sauce. Now, I've always been a cynic about vegetables that purport to be pasta. Don't get me wrong, I'm a vegan – of course I love vegetables, but I always worry that vegetables masquerading as spaghetti won't be quite as satisfying as my favourite starchy staple. As such, I nearly opted for risotto (and those that did had nothing but praise for it, so I can only assume it was delicious), but I was intrigued by the unusual flavours in the spaghetti sauce, so putting my scepticism aside, I went for it. Reader, you may rest assured, I had no regrets (except not knowing how to recreate the dish myself). The mushrooms were cooked to juicy perfection and the flavours in the sauce complimented them wonderfully. As for the rainbow coloured pasta? I loved it and my cynicism about things which sound too virtuous to taste good was cured. It was the ideal receptacle for what was quite a heavy and creamy sauce. The dish was light but incredibly filling, with sharp flavours and just the right amount of bite. I recommend this dish highly.

However, for me, from the moment I read the menu on my smartphone, the main event was dessert. Usually I can take or leave dessert, especially when as a vegan the choices are often fruit salad or yet another sorbet. But when the options offered are baked jaffa cheesecake; coconut panna cotta; or a vegan cheeseboard ... you can see why I would have walked 3 hours for this meal. For this course, it was a no-brainer: I wanted the cheesecake. Now I've had and made, a lot of cheesecake in my life – both vegan and (years ago) non-vegan, both raw and baked, and in most flavours. I'm something of a fanatic. I thought, when I left London, I'd said goodbye to the best vegan cheesecake known to man, sold in a famous raw restaurant in Camden. It turns out I was wrong. Round, smooth, topped with raspberry sorbet and decorated by popping candy, the jaffa cheesecake tasted as heavenly as it looked (and just look at it!) Made with nuts, it was rich, heavy, and most importantly, very chocolatey. The chocolate and orange were perfectly balanced, while the lighter, tarter flavours in the sorbet complimented it beautifully and the praline and popping candy base added a layer of texture which made for the most unique and delicious cheesecake I've ever had. As far as I'm concerned the chef deserves the award for services to veganism, currently held by the discoverer of aquafaba.

Governors Bay Hotel has a regular vegan menu, with main courses averaging at around $30. And if my experience is anything to go by and you'd like some of the tastiest and most inventive vegan food Christchurch has to offer, I suggest you get yourself there by whatever means necessary.

Governors Bay Hotel (only a 20 minute drive from Christchurch)
11am-9pm daily (except Christmas)
52 Main Road, Governors Bay, Lyttelton, 8971
+(643) 3299 433
info@governorsbayhotel.co.nz
The Quest for Vegan Kiwisaver
Rewi Stirrat

“If you’re asking me whether there is a gap in the market for this sort of option then yes, there probably is. But there are two very important influencing factors that decide whether the gap is filled: demand and viability.”

So says a Wellington financial planner, in effect summing up ethical fund management in two sentences. Indeed, demand is unsurprisingly a key player. When it was revealed that most Kiwisaver portfolios have investments in certain weapons and tobacco manufacturing companies excluded by the NZ super fund’s Responsible Investment Framework, finance minister Paul Goldsmith pointed out that it is ultimately up to individual investors to decide where their money is going. In other words, it is not the law that controls ethical investments, it is demand.

The legal case
Legally, he may have a point. The NZ super fund is Government-run and subject to its guardian mandate. The investment framework within this mandate is based around some legal precedent, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the New Zealand Nuclear Free Act requiring that New Zealanders do not “aid, abet or procure any person to manufacture, acquire, possess or have control over any nuclear explosive device”. Perhaps less convincingly, the 2008 Dublin Convention on Cluster Munitions clearly bans the use of cluster munitions by Government forces, and (depending on the way you read it) possibly prohibits government investments in companies that produce such munitions by requiring signatories not to “assist, encourage or endure anyone to engage in any activity prohibited” under the convention. The case against tobacco is even less clear and is built upon examples of public health policies and distaste for the business practises of the tobacco industry.

Even with the relatively strong case against investments in nuclear explosive devices, the super fund is quick to point out that the Ministry of Defence and Air New Zealand purchase arms and aircraft from companies with nuclear weapons programmes, with the justification that the aerospace and defence industries are dominated by “a few key players” and that it may be “technically or commercially infeasible to exclude these players”. Indeed, the strongest factor in any of these cases may simply be the guardians’ mandate to “avoid prejudice to New Zealand’s reputation as a responsible member of the world community”.

The thin moral line
Given that Kiwisaver funds are not managed by the government and do not manage government funds, the case that any of the practises of these portfolios has been illegal is paper thin. Prime Minister John Key asserted that different Kiwisaver managers will set their moral "demarcation line" at different points and that it was up to the individual to invest where they see fit. Mr Goldsmith echoed these thoughts in arguing that New Zealanders “have a choice about which scheme to join and can find out what their scheme invests in”. Once again, it is demand that influences ethical investment in a liberal economy, with law having little say.

Vegan principles
Unlike many social movements, veganism is unhindered by such home truths. Proponents utilise democratic power alongside environmental, public health and animal rights activists in attempts to shape the law, but the core tenet in simply exercising the right not to consume animal products is unrelent upon the will of lawmakers.

Which leads me to the point of the article: as far as I can tell, there is not a single diversified share-based Kiwisaver plan that does not directly invest in animal agriculture. As of now, the best option for vegans is to have their portfolios in fixed interest assets such as cash and bonds. However, anyone in the finance sector will point out the futility of this move; cash investments are always reinvested in order to make money and – particularly in New Zealand – a large proportion of these reinvestments will go towards animal agriculture as farmers take loans and mortgages. Indeed, any money you have in the bank is likely contributing to the ability of banks to invest in animal agriculture (and probably tobacco, cluster munitions and nuclear arms manufacture).

At this point, most people would be tempted to give up – if our money in the bank is part of the problem, why should we bother? However, most vegans are acutely familiar with the logical fallacy of the appeal to futility and are quick to dismiss it; just because we cannot change some things doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t bother changing the things that we can.

The vegan option?
The consumer choice for vegans appears to be not to have a Kiwisaver. However, once an individual’s money is in Kiwisaver, the only way to withdraw it before retirement is by buying a first home – and even then one can only withdraw a limited amount. Moreover, the impending retirement of a large chunk of the population coupled with the unlikelihood of governments raising the retirement age make this position untenable for all but the wealthiest of vegans. Alongside this, the employer and government contributions and tax benefits of Kiwisaver have meant that few financial planners advise their clients not to be in the scheme.

Portfolio managers will point out perceived difficulties in creating vegan funds. For a start, many funds are reinvested in managed funds around the world that will directly invest in companies
involved in animal agriculture. Of the few that do outright list their direct share investments, there is usually a proportion of the fund invested in fixed interest, leading to more of the aforementioned transparency problems. There is one notable exception that provides an example for vegans from a somewhat unlikely source.

**Islamic example**

Amanah NZ Kiwisaver portfolio is under strict Islamic Investment Principles applying Shari’ah law. The predictable list of banned investments includes pork, alcohol, pornography and nightclub activities. However, most pertinent to vegans is the prohibition of riba - "an excess", or in modern terms, interest. This means that the fund has to invest directly into companies rather than bonds and cash options, and indeed the website has an exact outline of the small - below 50 - number of companies that the portfolio invests in. This strict set of rules has forced the fund to sidestep the transparency issues of every other Kiwisaver fund on the market. In the modern financial world, this is about as close as it knowing exactly where your money goes.

Are these companies vegan? No, many of them are not. There are various biotechnology companies and a certain poultry and egg company quite high up on the list. However, many of them are or could be. Companies from the tech industry, cleaning product industry, property, tourism etc. Most industries are of course perfectly compatible with veganism. Despite the perceived difficulty, it is quite possible to draft a list of vegan-compatible companies to invest in. Indeed, most vegan investments are in fact quite unrestrictive – pornography isn't off the table, nor alcohol, nor nightclubs!

**Barriers**

There are problems with this model. For a start, fixed interest assets bring stability and security to managed funds. When talking about retirement savings, volatility is a legitimate cause for concern for most people. Moreover, very few floated companies would be vegan in the strictest sense – for example, a tech company may be vegan in theory but may cater omnivorous food in its canteen. There would probably need to be some level of flexibility when assessing companies in the name of diversifying and stabilising the fund. It's also pertinent to acknowledge that vegans themselves occupy a diverse range of ethical frequencies - some people will not be comfortable with certain types of investments such as the aforementioned alcohol.

In my opinion, compromise is not failure. A vegan Kiwisaver option is viable. Now we must supply the demand!

Revi Stirrat has an MSc in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Auckland.

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**Jeff Masson’s Great Book Giveaway!**

The Vegan Society continues to share in this bounty of great books that Jeff Masson donated to us. One lucky winner will get Jeff Masson’s copy of Being Vegan by Joanne Stepaniak. The author presents the definitive primer on an often misunderstood life choice. Fielding questions from friends and foes, she describes how compassion, kindness, and mercy to animals can be integrated into everyday life.

"Joanne Stepaniak has long been one of the freshest voices on the social challenges, large and small, that arise for vegetarians and vegans." -- John Robbins, Author of Diet for a New America.

Thanks again to Jeff!

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**GIVEAWAY!**

Enter to win by 31 January 2017 (or today, before you forget)

For Being Vegan email amanda@vegansociety.co.nz with the subject line “Being Vegan book” and your postal address.

Open to Vegan Society members only.
Back in June, 2016 the University of Otago announced that they are going to build a new $50 million animal laboratory. They believe that this new facility will help advance research in areas such as cancer and diabetes research.

NZAVS are strongly opposed to this plan and believe that this claim isn’t true - that in fact animal-based research is not the best method to further advance human health. We have been building a campaign to stop the Otago Animal Lab since their announcement.

Instead we think that the University of Otago, and New Zealand science, would be much better advanced by the $50 million being spent to develop a new facility embracing human-based research methods. Otago should be investing in the best 21st-century technology available rather than entrenching the failed and outdated reliance on animal models. We want the University to make a decision to move away from animal based research instead of solidifying it for another 50 years.

Under protest
On Saturday 13th of August NZAVS organised their first protest in Dunedin against the new lab.

We joined together outside where the new lab is being built in Dunedin because we know that there are better, more relevant and reliable research methods that we should be investing in. We were also there to represent the thousands of animals that the University plan on using, torturing and killing in the new lab once it is built.

Last year alone the University of Otago used over 13,000 animals for research, testing and teaching. Over 11,000 of these animals were killed during or after experiments. We are in a point in time where we can look back at thirty and forty years worth of research into such medical fields as diabetes and cancer research. We can see that using animals for this kind of research hasn’t been working.

Our supporters held signs with photographs of nine different types of animals; these represented the different animals that the University of Otago used for research, testing and teaching in 2015. On one side the photo was of a happy, free animal, and on the other side was a photo of the same type of animal being experimented on or dissected. We did this to symbolise what these different types of animals will have to go through in the new facility once it is built.

Results!
We had over 100 people attend the protest, and this sent a powerful message to the University. They know that there is opposition, and they know that we aren’t going anywhere. The success of the protest helped spread awareness around this new facility and how outdated and backwards the University of Otago’s plans are.

It led to another meeting between the University of Otago deputy vice-chancellor and NZAVS. Tara Jackson, Campaign Manager, New Zealand Anti-Vivisection Society
Soulshine Review  
Yolanda Soryl

Situated in gorgeous Browns Bay over the bridge in Auckland’s North Shore, the food on offer at Soulshine is well worth the journey out of the city. It is not a vegetarian café, yet I found it had far more options for me as a vegan than many NZ vegetarian eateries I have visited.

I ordered at the counter and asked the very helpful server what was suitable for me as a vegan. The menu is on the wall, and all vegan options are clearly marked. The server must own the business because she told me her daughter was egg and dairy intolerant and so she really wanted Soulshine to be a place where vegans and others on special diets could come and have a wide range of choices. I applaud her in this as Soulshine has so many vegan options, and they were much more interesting than the usual vegan options offered elsewhere. In fact it was a bit hard to choose because there were 5-6 vegan mains and I really wanted the pancakes, but the quesadilla looked amazing too!

What to choose? I eventually settled on the corn cakes ($16). This was a brilliant choice as they were just so tasty. They were served with avocado, vegan cheese, veggies and the yummiest salsa. My dining companions had the vegan quesadilla (again served with vegan cheese and veggies) and bagels and were also very happy. We ordered a bowl of wedges to share, and these came with a dish of that delicious salsa which was scoffed quickly.

I was too full to order from the range of smoothies and salads, but I did treat myself to one of the many raw vegan sweet treats on offer. I chose the nectarine cheesecake ($6.50) which looked and tasted lovely.

After that I didn't eat again for the rest of the day as the food was very filling. We strolled down a block to the sea and enjoyed the especially beautiful beach.

I travel and eat out a lot in New Zealand, and Soulshine is definitely going on my list of ‘must eat’ places when I come to Auckland. I loved it.

Soulshine
3 Inverness Rd, Browns Bay, Auckland,
(09) 479 7070
Open Tue-Sat 7:30am-4:00pm
The Christchurch Vegetarian Expo 2016

Sophie van Hamelsveld and Courtney Gurney-Meehan

Wow! What a way to celebrate World Vegetarian Day and World Animal Day. With delicious food, a fantastic atmosphere, informative demonstrations and motivational seminars, Christchurch’s vegetarian community delivered on an otherwise wet Canterbury weekend.

With a huge turnout, the city’s cozy CPIT venue was buzzing with the Expo’s positive energy on Sunday, September 25. People from all walks of life were brought together for a day of conscious feasting, learning and networking, all with the knowledge that no animals had been harmed for the occasion.

Food
Where to begin? From vegan pastries and fresh juices to decadent raw treats, the sheer variety of stalls proved a perfect match for the discerning. A meeting of the county’s finest, emerging food start-ups from as far afield as Auckland helped comprise a dazzling lineup of unique exhibitors across various tastes, dietary requirements and eating philosophies.

Much to the delight of those first attracted by images of plant-based goodness on Instagram from many of the exhibitors, the chance to sample their treats couldn’t have come soon enough. Even better, proceeds are being donated to Cat Rescue.

There was certainly something to suit everyone’s tastes, preferences and dietary requirements. It was especially wonderful chatting to local business owners about their upcoming plans, with the folks at Antidote Café and Juice Bar more than happy to service my next visit to New Brighton.

Learning more
Just when it seemed impossible to eat any more, the fun continued. Other stalls included a glistening array of indulgent handmade beauty products, with educational displays on everything.

22
from sauerkraut fermentation to spiritual wellbeing another welcome addition to the day. Unsurprisingly, local and national animal rights organisations were posted at the event, with SAFE, NZAVS and, of course, hometown favourite The Christchurch Vegetarian Centre. It was inspiring to see so many volunteers out in force, educating the public throughout the long busy day on the message of the Expo.

After finishing our lunch of an authentic and absolutely delicious Thai green curry, no time was wasted in catching a cooking demonstration on how to make vegetarian sausages, complete with sampling at the end. It was great to see people so keen during this cookery demonstration, learning how to integrate the easy and healthy meat alternatives into their cooking repertoire meant the event had lasting value. These demonstrations took place throughout the day and were the perfect stage for local talents to show off their skills and mouth-watering recipes to excited viewers.

Success
This year’s Christchurch Vegetarian Expo was a treat for all five senses. As vegetarian and vegan diets enjoy a surge in popularity across New Zealand, Christchurch’s yearly event looks set to follow suit. On an otherwise perfect day, my only regret is that I never returned for another sample of that rocky road slice - a pleasant problem to have. Above all, I’m sure that visitors emerged from the Expo with an increased feeling of assurance and understanding of their lifestyle choices, or, at the very least, with an awareness that choosing to omit animal products from their diet and lifestyle is not only easy but also delicious and completely satisfying. How long is it until next year’s Expo?

Photo credit Lisa Powers http://www.lisapowersphotography.nz/
If you’re planning to travel and spend time on the road this Christmas, then I highly recommend the Oasis Sun SPF30+ Face & Body Sunscreen. Available in a small travel size, medium tube or large family pump size so it’s perfect for keeping the family protected from our harsh NZ sun, leaving you more time to focus on making memories and less time worrying about sunburn. RRP starts from $14.90 and it’s available in store or online from www.thecrueltyfreeshop.co.nz

Longer days and hotter nights have finally arrived! I’m getting excited for some great outdoor BBQs (with lots of Fry’s plant-based sausages, of course). Luckily Eco Tan have this wonderfully natural, vegan self-tanning creme. Their Invisible Tan is long lasting and streak free, for that perfect bronzed goddess look. RRP $39.99 available from selected pharmacies and health stores.

Did you know that Kmart stocks some wonderful vegan goodies? Looking through the beauty aisle, I found this e.l.f Shimmering Facial Whip and thought it would be the perfect stocking filler! Use on the apple of your cheeks as a highlighter or light up the Christmas party by using this cream on your shoulders and décolletage. Shop e.l.f cosmetics at Kmart stores nationwide. Prices start from $3 or buy online from www.beautybliss.co.nz

Designer Brands have launched an amazing series called ‘Perfection Collection’ featuring 4 amazing make-up tins for Christmas. Shown here is their FACE palette which features 3 eye shadows, 2 brow shadows, one stunning highlighter and a blush / contour shade. It also includes a flat blush brush, one angled brush and a blending shadow brush. All brushes are synthetic with no animal hairs. Grab this tin now for only $19.99 from selected pharmacies in NZ.

Going away for Christmas or New Year’s can be stressful -but not when you pack smart! Sukin makes pampering easy with their Super Greens Detoxifying Clay Masque. Packed into a great travel size tin, with easy unscrew lid, this is your new favourite product. Use twice-weekly to remove toxins and help clear your skin. Don’t have time to go to the spa? No need to when you have this green beauty travel tin. RRP $24.99 and available from Farmers or selected pharmacies.

Struggling for gift ideas? Head on over to the Bonbon Vegan online store. They have Gifts for Him including shaving and grooming sets and Gifts for Her so she’ll feel pampered and pretty. You’ll even find a gift for your teenage niece who is impossible to buy for! With Christmas, also comes stress, but never fear because Bonbon have 4 blends of their Aromatherapy Inhalers to choose from. Currently I am using their Calm & Comfort Inhaler, which smells fresh and sweet. You can choose blends to kick cravings or others to keep you perky and awake; the perfect stocking filler and great for travel. RRP $9.99 available online www.bonbonvegan.com

If you’re looking for gifts for your friends and family, check out the stunning range of Naked Makeup products. They are cruelty-free and vegan, and look amazing too! For that perfect bronzed goddess look, grab a tube of Eco Tan’s Invisible Tan creme. RRP $39.99 available from selected pharmacies and health stores.

Did you know that Kmart stocks some wonderful vegan goodies? Looking through the beauty aisle, I found this e.l.f Shimmering Facial Whip and thought it would be the perfect stocking filler! Use on the apple of your cheeks as a highlighter or light up the Christmas party by using this cream on your shoulders and décolletage. Shop e.l.f cosmetics at Kmart stores nationwide. Prices start from $3 or buy online from www.beautybliss.co.nz

Designer Brands have launched an amazing series called ‘Perfection Collection’ featuring 4 amazing make-up tins for Christmas. Shown here is their FACE palette which features 3 eye shadows, 2 brow shadows, one stunning highlighter and a blush / contour shade. It also includes a flat blush brush, one angled brush and a blending shadow brush. All brushes are synthetic with no animal hairs. Grab this tin now for only $19.99 from selected pharmacies in NZ.

Going away for Christmas or New Year’s can be stressful -but not when you pack smart! Sukin makes pampering easy with their Super Greens Detoxifying Clay Masque. Packed into a great travel size tin, with easy unscrew lid, this is your new favourite product. Use twice-weekly to remove toxins and help clear your skin. Don’t have time to go to the spa? No need to when you have this green beauty travel tin. RRP $24.99 and available from Farmers or selected pharmacies.

Struggling for gift ideas? Head on over to the Bonbon Vegan online store. They have Gifts for Him including shaving and grooming sets and Gifts for Her so she’ll feel pampered and pretty. You’ll even find a gift for your teenage niece who is impossible to buy for! With Christmas, also comes stress, but never fear because Bonbon have 4 blends of their Aromatherapy Inhalers to choose from. Currently I am using their Calm & Comfort Inhaler, which smells fresh and sweet. You can choose blends to kick cravings or others to keep you perky and awake; the perfect stocking filler and great for travel. RRP $9.99 available online www.bonbonvegan.com
Planning your kiss under the mistletoe? Pucker up and make sure your lips look amazing with this bright orange shade from **Jeffree Star Cosmetics**. This hot colour **Flame Thrower** - will stun everyone showing them just how smoking you are this summer. Won’t rub or come off when eating or drinking so it’s perfect for your end of year Christmas Party. Soft and creamy to apply, this velour liquid lipstick dries matte for an amazing finish. RRP $36.00 and available online only from [www.beautybliss.co.nz](http://www.beautybliss.co.nz)

Maybe your perfect Christmas gift is a tattoo? If so, you’ll love the **LUSH Ultrabalm** with moisturising organic jojoba oil. Perfect for tattoo aftercare or scrapes and bumps and general lip care. Keep in your backpack for easy first aid, this small travel tin is wonderful for summer camping trips. RRP $11.90 available at LUSH stores nationwide or online at [nz.lush.com](http://nz.lush.com)

You’ve danced the night away in the hot summer’s sun and then you crawl into bed, only to realise you’ve left your makeup on. Reach for the **SANTE Eye Make-up Remover** for easy removal of stubborn eyeliner and waterproof mascara. I like the gentle feel and subtle scent. It’s effective and easy to use. Just swipe across the top of eyelids with a round cotton pad to get less panda eyes and more sleeping beauty. RRP $19.90 available in store or online from [www.thecrueltyfreeshop.co.nz](http://www.thecrueltyfreeshop.co.nz)

Go on... Treat yourself. You’ve earned it and what better way to celebrate than buy checking out the newest vegan makeup range to come to New Zealand. **OFRA** has high end makeup that shimmers and shines. Their **Beverly Hills Highlighter** is the perfect compact to have in your purse this New Year’s Eve. Celebrate in style with 5 amazing shades to highlight your cheek bones, under eyebrows, nose, cupid’s bow and décolletage. Shine bright like a diamond! RRP $69 available online from [www.impulsebeautynz.com](http://www.impulsebeautynz.com)

**HURRAW!** Balms have been a favourite of mine for many years, and recently I was given their **Sun Protection Balm** to try. With SPF 15, it goes on smooth, lasts well and protects from harmful sun rays. Why not try some of their other flavours like Vanilla Bean, Mint, Grapefruit or Liquorice? Ask Santa for the entire collection and try them all. Great little stocking filler, perfect for children and adults. RRP $7.50 available in store or online from [www.thecrueltyfreeshop.co.nz](http://www.thecrueltyfreeshop.co.nz)

Georgette Jackson is dedicated to blogging about cruelty free and vegan beauty products. Her Facebook page **DEBELMA’s DELIGHTS** features recipes, giveaways, stockist info and the latest reviews of vegan cosmetics. She is also the ambassador for the **SAFE - Cruelty Free Shopper APP**.
Invercargill

Jordan Wyatt

The latter days of 2016 proved fruitful for Invercargill Vegan Society (INVSOC) members. Pre-Trumpian-implosion, things were on a roll, and despite the shocking US elections, veganism has so far proved unstoppable in the south. Animal rights are coming, by hook or by orange-stained crook.

World Vegan Day

Posters plus free vegan cheese on pizza plus World Vegan Day awards to local vegan friendly businesses at the world’s southernmost vegan dinner! The streets of Invers were overtaken by giant green slabs of vegan signage: “Kindness, Respect, Compassion, Justice, Equality, Happiness, Altruism, Honesty, Passion. Help Animals, Go Vegan”.

The southern vegan community reached out to helpful businesses too, with Z getting an award for “The Vegan Pie”, and Pak n Save for carrying vegan afghans with sustainable palm oil. Brian, the manager of the most vegan-friendly bakery in the land, Colonial Bakery, had previously starred as a front page cover boy regarding the spread of animal rights in Invercargill. “Veganism grows in Southland”; community paper The Eye highlighted the increased demand for animal-friendly products. We were glad to give the Colonial crew a World Vegan Day award for their wonderful service.

New to the South Island, BurgerFuel Invercargill received a special thanks for their full vegan menu - and the staff were all too happy to pose for our World Vegan Day video!

Check out the Invercargill Vegan Society’s slick World Vegan Day video online, invsoc.org.nz/wvd2016

Queenstown Community Eco Fair

Combining forces with Sea Shepherd, INVSOC ran a vegan BBQ. Arriving soon after the launch of the Farmwatch dairy cruelty exposé, we were inundated with demands for tasty, animal friendly snacks. From American Hotdogs to the full on pineapple packing Works Burger, we had a veritable army of volunteers serving up animal rights by the coconut-oil-fried serviette.

A big thank you to Vegetarian Delights for helping with the Fry’s vegan range. We couldn’t have done it without you! With over a hundred Queenstownians satiated, we had a great response to veganism, the concept that animals are our friends.

Check out the Invercargill Vegan Society’s Queenstown Community Eco Fair video online, invsoc.org.nz/queenstowneco

Dunedin Potluck

Carl Scott

On Sunday 9 October, a new record was set at ‘The Apartment’ in Dowling Street, Dunedin, for the Dunedin potluck with almost 40 people attending! This potluck is a joint meetup of the Dunedin/Otepoti Vegan Society (DOVeS) and the Veganism and Animal Rights Society (VARS) Otago University groups.

Of course there was loads of amazing food, and fun. We even had some wonderful live entertainment provided by Darren Stowe on his acoustic guitar.

The aim of these gatherings is to enjoy delicious vegan food with like-minded people in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Everyone is welcome at our potlucks: vegans and non-vegans alike. Children are most welcome too. So please feel free to invite your friends and family.

To find out when the next potluck is happening, (and more), join the DOVeS email list here: www.dovesnz.weebly.com/contact.html
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.org.nz and choose Join to sign up today!

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www.vegetarianchristchurch.org.nz/events-tauwhainga/vegan-camp

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