

...the vegetarian-issues magazine



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The VivaVine is a publication of the **VivaVeggie Society**, New York City's premier vegetarian-outreach organization.

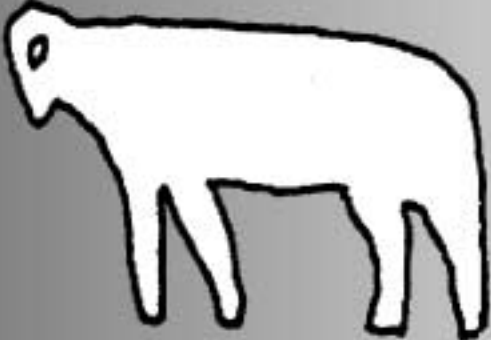


**The veg/
animal-rights
answer to
red-meat
gourmands**
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Grazing the issue

Pages 5, 10, and 13



VEGETARIAN CENTER PROGRAMS

All events are at 121 East 27th Street, Suite 704. Where appropriate, participants may bring dinner with them. **Information: 646-424-9595.**

Lecture series (6:30 P.M.)

Thurs., Apr. 26 & May 24: **Government giveaways to the meat industry: A primer** (Pamela Rice)

An introduction to the dozens of tax breaks and subsidies the government hands over to the meat industry. Suggested donation: \$3.

Seminar (6:30 P.M.)

Tues., May 8: **Workshop for wannabe vegetarian-issue journalists**

Learn about the inverted pyramid, copy style, the importance of proper grammar, and the who, what, where, and why of covering our issues. Suggested donation: \$3.

SUNDAY SOIREEES

at VivaVeggie's Veggie Center
Light snacks • BYO beverage

Admission fee: One newspaper/magazine article on a vegetarian issue. **Bring** your favorite music CDs and potluck dish, or make a donation to the Vegetarian Center.

Apr. 22, and May 27
6:30 P.M.

Rap 'n' Wrap (6:30 P.M.)

Tues., Apr. 17, & May 15: **A time for vegetarians to shoot the breeze and sort things out from our own perspective**

Everyone's talking about mad-cow disease, even meat eaters: What about this? Why are ranchers getting subsidies when there's no government money to fund the Endangered Species Act? Where can I get a vegan meal in Timbuktu? Suggested donation: \$3.

Workshop

By appointment: **Getting started with your new veggie diet**

What do you eat, now that you've decided to go vegetarian? Browse our files and take some literature. View videos that will have you saying, "Aha!" Donations appreciated.

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

First we want to congratulate you on your hard-won victory in November. We look forward to you becoming a voice for progressive policies for New York State and the country. That said, we respectfully submit the following key policy initiatives on behalf of the approximately 18 million self-proclaimed vegetarians in the United States today, not to mention the tens of millions of environmentalists and animal advocates, many of whom share a belief in these initiatives.

FIRST, we ask that you work to eliminate conflicts of interest inherent in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. On the one hand, the department serves to promote the consumption of American agricultural products; on the other, it is charged with formulating dietary guidelines, protecting American consumers from unsafe food, and enforcing the Animal Welfare Act.

SECOND, we hope that you will work to end subsidies to animal agriculture in their many forms:

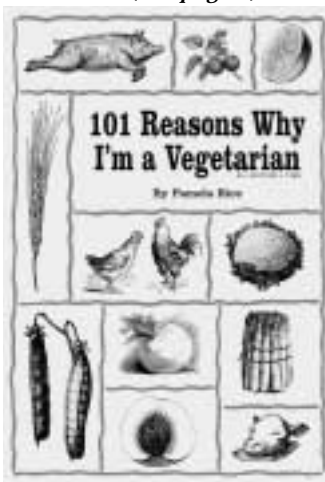
- **OVERT PAYOUTS.** Livestock farm-

ers receive payments from the U.S. Treasury to make up for low prices; dairy farmers in particular are given price floors; and livestock farmers, who should have their own insurance, are regularly given disaster relief. Animal agriculture also has benefited by the complete overhaul of farm policy that was put into effect in 1996, either through direct payments or through cheap grain from its suppliers who receive payments. *(See page 7 for further commentary.)*

- **HIDDEN PAYOUTS.** Operating expenses such as research and development, environmental cleanup, and meat and poultry inspection are simply provided for by the government. Regarding inspection, the industry should pay user fees to the government for the privilege of this oversight. In addition, publicly funded buildings, mostly for research, are built to benefit animal agriculture. New York City is looking to finance a new Fulton Fish Market. Given the ecological and ethical problems inherent in fishing, the government should back out.

Obtain VivaVeggie's guide to either New York City or New Jersey, free! Simply send an SASE to our post-office box (see page 4), and indicate which

guide you would like us to send.



Stop 'em in their tracks with VivaVeggie's "mighty convincer."

"101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian," our popular itemized booklet documenting the ills of meat and the virtues of veggies (by Pamela Rice), is available in single copies and in bulk. An order form appears on page 15.



<http://www.vivavegie.org>

Start thinking eco-vegetarian

• **FREE RIDE.** The meat industry is granted the ludicrous privilege of essentially being exempt from laws that other industries have to abide by—in particular, the Animal Welfare Act, the Clean Water Act, and even the Clean Air Act.

Given the dubious-at-best health benefits of animal-derived foods—including cows' milk—it behooves any reasonably progressive government to phase out economic breaks to the industries that produce them. We needn't remind you that cutting subsidies to agriculture in general is a great way to foster good relations with our trading partners as well.

The best way to get people to eat more healthfully is to make unhealthy foods such as meat more expensive. Regardless, animal agriculture needs to pass its costs of production on to its customers, not to the taxpayers as a whole. Just one example of how to make this industry pay its own way would be to place the strictest controls on *confined animal feeding operations* (CAFOs) and make sure that the controls are enforced. As a larger goal, we would like to see the elimination of CAFOs altogether, as they are not only bad for the environment but also bad for workers who suffer respiratory problems; for people in general, because they are incubators of antibiotic-resistant bacteria; and for the animals themselves, because the CAFOs rob them of any semblance of a natural life.

We also expect you to take a leadership role in fol-

lowing the enlightened and humane policies that have been adopted by the European Union to ban the veal crate, as well as the farrowing stall for hogs and the battery cage for hens. As you are no doubt well aware, these implements of today's factory farming turn sentient beings into food production units, allowing the animals virtually no living space or ability to express natural behaviors or experience the natural environment. As the number of animals raised for food in the United States each year has soared to 10 billion, this issue demands attention on the grounds of animal welfare, human health, workers' rights, and ecology.

THIRD, given that one-fifth of American teenage girls, according to *Vegetarian Times*, describe themselves as vegetarians and that the American Dietetic Association and American Medical Association

have endorsed vegetarian diets as healthful and nutritionally sound, we hope you will work to make sure that every school in New York State provides at least one vegetarian option at every meal. We would be pleased if you promoted vegetarian options in schools at the national level, too.

In addition, given the epidemic levels of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and certain types of cancer—all of which have been linked to a diet high in animal fats, low in fiber, and depleted of important nutri-

Continued on page 15

The Vegetarian Center's survival is suspended in the balance. Support is needed.

Thank you, **David Sielaff**, of Seattle, Washington. Your double-matching of donations to the VivaVegie Society in 2000 made all the difference to us. In fact, your matching program literally allowed the survival of our Vegetarian Center. (See pages 2 and 6.)

At the moment we are without a matching fund, but we encourage anyone to take up where our previous benefactors have left off. Our expenses never stop: rent, telephone, printing, postage, electricity. These are the big outlays, but the smaller expenditures, such as our annual post-office-box fee, photocopies, stationery supplies, book purchases, and *VivaVine* distribution, also add up fast.



David Sielaff at Stonehenge

Let us know if you would like to sponsor a matching fund yourself. If this is not possible, please be generous with your contributions. Who knows? By the time you read this, there may be a matching fund in place. Please feel free to contact us and find out! Contributions not in exchange for merchandise are tax-deductible.

Send checks made out to VivaVegie Society, P.O.

Box 294, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012.

VivaVegie Society • 646-424-9595

Five-Boro Bike Tour w/VVS

SUNDAY, MAY 5

Join VivaVegie as a team in this 45-mile free ride (no cars) through New York City. Do it with 20,000 other cyclists. We'll have a banner. Call 646-424-9595 before April 10 to be with us, and we'll all have a blast!



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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- **David Sielaff • NALITH**

JOIN VivaVegie

To become a member of the VivaVegie Society for one year, send \$15 to the above address. Membership entitles you to a membership card, five issues of *The VivaVine*, and a copy of "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian."

Make Our Day: Give us questions

I'm thinking of going vegan

I would like to obtain a hard copy of your "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian." I first saw the document on your Web site and was thrilled. I have been a lacto-ovo vegetarian for 15 years and am thinking of going vegan. Your literature will be helpful, as I'm sure I'll be bombarded with questions about why I would do such a thing! I'm sure you can relate.

Laura Messer

Milan, Michigan

Editor's note: Actually, sometimes I wish people would ask more questions. Too often the problem is that people don't want to know.

That's a lot of reasons!

We can think of 101 reasons why we appreciate the VivaVegie Society and all the work you do to promote a compassionate diet and lifestyle.

Joe Connelly (Editor),

Colleen Holland (Advertising)

*Veg-News: North America's
Only Vegetarian Newspaper*
Santa Cruz, California

Your "101" helped my side of a debate

I have a running debate with some people—I'm on the pro side of vegetarianism. Your "101 Reasons" helped a lot, especially the ethical information about farm animals.

Melissa

Tempe, Arizona

Attack on Mac market share

Several issues of *The VivaVine* ago, it was noted that McDonald's planned to add 150 of its restaurants to the New York City area over a short period of time. I believe we need an equally sizable proliferation of vegetarian and vegan restaurants. I have developed a surefire concept and a plan to do just that. I will start here in Oregon and then duplicate my efforts in all 50 states. You watch!

Craig Cline

Salem, Oregon

Vegetarian hunger relief on the Lower East Side

I've been a volunteer at Hare Krishna Food Relief since last summer. They're a great group. They are trying to establish a Nutrition Education Center, which will not only serve vegetarian meals to the hungry and homeless but also teach low-income people how to cook vegetarian dishes.

We primarily provide meals in Tompkins Square Park in Manhattan's Lower East Side. Despite the apparent gentrification of the neighborhood, the Lower East Side is not entirely affluent. In fact, because of skyrocketing rents, many residents find themselves having less and less disposable income for food.

Please let people know about us.

Patricia Graeme

Hare Krishna Food Relief*, New York:
212-674-0698

* Not part of or allied with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

VVS volunteer profile:

Rob Dolecki



Rob Dolecki, of Bloomfield, New Jersey, loves VivaVegie's vegan guide to New York City but thought there needed to be one for New Jersey, darn it! He utilized the Vegetarian Center and typed up the many New Jersey entries he found, each of which was double-checked with his phone call. See page 2 for how to obtain your copy.

Our Federal Public Lands: For ranchers or wildlife?

BY MIKE HUDAK, Ph.D.

Cattle, whose wild ancestors evolved in moist river valleys of the Middle East, were brought to the arid American Southwest in the early 1600s and to the remainder of the West around 1850. Today approximately 70 percent of our 11 Western states is grazed by livestock, and one-third the area of those states—roughly 243 million acres—is federal public land leased to ranchers.

That this landscape is particularly unsuited to cattle can be surmised from research showing that large herds of large native herbivores had not grazed west of the Rocky Mountain front range for the past 10,000 years—since the time of a cooler and moister climate. Lacking intense grazing pressure, western flora have not evolved defenses against this threat. Consequently, livestock grazing, and more generally “livestock production,” has become a major factor in species endangerment. Combined with fences, water developments, forage manipulation, and the killing of predators and competitors of livestock, grazing has made livestock production the single most

destructive activity on our public lands when viewed in terms of species endangerment. Of plant and wildlife species listed as *threatened* or *endangered*, or proposed for listing, livestock production impacts 22 percent of them—nearly as many as logging and mining combined.

Even among wildlife species not yet in danger of extinction, many populations have plummeted because of habitat degradation caused by livestock production. Bighorn sheep now exist at 1 percent of their population prior to the introduction of livestock, and the sage grouse, extirpated from five states, has been declining for 20 years in nearly all remaining states within its range.

Then there are the wildlife species the livestock industry really dislikes.

“Wildlife Services,” the U.S. government’s killing program, annually shoots, traps, or poisons on behalf of ranchers roughly 300 mountain lions, 300 black bears, 650 badgers, 1,800 bobcats, 5,500 foxes, and 82,000 coyotes. The organization has so aggressively targeted the prairie dog that its population is down 98 percent from 100 years ago. That all this is done at



Woodruff Allotment stock pond, Dip Hollow, Cache National Forest, Utah.



Anthill Well stock trough, Castle Creek Allotment (BLM), Idaho.

Photos © by Mike Hudak

taxpayer expense is testimony to the strength of the livestock industry’s political clout.

Who holds federal grazing permits? Federal land forage is controlled by a relatively small number of large operators. The largest 24.4 percent of ranchers holding Forest Service permits control 79 percent of the forage. On lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the concentration of power is even greater, with only 10.6 percent of permit holders controlling 66.1 percent of the forage. Some of these large “ranchers” are actually corporations not commonly associated with beef: Anheuser-Busch, Sinclair Oil, Hunt Oil, and Hilton Hotels.

The other end of the permit holder spectrum is dominated by small

ranchers, many of whom are waging a losing battle to remain economically viable. Although many are abandoning ranching, their grazing permits are often not retired but consolidated into the holdings of corporate ranchers.

Federal taxes subsidize ranchers. In 1998, the U.S. Forest Service and BLM together spent \$94 million more on their grazing programs than they collected in ranchers’ fees. Wildlife Services added another \$14.6 million, according to *The San Jose Mercury News*.

Other investigators claim that total subsidies are much larger. Focusing on public lands managed just by the BLM, Robert Nelson, a researcher at the University of Maryland, has estimated the annual management cost at \$200 million, only \$20 million of which is collected from ranchers in grazing fees. Taxpayer subsidies on all federal public lands may reach \$500 million annually when water subsidies, supplemental feeding programs, and mitigation of environmental damage are accounted for, according to a 1995 study by Karl Hess and Johanna Wald.

Economic benefits of ranching on federal public lands? In the 11 Western states, ranching on federal public lands provides fewer than 18,000 jobs (0.06 percent of the regional total), 0.04 percent of the income, and a minuscule 2 percent of the nation’s beef supply.

Where to learn more:

- *Waste of the West*, by Lynn Jacobs.
- *The Western Range Revisited*, by Debra L. Donahue.
- RangeBiome: www.rangebiome.org.
- The RangeTree listserve: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RangeTree>.
- Mike Hudak: <http://rangenet.org/directory/hudakm>.

Mike Hudak is the director of Public Lands Without Livestock, a Project of SEE Inc.

Methylmercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, organochlorine pesticides, polybrominated diphenyl ethers: *Bon appétit!*

Meals of fish that are high on the food chain should be kept to a minimum if you're pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or nursing. Young children should also avoid these meals, according to an advisory issued by the

Food and Drug Administration in mid-January. Specifically, shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish are particularly dangerous, it said.

The advisory was especially slow to arrive. Back in July, a dire report issued by the National Academy of Sciences estimated that methylmercury-contaminated seafood may be causing neurological problems in as many as 60,000 children born each year. And this was not the first time that the NAS had sounded a warning. In 1991 it said that govern-

ment standards for the contaminant were too weak. Even now, consumer groups lament that the FDA did not include fresh tuna, used in sushi or served as tuna steak, as part of its warning.

Along with this alert, the FDA reiterated its claim that seafood is a natural, low-fat source of protein. It said shellfish, canned fish, and farm-raised fish are safe, as long as the noted species were avoided.

The FDA's green light on farmed fish was particularly interesting in view of the fact that just a little over a week prior to its advisory a news release issued by the Suzuki Foundation, of Canada, reported startling scientific evidence that potentially dangerous levels of toxic chemicals are contained in the feed given to farmed salmon in Canada and Scotland. Though U.S. fish were not mentioned, the discrepancies that the studies revealed were substantial, and Canada is a bit too close for comfort.

The release cited research showing that the farmed fish sampled contained much higher levels of pollutants than wild fish, including ten times as many polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Other contaminants found in higher proportions in the farmed fish included organochlorine pesticides and polybrominated diphenyl ethers. The researchers theorized that as the concentration of protein in feed goes up, so does the concentration of contaminants. Feed for farmed fish is formulated with higher concentrations of protein to speed growth.

The contaminants reportedly tend to cause learning disabilities, especially in children. They also weaken the human immune system, increasing susceptibility to everything from colds to cancer.

**Coral reef report:
27 percent destroyed**

An international environmental monitoring organization declared in mid-December that it estimates 27 percent of the world's coral reefs have been permanently lost.

Destructive fishing practices,

VivaVegie's Vegetarian Center of NYC

- hosts lectures, video screenings, workshops, and discussion groups
- offers a referral service for restaurants, stores, vegan products, and vegetarian organizations
- functions as a meeting place for groups
- serves as a drop-in space for passers-by to pick up a restaurant guide, pro-vegetarian literature for leafletting, and other vegetarian information
- houses a notebook of menus from local veggie restaurants
- offers pro-vegetarian T-shirts and lapel buttons
- houses an archive of books, pamphlets, magazines, and cataloged news reports for students and journalists to use in research
- is a place to get involved with vegetarian advocacy
- is a place for visitors to speak one on one with a real, live vegetarian!

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such as the use of dynamite and cyanide, were named as threats to reefs. But the biggest threats, according to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, are global warming and climate change. Other threats include water pollution and sediment from coastal development, according to a story posted on the CNN Web site in December. The report warned that if nothing is done, 60 percent of the world's reefs could be gone by 2030.

Genetic pollution: Farmed fish escape their pens

All it took was one nor'easter to dislodge a battery of coastal pens crammed with salmon. One hundred thousand fish with genetic characteristics suited for dinner plates, not for survival in the wild, escaped into Maine's Machias Bay in December, the largest known escape of its kind in the eastern United States, according to a February story in the *Wash-*

ington Post. Suddenly thrust into a world of "eat or be eaten," it would be a wonder if any survived after being accustomed to doled-out meals in the pen. The worry remains, however, that a handful of escapees may live to pass on their sluggish, obesity-prone genes to future generations—that is, if they retain any instinct to head for a river to spawn. In any event, the seven government agencies that oversee U.S. aquaculture now may be starting to wake up. ☐

Separation of Meat and State: \$71 billion in ag subsidies—is this weaning farmers off the dole?

BY PAMELA RICE



Photo by Ted Teisler

As part of the Republican Revolution of the mid-1990s, the U.S. Congress completely overhauled American farm laws. New Deal/Depression-era farm policy was to give way to "Freedom to Farm." The goal was to

wean American agriculture away from subsidies and get it accustomed to operating in response to the market.

Except for the dairy sector, which still enjoys price floors, the program whisked away the widespread deficiency payments that were doled out in times of low prices and told farmers that in seven years the rug was going to be pulled out from under them—and they had better start getting used to it. In the meantime, the government would pay them a fixed amount—an average total of about \$5 billion per year. The payments were to be distributed despite good prices or bad, and the only requirement for receiving one was having participated in a deficiency payment program before 1996. Generally, the bigger your farm the more you would get. The payments would come even if you did no farming at all, or even if you now lived in the city.

The freedom in "Freedom to Farm" was that the government, for the most part, no longer dictated what or how much a farmer was to farm. The legislators seemed hell-bent on taking the communism out of the agriculture sector in all ways.

And how has it been going since 1996? Are we on schedule? As far as subsidies, we are indeed—and then some. Whereas direct payments to farmers over the past five years should have been in the neighborhood of \$25 billion, actual payments have amounted to \$71 billion. As Dan Morgan of the *Washington Post* wrote in a January 26 story, "Frequent spending bills stuffed with 'emergency' payments to farms—last year's totaled an unprecedented \$8.8 billion—have become standard fare on Capitol Hill, adding to the deluge of money going out under regular

support programs." He further explained that subsidization to farmers amounts to about 50 percent of farm income: "Every other dollar now going into the pockets of farmers comes from U.S. taxpayers."

Precisely how much of this subsidization goes to animal agriculture is anyone's guess. Even if it were 1 percent of the total, it would be too much as far as vegetarians are concerned—but we know that subsidies to the meat-producing sector are, in fact, a huge proportion. The other question is, How much is going into the hands of big operators—if not directly, through the subsidization of their suppliers? The *Post* article indicated that nearly three-quarters of all food production comes from a mere 157,000 commercial farmers, or 46 percent. They're so efficient, Morgan reports, that low prices don't knock them out. Of course, it would be well to examine the price that the environment and the animals pay for farmer efficiency.

It bears noting that the other 54 percent of farmers—the "less efficient" ones—earn half of their income from off-farm jobs, according to the *Post* story. They certainly are not making out with "Freedom to Farm."

In the end, the new legislation has done almost nothing that it set out to do. Subsidies are bigger than ever, and because they are, farmers (the big ones in particular) are not listening to market forces at all. And—you guessed it—they are overproducing, which is wiping out small farmers and disrupting international trade.

Why do these farmers receive so much consideration? Some may argue that they're involved with national security: Food is vital to a country's strength. But how could creating an over-supply of meat have much to do with that? And how can some 175,000 farmers stack up against millions of vegetarians? By some estimates, those who consider themselves vegetarian come to about 7 percent of the U.S. population, or a whopping 18 million. We vegetarians need to start exercising some well-deserved clout commensurate with our numbers. And the first thing we should ask for is a separation of meat and state! ☐

Prion Panic: Infectious agent endures incineration

No mad cows yet, but are we looking hard enough? Potentially infected feed may have spread

The United States has yet to encounter even one mad cow, at least a detected one. Our lack of results, however, may be because we aren't going out of our way to find infection. Only about 1,000 cattle are tested for mad cow disease in the United States every year, according to a February 4 story in the *New York Post*—and that's out of 37 million slaughtered. According to a January 14 article on mad cow disease in *The New York Times*, France tests 20,000 animals for the disease each week, and it only has 5.7 million cattle. Last year it found 153 infected animals.

An all-but-proven theory says that mad cow disease is spread by feeding ruminant protein back to ruminants. In mid-January, however, the Food and Drug Administration reported that many animal-feed manufacturers in the United States were not labeling their products according to regulations designed to keep cows and other ruminants from eating the rendered bodies of other ruminants. Such carcasses can legally be fed to other species, and many feed producers have no system in

place to keep different kinds of feed from commingling. At least 700 out of 5,000 feed handlers inspected were not in compliance, according to Dr. Stephen Sundlop of the FDA, as reported in the *Post* story.

A marketplace that's gone wildly global doesn't help U.S. chances of avoiding this dreaded cow plague. The *London Times* reported early in February that potentially infected meat and bone meal were exported to 70 countries by a British rendering company between 1988 and 1996. Reportedly, the rendered ruminant material was labeled properly for use as chicken and pig feed, but it is likely that some was illegally or mistakenly used for cattle.

Mad cow fallout: The Red Cross now considering more blood donation restrictions

With mad cows being discovered all across Europe—at press time the count is a dozen countries—the American Red Cross doesn't want to take any chances. According to the *Post* story cited above, the international rescue organization is considering severely tightening restrictions on blood that it will accept, to the point of disallowing donations from anyone who has lived or traveled anywhere in Western Europe over a

period of three months or more—even though there is no evidence that mad cow disease can be spread via blood, according to a story in *TIME* in late January.



Blood-bank officials, according to the *Post* article, fear that a three-month rule would devastate supplies in New York City—supplies that tend to run in crisis mode on a regular basis, especially since a ban already disallows blood donations from people who have lived in Britain for six months between 1980 and 1996. The question becomes, Will such a ban create more victims than it saves?

EU carcass disposal a nightmare with installment of new rules

Thanks to the recent reemergence of the mad cow crisis in Europe, regulations imposed by the European Union are forcing farmers to test all animals for mad cow disease that are over 30 months old. But what to do with the bodies when a cow can't go to market? A January 22 Associated Press story recounted a monstrous scene where a farmer in Ireland found a cow carcass on his doorstep that he had buried only a few days before. Neighbors had dug it up because they feared that prions, the infectious mad-cow agent, would leach into the local water supply. Before November, burial of infected cows was permitted in Ireland, according to a January 12 story in *The New York Times*. But since infectious prions will stand up even to incineration, carcasses are being frozen until a successful method of neutralization is found. ☐



Michael Greger, M.D., gesturing at the far right, gave a talk on mad cow disease at the Vegetarian Center late in February. He was invited as an expert witness at the Oprah Winfrey trial, which exposed the common farm practice of feeding rendered animal remains to livestock. The talk was videotaped and will be made available to the VivaVegie Society. Call ahead to schedule a viewing.

Correction: Two issues ago, we gave you a great “sausage” recipe from the chef of a bed-and-breakfast in Wales. We gave the wrong name and Internet address, however. The correct name is Pentre Bach, with www.pentrebach.com being the Web address.—Ed.

Veggie Nuggets

No longer taking the bait

In the face of a vicious predator, a cagey crustacean has adapted and is now looking to flourish. The predator, man, on the other hand, is seeing before his eyes an object of his desires—Maine lobsters—increasing in number yet becoming more elusive than ever. What's going on?

A theory, according to the *Boston Globe*, is that lobsters are increasing despite the odds because a new breed is gaining a foothold, one that won't enter a trap, no matter the goodies that beckon it from within. Live long, my friend, evolve and prosper.

MCD: Do you think McDonald's—or mad cow disease?

The ticker symbol for McDonald's Inc. on the New York Stock Exchange is MCD, and as luck would have it, this is an acronym for *mad cow disease*—not the kind of mind association the burger giant would like to get around. No matter what, MCD earnings are likely to be lower in the near term. Recently, the lowest quarterly

profits in 2½ years were blamed on the panic over mad cow disease raging in Europe. It didn't help that a supplier to an Italian McDonald's restaurant discovered an infected cow

in its processing facility. Meat from the cow never made it to the McD establishment, but at this point a war room undoubtedly has been designated at McDonald's headquarters in Oak Brook, Illinois, and the words *battle plan* must be in use by more than one McD executive on the premises in anticipation of a domestic mad cow crisis. What a time to be a fly on the wall at board meetings!

Leno on a roll

Jay Leno seems to understand the killer aspects of animal foods pretty well these days. When hearing about Ben Cohen (of Ben & Jerry's ice cream) and his recent bypass, Leno quipped, "They're going to do a new flavor—Chunky Arteries." And never mind mad cow disease, Leno had some comments on the deadly properties of McDonald's new bacon, cheese, and chicken sandwich. "How much cholesterol is in that?" he wondered. "I mean, McD's has come full circle. First the breakfast meal, then the happy meal, now the last meal."

Vegetarian hero from the most unlikely of places

It verges on scandal! A celebrated French chef from a celebrated French restaurant—in Paris, no less—recently declared that he no longer eats meat and therefore is no longer willing to prepare it either. Top chef Alain Passard explained in a *New York Times* profile in February that the mad cow crisis certainly had influenced him, but in reality he was simply bored with preparing meat. His meals still command \$200 for a ten-course dinner, according to the *Times*. "For a chunk of veal or lamb, a few minutes less or more may not make the difference," he was quoted as saying. "With a leek you can ruin the texture or flavor in a few seconds." ☐

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- **A Cow at My Table** (stylistically inventive and poignant documentary)
- **Foods for Cancer Prevention and Survival** (Dr. Neal Barnard's compendium of facts from the latest studies)
- **Diet for a New America** (John Robbins's powerful synopsis of his book)
- **Truth or Dairy** (a star-studded expose)
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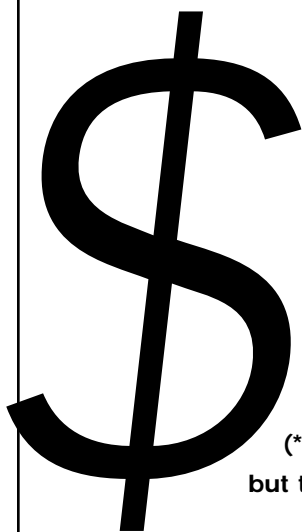
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ECO/SUBSIDIES BEAT

Dead zone: Paying off the polluters again

The Mississippi River is just a trough for refuse as far as a lot of farmers are concerned. Oh, they wouldn't admit such a thing, but ultimately, as long as no one is looking, it's fine with them that nutrients such as manure and fertilizer run off their land and end up in the river. Of course runoff happens invisibly, so presumably no one *can* be looking, even if they wanted to investigate.

One thing is not invisible, however, at least not to scientists measuring oxygen in the Gulf of Mexico down the pike. Excess nutrients—a little bit from a lot of farmers—

Excess nutrients—a little bit from a lot of farmers—cause algal growth, which in turn results in a decrease in oxygen at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico.

cause algal growth, which in turn results in a decrease in dissolved oxygen in the bottom water. Mobile marine life can relocate to oxygen-rich areas, but slow-moving animals die. Every year a

“dead zone” the size of a small state forms off the coast of Louisiana, later to disappear.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, this ebb and flow has gone on long enough. In January it proposed a plan to elicit volunteer cleanup from farmers, prodded by incentives from the government, to cut the size of the dead zone in half by 2015.

Environmental groups are urging that the incentives be generous enough to convince farmers to do the right thing. They argue, according to a Reuters story posted to the CNN Web site, that “without adequate funding American farmers will...continue to add to the high amounts of polluted runoff already entering the river.” With much if not most of the runoff coming from animal agriculture, including the cultivation of feed grains, vegetarians may wonder “Where's our payoff?” when our contribution to the dead zone is minimal.

Ranchers get paid to be destructive

Cattle grazing in the American West usually takes place along fragile riparian zones—wide floodplains along rivers and streams where wild species of plants and animals congregate and regenerate. These delicate ecosystems, which serve as natural purifiers of the water, are being summarily trampled flat and contaminated by manure. A 1999 study published in the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* asserted that 80 percent of stream and riparian ecosystems in the western United States have been damaged by cattle grazing.

But now we've learned, after a recent discovery by the Forest Guardians, that since 1990 cattle ranchers on public lands have received \$237 million in federal subsidies, as reported in a January story by the Environmental News Network. At the same time, the Bureau of Land Management has said that there are no resources left to enforce the Endangered Species Act adequately. □

FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

Ironclad conjecture: Get the rust out of diet

If you're over a certain age, you can remember a time when a mortal fear was placed in society's collective brain about getting enough dietary iron. The Geritol mantra in the sixties, God help us, was "Do you have tired, iron-poor blood?" (Funny, in our meat-centric nation, that anyone was ever short on iron.) As with protein—another nutrient associated with meat—you just couldn't get enough of it. The pendulum has swung, however, to the other side, and the phrase that now comes to mind is "too much of a good thing."

Researchers are realizing with a number of nutrients that upper limits on intake are as important as recommended minimum requirements. In the case of iron, a team of Japanese researchers recently uncovered some key arterial mechanics when they looked at dietary iron in the body. According to a Reuters story in October, just as iron oxidizes into rust outside the body, it can increase the oxidative stress on the lining of blood vessels. Too much iron, the researchers discovered, becomes a risk factor for atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), the already recognized badge of the meat eater. According to the lead researcher cited in the Reuters story, "This could mean that the Western diet, rich in red meat, causes heart disease not only because it has so much fat, but because it is too rich in iron."

For vitamin B₁₂: Fortified cereals, not meat

One of the first questions meat eaters ask vegans is "Where do you get your vitamin B₁₂?" The question is asked so often that the answer should probably be flashed out in lights in Times Square. Myths abound regarding this nutrient, and if recent research has any say in the matter, it may just be the vegans who should be asking the meat eaters where they get their vitamin B₁₂.

According to surveys conducted by the Vegetarian Resource Group, only about one-half of one percent of the population is truly vegan. Yet according to discoveries by a U.S. Department of Agriculture research center in Boston, nearly 40 percent of the U.S. population is flirting with a marginal vitamin B₁₂ status, and 9 percent are deficient. Deficiencies can cause walking and balance disturbances, a loss of vibration sensation, confusion, and, in advanced cases, dementia. The body requires B₁₂ to make the protective coating surrounding the nerves.

The USDA researchers discovered, not surprisingly, that meat, poultry, and fish consumption has no impact on deficiencies, despite ample amounts of the nutrient found in these foods. A person's ability to absorb the nutrient is the key. The vitamin, it has been discovered, tightly binds itself to proteins in meat and dairy products and requires high acidity to be cut loose. As we age, we lose the acid-secreting cells in the stomach.

But younger adults, the researchers learned, also have trouble utilizing the nutrient, thanks to the high use of antacids, the researchers surmise—antacids to counteract the effects of eating meat. What is one of the best ways to overcome vitamin B₁₂ deficiency? Fortified cereals. ☐

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Mary Gove Nichols: Uncommonly Victorian & veg

Gove explained that God did not design the human body for flesh eating.

BY KAREN IACOBBO

MARY GOVE NICHOLS was a leading crusader for vegetarianism during the mid 19th century. She was a disciple of Sylvester Graham—perhaps the foremost vegetarian advocate of the century—and as a “Grahamite” her major form of activism was to teach physiology and anatomy to Americans.

To this end, Gove, who was a physician and proprietor of a water cure establishment (a non drug, “nature cure” facility), presented a series of lectures to female-only audiences eager to learn about the human body and how it functions. At the time, women were not supposed to lecture to audiences including males, but Gove managed to reach them as well through her published lectures, her magazine, and other works. Gove was also a novelist, acknowledged by no less a literary figure than Edgar Allan Poe, whose dying young wife Gove attempted to save from a fatal case of consumption (tuberculosis).

Gove couldn't save Poe's beloved cousin/wife, but she did help many people regain good health. Women (and men) were interested in what Gove had to teach, because they wanted to take control of their health and the health of their families instead of relying on the often treacherous, sometimes fatal drug medicine prevalent throughout the century.

Nichols and her lectures were popular. History records that at one lecture, the audience numbered as many as 2,000—and that lecture was delivered in a small city. Vegetarianism was an integral component of Gove's teachings. Like her mentor Graham, Gove explained that God did not design the human body for flesh eating but to eat of the foods of the vegetable kingdom.

Gove, like Graham, was not typical of today's vegetar-

ian advocate. It's doubtful that she would have approved of many vegetarian convenience foods, although she probably would have liked those low in fat and high in fiber. One's diet had to be heavy on whole grains, vegetables, and fruits—devoid of coffee, tea, condiments, and grease as well as meat—to pass inspection by her. Gove and other vegetarian crusaders contended that in some cases a diet that included flesh foods might be more wholesome than one that was vegetarian but loaded with grease and pastries. This was a concession evidently born out of compromise, which all but the staunchest vegetarian activists (those motivated primarily by religion or animal rights) seem to have made. Most likely they made this concession because they lived in a virulently meat-hungry and vegetarian-suspicious time that lacked hard scientific evidence proving the benefits of rejecting meat.

BESIDES THE “VEGETABLE DIET,” Gove and other “physiologists” called for a long list of daily practices, from bathing and exercise to adequate rest and cheerful attitude, as the prescription for health. If that advice seems familiar, the next time it is mentioned remember Gove, who like Graham, journeyed from city to city preaching physiology and a vegetable diet. Over time, many of the ideas of the American veg pioneers—derived from observation, the Bible, and natural history—have been scientifically verified and adopted by mainstream medicine. Until now, Graham, Gove, and company have rarely received credit for their attempts to aid ailing America. When they have been recognized, they and their groundbreaking work have usually been portrayed more as caricatures than as people of strong character, out to save the sick from unhealthy habits. ☐

Karen Iacobbo and her spouse Michael Iacobbo are the authors of the forthcoming Encyclopedia of Vegetarianism and a history of Vegetarianism in America: 1817–2000. You can contact them at jwiacobbo@aol.com or American Lyceum, 409 Pine Street, First Floor, Providence, RI 02903.

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Yellowstone: Held hostage by cheeseburgers

BY BRUCE GOURLEY

No, this shocking headline is not from the front page of a supermarket tabloid or a sequel to the cult movie *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes!* It is not a marketing gimmick by some fast-food restaurant, nor is it the plot line of an upcoming "X-Files" episode. And neither is it the punchline of a new comedy routine by Jay Leno, nor a scare tactic by Disney to try and reroute vacationers to the Mouse Kingdom.

In fact, this rather ludicrous statement is not fiction at all. It is a true story that is taking place right now. And not only that, it is old news: This bizarre hostage situation has been going on for years. Following are the basic facts and figures of this strangest of true stories.

Yellowstone National Park is America's oldest and best-known national park. Yellowstone is renowned for its wildlife and geysers. The two symbols of Yellowstone National Park, known the world over, are Old Faithful geyser and the bison (sometimes called buffalo). Bison, which once numbered 60 million in North America, were hunted to the brink of extinction in the late 1800s. Yellowstone became a place of refuge for the remaining few. The bison slowly made a comeback from the edge of extinction, and today the world's largest free-ranging herd (some 3,000 animals) resides in Yellowstone.

In the mid-1800s, there were few domestic cattle in the American West. Today, domestic cattle in America number in the tens of millions and supply our insatiable appetite for the billions of hamburgers Americans eat monthly if not weekly. In the American West, where many of these cattle are raised, ranchers lease public lands (that is, land owned by the American people, vegetarian and nonvegetarian alike) on which to graze their cattle, paying the government pennies per head.

There are 2,000 head of privately owned cattle grazing on public land in Montana adjacent to Yellowstone National Park. The owners of these cattle pay the government only \$13,000 per year in grazing fees.

Government agencies decided some years ago that Yellowstone's bison are a threat to the 2,000 cattle that graze on public lands adjacent to Yellowstone National Park. The bison were labeled a threat because some carry the disease brucellosis, a

disease that can cause domestic cattle to abort their fetuses. Oddly enough, however, there is not one shred of evidence—despite extensive research continuing to this day—that wild bison can transmit the disease to domestic cattle.

The simple solution to this "problem" would have been to declare the public lands adjacent to Yellowstone National Park off limits to cattle grazing. But the government, in its infinite wisdom, decided that the 2,000 head of cattle, grazing virtually free on land owned by you and me, were more important than Yellowstone National Park and indeed needed to be protected from Yellowstone's bison. Of course, the government did not bother us taxpayers to learn what our preferences would be for our land.

Having decreed that the 2,000 head of cattle are more important than Yellowstone National Park, government agencies set out to put our money where their mouth is. In recent years, the government has spent millions of our dollars protecting the 2,000 head of cattle from the subversive Yellowstone bison. Much of that money has been used to kill well over 1,000 of Yellowstone's bison in recent years. Then, in December 2000, government agencies announced that they will be spending \$50,000,000 over the next 15 years to harass and kill those subversive Yellowstone bison.

By contrast, Yellowstone National Park's entire budget for last year was \$24,508,000, far less than was actually needed to protect Yellowstone's bison and tens of thousands of other mammals (including the endangered grizzly bear and wolf), not to mention small animals, fish, vegetation, and geology, maintain hundreds of miles of roads and trails and hundreds of facilities, and provide enough staffing for the 2.2 million acres that make up Yellowstone.

Only in America does the government spend \$50,000,000 of your money and mine to ensure that a slue of cheeseburgers (enough, perhaps, to supply all the McDonald's restaurants in the Atlanta metro area for about 15 seconds) are given higher priority than Yellowstone National Park, one of the world's first and foremost national parks.

Yes, the truth is stranger than fiction, and insanity is in abundant supply. ☐

Copyright © 2001 by Bruce Gourley

The government decided that 2000 head of cattle, grazing virtually free on land owned by you and me, were more important than Yellowstone National Park.



Courier Epiphany: Deliverance for *Vine* messenger

BY ADAM GOODMAN

I am a bike courier here in New York City. Yeah, that's right, I'm one of those guys you really hate when I am moving freely and you are stuck in rush-hour traffic. Anyway, the other day, a friend of mine asked me to do him a favor by taking over delivering *The VivaVine* for him. Now, my friend is one of those "vegan policemen"—you know, the kind I would consider annoying—someone who tells you about the horror of the feedlot steer's life while you are trying to eat a burger. But he's a pal, so I'm like, "What the hell, a job's a job."

Now let me say here that I have dabbled with being a vegetarian in

the past. But I always had a problem with being a "real" vegetarian, because—well, I really like to eat. No, I mean I really like to eat! My nickname is "The Bear," no less. Eating vegetarian always meant to me eating nothing but salad and tofu and cardboard and rocks and stuff! I mean no more "butta on da bread," no more lox on my bagels, and well, fagetaboutit!

So I took the job, which consisted of going to the city's vegetarian restaurants and healthier food stores.

And the first thing I noticed was how many of these places there are in this town. Quickly, my idea that vegan food is boring went up in smoke. Everywhere, the food looked so good! When I took my break, I stopped in at a shop that had a vegan hot bar, where I had some sweet-and-sour no-meat meatballs over eggless noodles with some beans on the side—tasted great! But more than this, I noticed that my riding suddenly became faster and stronger. And when I finished the route, I found that I was not as fatigued as usual. For supper, there was no question: I decided to go to another vegetarian place. It specialized in cuisine from India. Everything there tasted great too.

Later that night I noticed that I continued to feel better than usual—

much stronger with less pain after a day of riding. So I decided to give being a full-time vegetarian a try. The improved feeling and riding continued, which in my business translates into more money! So I'm thinking, "I kind of like this."

The day soon came when I went out to eat with my vego-cop friend. Of course, the last thing anybody needs is an "I told you so," right? So, in pure spite,

I ordered a burger—the real kind—and fries. But I just didn't like it anymore. By this time I had been running so vegan

clean that the burger became nothing short of an act of pollution on my body—like a vandalism or something. And even worse, after this meal, I couldn't believe how slow and tired my riding became. So, what you gonna do? When the truth hits you in the face, you better pay attention.

Since then, I have been pretty regular about eating vegetarian. And the truth is, I find I am simply much happier and healthier now. I just feel better. And I don't think I have given up anything in terms of variety or flavor either. So there you have it—one man's honest opinion. And you know what? All I wanted to do was a favor for a friend. See what happens? ☐

No, I mean I really like to eat! My nickname is "The Bear."



Stop by VivaVeggie's Vegetarian Center, 121 East 27th Street in Manhattan (office hours: 4:00–7:00 P.M., Monday through Friday), and pick up one of our T-shirts, modeled here by Yichun Lin. The khaki shirts, silkscreened in navy, are available in most sizes (S, M, L, XL) and are yours for half off the regular \$12 price, because our old phone number is on the back. Add \$3.50 for mail-order purchases (see page 4 for the mailing address). You will be able to display the words "Vegetarian Center" on your back wherever you go!

COVER PIX: "It's almost as if the 31 sponsors of this \$100-a-plate red-meat extravaganza (*'Big Red'* at Cipriani's on 42nd Street) were daring us animal-rights and vegetarian activists to protest!" said instigator Joan Zacharias (holding "blood clot" sign). About 25 of us braving icy rain didn't let those in attendance down, reminding the revelers from behind our picket that red meat is nothing to celebrate. Special thanks to Carol Moon for getting the permits and Joyce Friedman for publicity. Many of the signs came courtesy of the VivaVeggie Society.




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Herewith, also, is a tax-deductible donation to the VivaVegie Society for \$ _____. Total enclosed: \$_____.

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Thanks aplenty for these contributions:

Since our last issue, donations of \$25 or more were received from the following people: **Suzy Richardson of GreenVision Foundation, Roberta B. Vogel, Laura A. Bigini and Bella Hecht Cloude.**

Volunteers are VivaVegie heros

There are many ways to make a difference if spreading knowledge about the virtues of vegetarianism is your calling. Special thanks to the following people who helped the VivaVegie Society since the last issue of *The VivaVine*: **Rob Dolecki, Tom Thompson, Goeff Watland, Evelyn Gilbert, James Langergaard, and Seth Asher.**

VivaVegie wants you!

Do something on the low-commitment side.

- Collect vegetarian restaurant menus and send them to us.
- Arrange to do filing at the office.
- Call on short notice to ask if there may be an errand to run.
- Keep our notebook of veggie current events and conferences always up to date.

Get the “101 Reasons” stocked at your neighborhood store.

VivaVegie will give you a stack of sample “101 Reasons Why I’m a Vegetarian” to give to a retail establishment, free of charge, to test how they sell. Engage the owner/manager and keep in touch with him or her. Essentially, do all the things that a sales rep would do to service the account. Ultimately, VivaVegie wants to get regular orders. An order blank is on the 15th page of each copy of the “101 Reasons.”

VivaVegie wish list

- Publicity/public-relations director, most urgent
- Director, “Operation Target Media”
- Volunteers coordinator
- Grant writer
- Pro bono accountant or lawyer
- Correspondence secretary
- *VivaVine* distributor (even for a single place)

SENATOR CLINTON, *Continued from page 3*

ents—promoting a sound vegetarian diet in schools is a public health necessity. Other public institutions where vegetarian choices are imperative include prisons and jails, homeless shelters, and food relief programs.

FOURTH, we hope you will work assiduously to promote organic agriculture, farmers’ markets, and community-supported agriculture (CSA). Government support can play an important role in promoting the increased use and consumption of nutritionally rich and ecologically sound organic foods.

We look forward to hearing your positions and thoughts on these urgent issues of concern to our state, our country, and indeed the world our children will inherit. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you or your legislative staff in detail and would be happy to provide supporting documentation. Thank you for your attention and interest. We look forward to many years of outstanding service from you as our senator.

Special thanks to VivaVegie secretary Mia MacDonald and Martin Rowe for initiating this letter. They worked hard on the Hillary Rodham Clinton campaign, as well as on formulating this letter. —Pamela Rice



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www.vivaveggie.org

**NOTE TO SUBSCRIBERS: IT'S TIME TO RENEW
 IF YOUR LABEL READS APRIL 2001 OR EARLIER**

CALENDAR

See page 2 for program listings of events that take place at the Vegetarian Center, including seminars, workshops, rap sessions, and soirees. For the following listings, please call to confirm details. Events are in Manhattan unless otherwise noted.

Sun., April 15

- Join **VivaVeggie** and Penelo Pea Pod at the **Easter Parade**—our biggest outreach day of the year! 646-424-9595.

Sat., April 21

- **EarthSave Long Island's** dinner/lecture, 631-421-3791, Box #1, or EarthSaves@aol.com.
- **Eco-Rap for Earth Day** with **VivaVeggie** at the Vegetarian Cen-

ter. Share an article that shows the environmental impact of meat. 6:30 P.M., 646-424-9595.

Sat., May 12

- Join **VivaVeggie** and Penelo Pea Pod at the **Transportation Alternatives** street fair on Avenue C between 5th St. and 6th St., 646-424-9595.

Sun., May 20

- **Farm Sanctuary** hosts a not-to-be-missed gala at The Plaza to raise funds for its Year 2001 "Say No to Veal" advertising campaign. Friend of farm animals Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-NY), as well as James

Cromwell and Lily Tomlin, will be on the roster. Tickets are \$250. 607-583-2225, ext. 281.

Sat., June 30–Thurs., July 5

- **Animal Rights 2001** conference in Washington, D.C., sponsored by FARM. www.animalrights2001.org.

Wed., July 11–Sun., July 15

- **North American Vegetarian Society Summerfest.** Johnstown, PA. 518-568-7970.

Sat., July 21–Sun., July 22

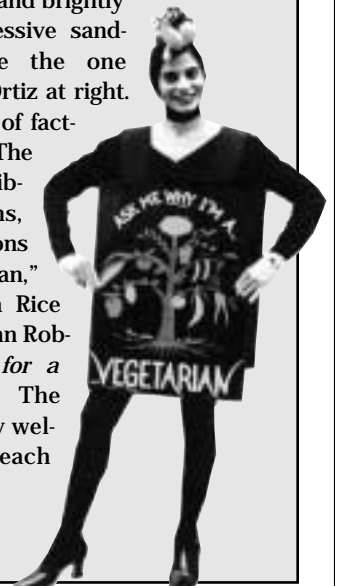
- **EarthSave Long Island's** Wantagh Summer Festival, featuring Earth-Save's "Planet Earth." 631-421-3791, Box #1, EarthSaves@aol.com.

MORE NYC-AREA RESOURCES

- **Accent on Wellness** Natural Hygiene support group meets every Monday at 7:30 P.M. at the Hygeia Center, 18 East 23rd St. Raw pot lucks are held the first Saturday of the month at 6:00 P.M. 212-253-2262, PlanetHealth@aol.com.
- **Brooklyn Raw** holds a pot luck the last Friday of each month, 7:30 P.M., at Eco Books, 192 Fifth Ave., Brooklyn, between Sackett and Union Sts. A support group is held the first Wednesday of the month, 7:30 P.M. 718-832-9380.
- **Central Jersey Vegetarian Group** has monthly pot lucks. 908-281-6388.
- **EarthSave Hudson Valley** hosts a pot luck the fourth Saturday of each month. <http://hudsonearthsave.org>.
- **International African Vegetarian Network and Friends'** dinner, the first Sunday of the month. 4:00 P.M., the House of the Healing Fire, 212-368-5320, Sis Moutique.
- **Iron Vegans' Raw Food Connection** holds a pot luck the second Saturday of the month. 718-263-7160.
- **Lactovegetarian pot luck** the second Sunday of the month. 6:00 P.M., Greenwich Village, 212-475-9879.
- **NYC Vegetarians** holds monthly dinners, pot lucks, and other activities. Les Judd, 718-805-4260 (Mon.–Thurs., before 10:00 P.M.), lesjudd@aol.com.
- **Veggie Singles** holds monthly events for single vegetarians interested in meeting and possibly dating other like-minded plant eaters. An April Fool's party is planned. 718-437-0190.
- **VegOut** (the social group for lesbian, gay, bi, and transgender vegetarians and friends). 212-802-8655, vegout1@juno.com.

So, what is the VivaVeggie Society?

The VivaVeggie Society takes vegetarian advocacy to the streets. VivaVeggie advocates approach Mr. and Ms. Pedestrian to get the facts out about their healthful, ethical, and environmentally conscious vegetarian diet. Advocates assemble where there is plenty of pedestrian traffic. They come donned in T-shirts and brightly colored and expressive sandwich boards—like the one shown on Mayra Ortiz at right. They carry plenty of fact-filled information. The mission? To distribute, for donations, the flyer "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian," written by Pamela Rice and inspired by John Robbins's book *Diet for a New America*. The VivaVeggie Society welcomes new outreach activists.



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