

just
say
you heard
it
through
the

Viva VINE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VIVA VEGIE SOCIETY
by Pamela Teisler



"IS OUR FISH FIT TO EAT?" -- An interesting question. An interesting question, especially when it is the title of a cover story in Consumer Reports (Feb. '92).

What is one of the first things non-vegetarians say when they confront a vegetarian about his or her "very peculiar" diet? . . . "Well, you still eat fish, don't you?"

Fish eating in the U.S. has gone up, no less, 25% to an average of 15½ pounds a year per person. All well and good; but to quote from the first page of the 12-page Consumer Reports story, "Nearly half the fish we tested was contaminated by bacteria from human or animal feces, most likely the result of poor sanitation practices at one or more points in the handling process. Some species were contaminated with PCBs and mercury..." The rest of the article for the most part gives evidence to back up these allegations, in addition to other Consumer Reports - type concerns such as deceptive and erroneous labeling. By the way, when it comes to fish, "fresh" simply means that your fillet has never been frozen. Your "fresh" fish you take from the ice at the fish market more than likely has been dead for 2 weeks.

So if the thought of dolphins caught in fishermen's nets, nor the sheer possibility that man may be fishing the oceans to extinction doesn't deter you from eating fish, perhaps the thought of eating excrement might. Bon appetit.

WANTED:

. . . people with VIDEO CAMERAS. The VivaVegie Society needs to get on public access tv. You to videotape a VivaVegie street action. You to record the VivaVegie message and the pedestrian responses. There may be up to 3 hours of videotaping. In exchange is a lot of fun, and a whole lot of human interest. Here is something new under the sun for your video library. It's not absolutely necessary that you be a vegetarian, but be prepared to be convinced to change your diet. Cassettes will be paid for. Let's hear from you! Call 212/966-2060

CALENDAR

Tues, May 12: EARTHSAVE VEGAN POTLUCK, 6:30 p.m., Greenpeace offices, 462 Broadway @ Grand St., 6th Fl.; bring a tasty vegetarian dish; no dairy; and please bring a 3x5 sign listing the ingredients. Call 212/978-4338 to confirm. **Sat., May 9:** John Robbins, Pulitzer Prize nominated author of Diet for a New America will be at the New Life Expo conducting a workshop, 3 p.m. in the Georgian Room of the New York Hotel Ramada. Call ASAP for reservations: 212/564-EXPO.

SCHEDULE TO HAND OUT "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian": Sun., May 10 (Mother's Day): NATIONAL VEAL BAN ACTION: 2:00 p.m., SoHo, corner of Prince and West Broadway. **Sat., May 16:** THE NINTH AVE. INT'L FESTIVAL (street fair): 12 Noon, 50th St. and Ninth Ave. **Sun., June 21:** 1ST DAY OF SUMMER, 2 p.m., south end mid entrance to Washington Sq. Park. Always call Pam at 212/966-2060 to confirm.

received from people inquiring about the "101 Reasons." I get dozens of letters like this all the time. Many of the people sound almost desperate for answers. "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian" has to get out there! I need your help. I hope you can be a part of this production. *Pamela*

Meeting to plan street theater

On **Sat., June 13**, the VivaVegie Society plans to meet to plan a street action. We're planning a skit. Let's get creative in the dance studio we have. Call Pamela @ 212/966-2060.

Dear VivaVegie Society supporters:

I think it is about time that I give you the readers an update on the VivaVegie Society; that is, a where we've been and where we're going kind of thing.

It's been about a year now since I have regularly gone out with my sandwich board beckoning people to "Ask Me Why I'm a Vegetarian," passing out my flyer, "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian."

In addition, The VivaVegie Society sponsored the "refuge-for-vegetarians" event in the East Village on World Vegetarian Day on October 1st last year. The VivaVegie Society has been featured on cable tv's Coca Crystal Show, in NY Newsday, The Animals' Agenda, Downtown, the Minneapolis Star Tribune; and in June, VivaVegie member Paul Morenberg and I gave a seminar at the North American Vegetarian Society's annual Summer-fest conference.

This is the third bi-monthly edition of the VivaVine which began publishing at the beginning of this year.

The reception that our activities have gotten has been stupendous. On Earth Day this year (4/22/92), for example, I had an especially attentive crowd that gathered around to learn, yes, why I'm a vegetarian. People, no less, clamored to get their copy of "101 Reasons why I'm a Vegetarian." It cannot be denied that street action such as this ("veg-evangelism) is having a tremendous effect in getting the word out. People are extremely interested in the issue of vegetarianism these days. They eat up "101 Reasons," so to speak, like candy! They want to know!

"101 Reasons," however, needs an overhaul. As I look it over these days, I see that the information needs to be updated and cleaned up. It needs to cite the new and diverse information that is becoming known all the time. So, therefore, **THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE VIVA VINE WILL NOT COME OUT AGAIN UNTIL SEPT., '92 SO "101 REASONS" CAN BE REVISED.**

Otherwise, what I need to bring up is that I now need financial support to move on. I need to garner forces. "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian" must be there as a succinct educational reference guide for people following the very current trend these days to go veggie.

To pay my printer of the revised edition of "101 Reasons" and to pay my accountant for his services will come to around \$1,000. To pay for storage of the planned 10,000 press run will bring up my expenses even higher. And postage, ugh, is always killing me.

Therefore, I want to throw out my plea for continued donations. But mostly I want to ask for pledges for future donations which I will need to receive at the end of the summer when the 2nd edition of "101 Reasons" is to be printed. Please see the coupon to pledge on page 3 of this newsletter.

The last issue of The VivaVine ran 2 letters I

BEYOND BEEF

On April 14, an international coalition announced the launching of the **Beyond Beef Campaign** at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. The coalition includes the Greenhouse Crisis Foundation, The Rainforest Action Network, EarthKind, Greenpeace USA as well as a broad-based contingent of environmental, animal protection, health, family farm, anti-hunger and development organizations.

The **Beyond Beef Campaign** will call on consumers around the world to cut their consumption of beef by at least 50%. The call will be backed up with an overkill (not) of information about beef and its devastating impacts upon health, the environment, animal suffering, small farmers, and hunger around the world. The press packet being sent around by the **Beyond Beef Campaign** contains fact sheets (not unlike "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian"). The campaign will also urge the replacement of beef with grains, fruits and vegetables. For those still eating some beef, the campaign will advocate the consumption of beef that is humanely and organically raised.

The **Beyond Beef Campaign** will mobilize public support and political action behind a fundamental restructuring of agriculture and food policies both in the U.S. and around the world. The campaign will attempt to halt programs that subsidize the multinational cattle and beef industry and will actively support and encourage programs that assist family farms and peasant agriculture.

This campaign will be hitting on all fronts with no mercy. It plans to persuade with the facts about beef, to eat away at the demand side for the product itself; but it also plans to take on the giant multinational beef producers and the governmental policies that subsidize the industry. These are policies which allow the beef producers to enjoy market prices below the cost of production. (The campaign is taking on one tall order. We're talking hand to hand combat! No more preaching to the choir, they're taking on the enemy.)

The **Beyond Beef Campaign** takes its name from the just published book by Jeremy Rifkin, Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture. Rifkin, long time animal rights activist, environmentalist and philosopher, hammers home the facts (just like the VivaVeggie Society) of our society's meat habit in his book. He also runs down the history of the growth of the beef industry, from the beginning of civilization, to America's Old West, to the "golden arches" in Tokyo and Moscow.

Beyond Beef, goes beyond, no less, "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian." If you thought you knew everything after reading the 4-page flyer which is the hallmark of The VivaVeggie Society, you'll need to know, there's still a lot more mind boggling facts out there about the results of modern meat consumption and production.

Newsweek said, "You're not going to want another hamburger for a long time." The San Francisco Chronicle called it "impeccably researched." And, Beyond Beef has been compared to Upton Sinclair's The Jungle.

If you can't find the book at the bookstore, call 1-800-526-0275.

THE BEYOND BEEF CAMPAIGN SAYS

there are 5 things you can do . . .

- 1: Reduce your consumption of beef by at least 50%.
- 2: Recruit ten family members, friends and business associates to participate in the Beyond Beef campaign
- 3: Work with students and teachers to push for a 50% reduction in the amount of beef served in school cafeterias; and secure pledges from students to reduce their beef consumption by at least 50%.
- 4: Encourage local restarants to reduce the number of beef selections on their menus by at least 50%.
- 5: Lobby supermarkets to sell only beef that has been humanely raised under strict organic standards.

BEYOND CHICKEN

With all the talk about beef, what about CHICKEN? Not to detract from the Beyond Beef Campaign (see left), running to your grocer's chicken refrigerator case is definitely not the answer for a person trying to do the right thing by avoiding beef. According to a paper developed by Jim Mason for the Coalition for Non-Violent Food, which is a project of Animal Rights International, the modern broiler industry "mutilates, confines and kills more than five billion chickens each year in chicken "factories" which mass produce cruelty, endanger consumers and workers, destroy family farms and jobs, and threaten the environment."

Jim Mason notes that people are eating more chicken than ever, and that the cost for it is cheaper than before. But what is the real cost? he asks. When all of the hidden costs are factored in, he says, "chicken doesn't seem like such a bargain."

According to Mr. Mason's paper, "USDA studies say 4 out of 10 chickens reach stores contaminated with salmonella bacteria. . . Antibiotic-laced chicken feed is, many health authorities believe, contributing to a dangerous new kind of pollution that is making penicillin and other "wonder drugs" less effective in treating disease in humans. . . Manure-soaked litter scraped from the (chicken) factory floors pollutes streams and groundwater in many of the country's biggest broiler-producing regions." Salmonella-infected and drug-injected chickens and polluted water are direct assaults on the public by the trade in chicken. And Mason doesn't spare his reader when he describes the death camp conditions the chickens themselves as well as the chicken industry workers endure. "For forty years, poultry scientists have tinkered with chickens so that agribusiness can make more flesh from less feed," he writes. Unnatural, extreme rapid weight gain causes some birds to keel over and die suddenly (your chicken-style heart attack) from the stress. "Bred for chunky bodies, many broilers can barely walk on their flimsy, underdeveloped feet and legs. . . They squat most of the time or breast-stroke their way -- lizard like -- across the ammonia-soaked litter on factory floors," writes Mason. Chickens remain in a constant state of aggravation. A sentient being that evolved in flocks of 100 or less, the instinct to establish a pecking order is never achieved in rooms filled with 20,000 birds.

Henry Spira, the coordinator of Animal Rights International, has launched a crusade against the Purdue Chicken empire. Given that Frank Purdue is just about a household name, Purdue becomes useful as a specific target, symbolizing all that is abominable in the chicken business. Purdue turned out to be the perfect target because he not only inflicts torture on his birds, he fired employees after they began suffering from work related debilitating injuries. When the workers tried to organize, Purdue allegedly called in the mob. Foul! we say. Send an SASE to Henry Spira of Animal Rights International, Box 214, Planetarium Station, New York, NY 10024, to receive information and to join the campaign.

EVERY BODY COUNTS FIGHTING BRONX INCINERATOR

The threat is still there that incinerators will become operational throughout New York City. Press the issue. Put your body on the line. Come to a critical public hearing May 14 from 6 - 9 p.m. at the Bronx County Building, Walton Ave. steps, to stop the killer Bronx Lebonon Hospital medical waste incinerator which just happens to be near by the Hunts Point Terminal Market, the distribution point providing food for tens of millions of people in the tri-state area. Call Susan at 212/367-6094 before 7 p.m. for info.

JERRY BROWN ON ANIMAL RIGHTS

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.

—Mahatma Gandhi

Many species of animals around the world are becoming extinct because of human greed and indifference. Presently, in the United States abusive and cruel treatment of animals is out of control. Millions of animals raised for food are confined in small crates for their entire lives; millions are used in scientific experiments which could be replaced by other methods.

I support legislation that would put an end to the use of narrow wood crates for raising veal calves, "steel-jaw" leghold traps for hunting and the use of animals for cosmetic testing.

We have the power to change our attitudes and actions towards animals. I have always believed that people who care about animals also care deeply about other people.

As Governor of California, I passed numerous animal welfare bills; endangered species received 3.5 million dollars for habitats; the maximum punishment for the sale or purchase of bear meat or parts was increased; the moratorium on trophy hunting of mountain lions was extended.

As President, I will work to ensure better treatment of our animals.

Thank you, Jerry Brown

May 10 is Mother' Day
It also marks the VEAL BAN CAMPAIGN

While you're celebrating the institution of Mother's Day, take some time out to remember all the the mother cows who lose their male baby calves to the veal trade. F.A.R.M. does. Farm Animal Reform Movement, the activist organization of Bethesda Md., champions May 10

as a day to expose the facts of veal production, facts which boggle the mind.

To quote from information published by F.A.R.M.:

The calf is torn from his mother at birth, to prevent her from mourning the loss and dropping her milk output. He is then dragged to an auction and, eventually, to a dark barn on a veal farm. Here, the newborn calf is chained by the neck in a tiny wooden crate and forced to stand or lie, without bedding, on an uncomfortable slatted floor, unable to turn around, stretch his limbs, or groom himself.

He is force-fed a liquid formula that is deliberately deficient in iron and fiber (to keep the flesh tender and light in color/pt) and laced with antibiotics to raise his chance of survival in the face of abominable conditions. For 16 long weeks, he suffers from loneliness, maternal deprivation, fear, despair, inability to move, physical discomfort, anemia, chronic diarrhea and respiratory disorders until the butcher's knife ends his agony.

"Milk-fed" veal calves are forced constantly to lie in their excrement, which coats their fur. . . Their flesh contains excessive residues of penicillin, tetracyclines, and other antibiotics . . . (Antibiotics in our food hampers the effectiveness of antibiotic medication people may take to fight their own infections. /p.t.)

F.A.R.M. has monitored the veal industry, initiating boycotts, launching letter-writing campaigns, promoting networking of information about veal, disseminating images of veal in veal factories, and facilitating education on the veal issue through the media. F.A.R.M. has introduced legislation on the state level to ban the use of the veal crate. They arranged a meatless "Alternative Inaugural Luncheon" for the press outside the U.S. Capitol where President Reagan was being served "medalions of veal" at his official inaugural. Send an S.A.S.E. to F.A.R.M. for more info: 10101 Ashburton Lane, Bethesda, MD 20817. (Jerry Brown's statement, at left, was sent to me from F.A.R.M.)

To Ms. Pamela Teisler

I am an eighth grade student at Wyoming Area who is doing a research report on vegetarianism. I would greatly appreciate any information you might be able to send me.

Sincerely, Laura B.
Exeter, PA

Also, a post script to a letter sent to me from Kristen H. of Croton-On-Hudson, NY (/pt):

P.S.: I thought you would like to know that I know of 3 people who have seriously altered their eating habits as a result of reading "101 Reasons."

These are just 2 of many letters which I receive every day. "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian" takes information about vegetarianism to the mainstream where people are quite (shall we say) hungry for the facts. Help me get it reprinted!

Pamela Teisler
The VivaVeggie Society

Please clip this coupon and return to Pamela Teisler, The VivaVeggie Society, 234 Mulberry St., #17, New York, NY 10012.

Dear Pamela Teisler of the VivaVeggie Society:

I read the editorial on page 1 of this newsletter and I would like to pledge my financial support to help with printing costs of the updated and revised edition of "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian." Printing, I know, is to take place in the Summer of 1992, and I understand that I will be contacted to fulfill my pledge at that time. (A contribution of \$20. or more will get my name printed on the next edition of "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian.")

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Pledge amount: _____

If applicable, the following is how I would like my name to appear on the next edition of "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian":

~~_____~~

I have pledged \$20 or more, but I do not want my name to appear on the flyer

GOOD FOLKS. GET TO KNOW THEM.

Focus on Animals is a cable program that airs educational programs on issues of animal rights. Tune in, in Manhattan, Sundays at 4:30 p.m on ch. 17 for the compassionate perspective. Send SASE to: P. O. Box 150, Trumbull, Connecticut 06611.

Thank you, **Brock Adler**, the vendor coordinator for EARTH DAY NEW YORK, '92, for keeping all meat vendors away this year. Many of us know how exasperating it was at Earth Day New York, '91 where you could hardly find a place to stand free from the smoke of meat vendors. Letters of support to: Mr. Brock Adler, EARTH DAY NEW YORK, 153 Waverly Pl., 4th Fl., NYC 10014.

The **American Vegan Society** is a non-profit educational membership organization devoted to better understanding of veganism (vee-gun-ism), the compassionate lifestyle of those who avoid consumption of all products derived from animals, whether that be beef, wool, honey or fur. They publish **AHIMSA** magazine which comprehensively lists educational materials from a wide variety of authors and vegetarian groups. Send SASE to: 501 Old Harding Hwy. (P.O. Box H), Malaga, New Jersey 08328.

Dr. Michael Klaper, one of John Robbins' main medical advisors, would like to hear from you. He is conducting crucial research into the effects of a vegetarian diet and lifestyle. If your diet has recently become at least 90% vegan, he would like to ask you how this has affected your health. If you are willing to share your experience, send a brief written summary to him along with a way he can contact you. You may remain anonymous if you wish. Dr. Klaper is a pillar amongst vegetarian advocates out there. He is an inspirational spokesman/lecturer for the vegan lifestyle and the author of Vegan Nutrition: Pure & Simple along with other books and videotapes. (He's a real hero to me. /p.t.) Contact him at 2611 Vanderbilt Lane #2, Redondo Beach, Calif. 90278, 310/318-8092. (Note: John Robbins is the author of Diet for a New America.)

VUNA stands for Vegetarian Union of North America. It is a loose coalition of vegetarian groups affiliated with the International Vegetarian Union. They strive to promote a strong, effective cooperative vegetarian movement throughout North America. They sponsor the publication, "Guide for Local Vegetarian Groups" and publish the newsletter **VUNA views**. Send SASE to VUNA, P.O. Box 9410, Washington, D.C. 20016.

So, what is The VivaVeggie Society? The VivaVeggie Society takes vegetarian advocacy to the streets. VivaVeggie members confront 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 equipt with brightly-colored T-shirts with vegetarian messages, and plenty of fact-filled information. Founder Pamela Teisler wears the outfit shown on the reverse side of this newsletter. The mission? To pass out the flyer, "**101 REASONS WHY I'M A VEGETARIAN**," written by Pamela Teisler, and inspired by John Robbins' book, Diet for a New America. The VivaVeggie Society has been, and will be in the future, involved with various projects such as World Vegetarian Day, special mailings of "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian," and media awareness campaigns. **Donations can be sent to:** Pamela Teisler, The VivaVeggie Society, 234 Mulberry St., #17, NYC 10012 (212)966-2060

ALWAYS SEND A STAMPED SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE WHEN YOU WANT TO RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM VEGETARIAN GROUPS

... (Especially the VivaVeggie Society) /pt

Dear President Bush: I'm writing to persuade you to attend the UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (the Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil this June. We in the "North" must face up to our part in the devastation to the planet's environment.

All people in the entire world must try to work together to learn how all of us can do our part to turn things around; for the sake of those who will live after us.

You are at one of the most critical moments in time. I hope for the future generations that George Bush will be looked upon in the history books as a man who took the crucial steps to save the environment. /P. Teisler

DISSECTION ALTERNATIVE

A bulletin from PETA is out alerting students and parents in New York state that a bill has been introduced in the state legislature which would give students the right to choose an alternative to dissection. PETA urges that people write as soon as possible to your state senators and assemblymen in support of the bill S. 296/A. 366. For more information, contact Pat Graham at 1-800-922-FROC.



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