

The Mighty Convincer

101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian

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Above images are of Veggie Pride Parade NYC 2008, 2009, 2010 & 2011. Picture credits can be found on the back page.

No laws stop institutional cruelty on farms

1 The federal-level Animal Welfare Act does not apply to farmed animals, despite the name. And many state anti-cruelty statutes for livestock were conveniently stripped of any teeth in the 1980s and 1990s, just as large-scale intensive farming was getting a foothold. The Humane Slaughter Act does not apply to chickens, which represent over 95 percent of all farmed animals, and, in any case, is rarely enforced. The Twenty-Eight Hour Law says that livestock may not be confined in a vehicle or vessel for more than 28 consecutive hours without being unloaded, fed, watered, and given rest. This law is not effectively enforced and does not apply to birds. Farm cruelty is not regulated at the federal level; at the state level it is dealt with as a criminal offense. But local police rarely monitor it, let alone obtain a warrant to step onto a private farm. Since the majority of states specifically exempt "common," "customary," "normal," or "accepted" farming practices, there is essentially nothing to stop the institutional cruelty that is all-pervasive on today's farms.

2 Major studies in England and Germany have shown that vegetarians are about 40 percent less likely to develop cancer compared to meat eaters. In the U.S., studies of Seventh Day Adventists have shown significant reductions in cancer risk among those who avoided meat. Studies at Harvard have shown that meat eaters have about three times the risk for colon cancer as those who rarely eat meat. Clues to why? Meat is high in saturated fat and animal protein. It's devoid of fiber. It contains certain carcinogens (HCAs and PAHs), formed as meat is cooked at high temperatures. Red and processed meats especially are linked to cancer risk, notably colorectal cancer and cancers of the oesophagus, lung, pancreas, stomach, endometrium, and prostate. On the other hand, plant foods are rich in antioxidants and other anti-cancer compounds.

3 The world's total meat supply was 71 million tons in 1961. By 2007, this amount had quadrupled. In parts of the developing world, meat consumption rose by sevenfold in just the past 20 years. By 2050, when world population

is projected to rise by 30 percent, production of agricultural crops will need to increase by up to 100 percent, thanks to another doubling of world meat consumption. Such a prospect is truly sobering, since meat production plays a dominant role in just about every environmental problem on the planet.

4 World fishing has brought 29 percent of fish species to utter collapse, that is, to generally 10 percent of historical levels. A 2006 report predicted that essentially all wild edible fish will be gone from the ocean by 2048. Still, local supermarkets display plentiful supplies. And global catches continue to stay stable, though made up from fish at lower trophic levels. How can this be? According to a 2010 study, fish stocks would have long ago crashed outright if not for the industry's steady plunder of new fishing grounds, primarily in the southern hemisphere. A 2011 report from the International Programme on the State of the Ocean warned that ocean life is at high risk of entering an unprecedented phase of extinction. We must ask, what shall we say to our descendents when the fish are all gone?

5 Incredibly, 81 million Americans live with some kind of cardiovascular disease, thanks to the standard American diet. Heart disease alone costs the U.S. economy over half a trillion dollars per year. But hope is far from lost. Studies show that 82 percent of those who changed to a low-fat, low-processed-food vegan diet were able to reverse their CVD symptoms entirely. Virtually all heart diseases are a function of animal-based and processed foods, including bottled vegetable oils. Keeping stress levels down is important as well.

6 Cattle today are typically "finished" in excrement-replete feedlots. Cow feces is the carrier of the deadly *E. coli* strain O157:H7, which sickens 73,000 Americans every year. Thanks to break-neck line speeds of 400 animals per hour at the slaughterhouse, caked-on manure will migrate to edible portions during de-hiding. A single ground-beef patty may contain the flesh of hundreds or even thousands of animals. The USDA has a zero-tolerance policy for the O157:H7

strain. However, there are six other *E. coli* strains that infect 30,000 people every year as well, but few public health labs in the country test for them.

7 A U.S. meat-inspector-turned-whistleblower testified in 2010 that pigs in the slaughterhouse where he worked were being shackled and bled out while still conscious, and the animals were regularly being unloaded from trucks so aggressively they were forced to trample one another. Considered a troublemaker, the inspector was harassed and then shunted off to another plant where conditions were even worse. Meanwhile, a U.S. Government Accountability Project survey of USDA inspectors across the country confirmed that enforcement of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act is woefully lax. Inspectors often err on the side of inaction when confronted with a violation. And only about one percent of the Food Safety and Inspection Service budget had been designated for enforcement of the HMSA.

8 A tiny percentage of all the water on Earth is potable, that is, fresh. About 70 percent of this precious store is used in agriculture. Yet, because of increasing meat consumption, global water demand is forecast to go up by 40 percent by 2030. It's important to realize that half of all the world's cultivated grain is fed to livestock. So, when people hear the word "agriculture," they largely need to think *animal* agriculture. Production inputs for a single hamburger amount to 634 gallons of water, 25 times that needed for the equivalent in wheat.

9 In what is still the most comprehensive investigation of diet and lifestyle ever conducted, The China Study found that the consumption of surprisingly small amounts of animal protein is linked to chronic disease. The many findings from this grand epidemiological study are especially compelling because they allowed meaningful comparisons between populations with similar genetic backgrounds yet with nonhomogeneous diets. All in all, The China Study provides the ultimate vegan vindication.

10 Slim profit margins in poultry processing compel giant slaughter-

Livestock contribute 51% of climate gases

houses to turn to cheap, often illegal, labor. Poultry-line work is difficult, dirty, and dangerous. Generally, no one stays on worker payrolls for more than a year. Companies simply refuse to offer higher wages and better working conditions. Laborers work in a milieu of flying fatty fleshy pieces, roaring racing conveyors, and the constant fear of fellow employees wielding sharp knives in close quarters. Thirty thousand knife motions per day by one employee is not uncommon. Nearly 15 percent of workers face debilitating injuries on the job each year, mostly because of repetitive trauma of the wrists and fingers.

11 Today, more meat is produced on fewer farms. No trend in agriculture is more all-pervasive than this. Hundreds of thousands of small operations have been put out of business while industry concentration has placed total control in the hands of a few kingpins who dictate production methods. Traditional price discovery is no longer in play. Prices are set by an entrenched vertically integrated supply-chain, controlled by supermarkets, packers, and processors, forcing farmers and ranchers into low-profit contract arrangements for which they have no say. Pig and poultry growers, in particular, have been relegated to serf-like status. Down the line, animals are transformed into production units, the environment near farms and slaughter plants is destroyed, and the consumer is left with a product laced with health and contamination risk.

12 We humans share 99 percent of our DNA with chimps—with mice, cows, dogs, and daffodils, 90, 80, 75, and 33, respectively. Scientists are asking all new questions, and they're discovering that animals, including farmed animals, have high-level cognitive and communication abilities. Animals express a full range of emotions: fear to curiosity to glee. They will express compassion and act proactively to rescue or even nurse an individual from another species. Some animals are artists. The roots of morality (fairness awareness) go well beyond the human milieu. In a specific sense, pigs can readily understand the concept of a mirror. Sheep can recognize 50 spe-

cific sheep from two years prior when presented front- and side-view images; they prefer a happy human face to a sad one. And a cow will experience "eureka moments"—kicking up her heels and tossing her head when she discovers that a lever will allow her into a pasture.

13 The chemical process that converts atmospheric nitrogen into fertilizer is considered by some to be the most important discovery since the advent of agriculture. In 1905 it ushered in a world of food and feed in great abundance, allowing man to not only feed himself to excess but his livestock as well. Indeed, the discovery allowed humans to become habitually carnivorous. Unfortunately, it also brought a surfeit of "nutrients" into the environment. The water, air, and land across the globe are choking under their polluting burden. Dead zones, harmful algae blooms, and acidification are everywhere on Earth. Climate change must be counted as a consequence as well.

14 Genetics is as important a component of today's intensive farming as drugs and confinement hardware. The animals themselves, right down to their DNA, must stand up to the rigors of the industrial process, both in life and in carcass form. They must produce and reproduce quickly and do so on minimal feed. And the particular output that they unwillingly give forth must please the consumer in texture, taste, uniformity, convenience, and price. Today, mutant genes that would never have survived in the wild are cultivated in the laboratory to monstrous ends. Entire herds and flocks will be comprised of animals with nearly identical genes.

15 In 2006, the Food & Agriculture Organization/U.N. surprised the world with a report (*Livestock's Long Shadow*) declaring that livestock production contributes 18 percent of the world's human-caused greenhouse gases, noting that all the world's transport vehicles contribute just 13 percent. Soon after, Worldwatch Institute said that 18 percent was a gross under-assessment, with 51 percent being closer to the mark.

16 Historically, manure never presented a problem for farms. It

was part of a closed, multi-use operation where everything was utilized. That's all changed. According to a 1997 USDA report, America's farms generate 1.37 billion tons of livestock waste every year, which equates to 5 tons for every American. Such gargantuan quantities of manure came about for one reason: the trend toward farm specialization. By-product has no purpose on farm sites anymore; it becomes pollution.

17 Industrial agriculture is environmentally unsustainable in terms of water, topsoil, and fossil-fuel. It turns arable land into desert and forest into eroded wasteland. Yet, the level of meat production—the hidden purpose for industrial agriculture—grows steadily across the globe. And worse, tragically, while half of the world's harvest is fed to animals, approximately 925 million people worldwide (1 in 7) are undernourished. No matter the species, feed-to-flesh conversion is wastefully inefficient—beef, 8:1; pork, 3.5:1; chicken, 3:1; and farmed fish, 2:1. Just as with guns and butter, the world must choose. Feed human beings. Or feed animals to feed a select number of human beings.

18 American farmers administer 29 million pounds of antibiotics to their livestock each year. The drugs are routinely given in low doses to healthy animals to promote faster weight gain on less feed and to counter the effects of typically crowded and unsanitary conditions. The amount represents eight times the antibiotics taken by humans. Giving antibiotics to livestock has increased steadily since the 1940s, despite warnings from scientists that the practice puts human health at risk. Bacteria mutate to acquire antibiotic resistance, potentially nullifying the effectiveness of the antibiotics humans need to fight disease.

19 Dietary fiber is the indigestible part of food that absorbs water in the intestines, bulks up, and nudges on vital processes. Only plant-derived foods contain it. Each person should consume a minimum of 35 grams of fiber per day. Otherwise, one risks the onset of constipation, colitis, colon cancer, and hemorrhoids. Just look up the diaries of the famed Lewis and Clark. Their 19th cen-

No end to industrial ag's POP foodchain

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tury expedition was rife with frostbite, dehydration, sunburn, boils, colds, and flu. But the worst of it was the never-ending constipation, due to a diet of mostly wild game. Today's meat-loving Americans, ingest only about 12 grams of fiber per day.

20 Feedlot meat is a product of the oil age and a driver for the oil wars. When cheap oil is gone, cheap meat will be history. A pound of beef takes three-quarters of a gallon of oil to produce. A 1,250-pound steer essentially embodies a whopping nine barrels of oil. About 40 calories of fossil fuel are needed to produce a single calorie of beef protein. By comparison, only 2.2 calories of fossil fuel are required to produce 1 calorie of plant protein.

21 Fishers today employ trawlers, dredgers, longlines, and driftnets with the help of sonar, GPS, and satellites. The fish don't stand a chance. The world's longliners, for example, set 1.4 billion hooks every year. Their lines could encircle the world 550 times. The mouth of the largest trawler net can accommodate thirteen 747 jets. Global fishing capacity could actually haul in the current world catch times four. Add to this, a quarter of the harvested fish is estimated to be "by-catch," that is, from nontargeted species. It will be shoveled off ship decks, back into the water—stressed, mutilated, or dead.

22 To satisfy humanity's ravenous appetite for frogs' legs, a billion frogs are taken from the wild each year. The collective pillage is helping to classify amphibians as a whole the most threatened animal group on Earth.

23 Two facts contradict the conventional wisdom. Osteoporosis is rare in Japan where people eat almost no calcium-rich dairy products; and osteoporotic fractures are highest where people eat the most dairy products, namely in the U.S. and Europe. New research tells us that the best way to reduce the risk for osteoporosis is, in fact, to eat more alkalizing fruits and vegetables and less acidifying animal protein, cereal grains, and coffee.

24 The dairy industry has an unrelenting need: a steady supply of lactating cows. This requires constant impregnation—typically via artificial insemination. Surplus female calves and all male calves must go somewhere. Witness your typical

veal stockyard auction: hundreds of one-day-old calves penned together—prodded, confused, terrified, often subject to brutal weather conditions, each desperately crying for his or her mother, destined for bob veal (slaughtered immediately) or fancy veal (reason #94). Some will be lame or sick (reason #79). Such a fate!

25 Diabetes rates in the U.S. are among the highest and fastest growing in the world. A new clue to why could very possibly indict a common practice on America's industrial farms: recycling. Cow and chicken fat is fed to pigs and chickens, dead chickens and chicken litter (including manure) is fed to cattle, and meat and bone meal is fed back to the chickens, and on and on. Meanwhile, with each feeding cycle, highly toxic substances called POPs (persistent organic pollutants, such as PCBs and Organochlorine pesticides) are getting more and more concentrated in the mix. It's long been known that POPs are everywhere in the environment and lodge specifically in animal fat. Now, industrial agriculture is creating a toxic food chain that never ends. Alas, studies show a strong link between the onset of diabetes and POPs.

26 A 2009 Oxford University study discovered that vegetarians and vegans had body weights 3–20 percent below those of meat eaters. These researchers had previously discovered that the lowest weight gains over time could be found in people with high intakes of carbohydrate and low intakes of protein. Some years earlier, a Swedish study of 55,000 women and a British study of 65,000 men and women both found vegans to have lower BMIs (body mass index) and to suffer less often from obesity. Vegan food tends to be lower in calories by volume, and it usually contains abundant dietary fiber and so satiates quicker. Early in 2011, President Bill Clinton announced he had lost 24 pounds by switching to a low-fat, near-vegan diet.

27 A 2006 U.N. report declared livestock production worldwide accounts for 70 percent of all agricultural land and 30 percent of the land surface of the planet. Grazing occupies 26 percent of the ice-free terrestrial surface of the planet. About 20 percent of the world's pastures and rangeland (73 percent of dry pastures and rangeland) have been degraded to some extent,

World's meat addiction linked to peak water

mostly through overgrazing, compaction, and livestock-specific erosion.

28The American Dietetic Association states that "vegetarian...or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well-planned vegetarian diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the lifecycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and for athletes." No argument here.

29A *New York Times* story about a rural Idaho family describes an increasingly common situation. The Kudlows drank from a private well at one time but now spend \$150 a month on bottled water. They live within two miles of 30,000 feedlot dairy cows. The animals generate as much sewage as a medium-sized city, but, as is typical, treatment of the manure is not required. Bacteria, pathogens, and pharmaceuticals associated with feedlots contaminate the water. Nitrate levels six times those set by the EPA as safe were detected. The federal Clean Water Act remains silent about groundwater pollution, and state agriculture departments tend to side with the polluters.

30Broiler chickens—those raised for meat—are incubated and hatched by machine by the millions. Each is mechanically conveyed from hatchery to shipping box and eventually into massive windowless sheds with tens of thousands of other chicks for grow out. None will ever know his or her mother's protective wing. Naturally programmed to seek a pecking order in small flocks, the birds are kept perpetually stressed. Meanwhile, thanks to intensive single-trait selection and antibiotics, their bodies will grow rapidly to five pounds in 45 days, an accelerated rate that results in heart and painful orthopedic disorders. Flip-over and other diseases and infections from ammonia-soaked air cause five percent to die before slaughter—about 2,000 birds per shed. Those that live go to slaughter with their baby-blue eyes. A chicken in the 1950s grew to three pounds (market weight of the time) in 84 days.

31Clean-out is a humongous process that takes place between herd or flock deliveries at today's factory farms, a process that operators would rather consumers never see. First, the excrement must be removed with bulldozers to dumpsters or mini-mountains outside. Then starts the intense, meticulous process of scraping, power washing, and disinfecting. The animals, while resident in the barns, must be protected by strict measures of "biosecurity," so fragile are their immune systems. Disease outbreak is a constant threat. Like a quarantine ward, outsiders must shower up and walk through disinfectant before entering a room full of animals.

32Today, gigantic open-air cesspools or holding pits of urine and feces are typically situated adjacent to or beneath barns that hold thousands and even millions of factory-raised animals. They emit more than 160 volatile compounds contributing to an overwhelming stench—one that cannot be compared to everyday farm odor. It will hammer you like nothing you've ever experienced. Abundant dust at such facilities conveys toxic gases, endotoxins, and pathogens many miles away. Particles of manure, feed, soil, and bacteria can lodge in the lungs. And endotoxins can inflame respiratory tissues and trigger asthma, bronchitis, and allergies.

33A British study in 2002 involving 11,000 meat eaters, fish eaters, vegetarians, and vegans showed non-meat eaters, especially vegans, to have a lower prevalence of hypertension (the arterial disease that causes high blood pressure) than meat eaters, largely, it was concluded, because of differences in body mass index. The study echoed other peer-reviewed studies in the 1980s. Plant products generally contain less fat and sodium and have no cholesterol at all. Vegetables and fruits are also rich in potassium, which helps lower blood pressure.

34Humans eat animals, but what are the animals eating?: rendered parts of their own species, manure contaminated with hormones and antibiotics, and roughage in the form of plastic pellets, just to name a few. We've all

heard of grain-fed beef, but this rapid growth-promoting diet sickens the animals with bloat and liver abscesses; veterinary drugs must be administered. Europe has suffered several disturbing continent-wide dioxin-in-feed crises. Then there's the massive amounts of plastic trash that is contaminating the oceans. Its microscopic poisons inevitably travel up the food chain.

35In 2010, new FDA rules went into effect that require egg producers with 50,000 or more laying hens to establish measures to control rodents able to pass salmonella on to the birds. They also establish testing requirements for poultry houses and eggs. The rules theoretically prevent up to "79,000 illnesses and 30 deaths" per year. But the rules were instituted slightly too late to counter a salmonella outbreak, which turned into a recall of a half-billion eggs. An inspection found chicken manure piled 8 feet high, brown excrement seeping through foundations to the outside, access doors to pits bulging out from the weight of chicken waste, mice in laying houses, and massive infestations of flies and maggots.

36Less than one percent of the world's water is suitable for agricultural use and human consumption. Yet, to feed a seemingly uncontrollable desire for meat, countries around the world have given in to profligate pumping of trillions of gallons of aquifer water annually. Tables are dropping by 3–20 feet per year in countries such as China, India, Iran, Pakistan, and Yemen. In some cases, wells are half a mile deep. Under Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, the fossil water table is down by 100 feet. Since over-pumping is a global phenomenon, key shortages could occur all at once, creating a sudden and potentially disastrous episode of food scarcity.

37The USDA's new food diagram (ChooseMyPlate.gov) recommends nearly half of one's diet consist of fruits and vegetables. Amazingly, the meat group no longer exists; we now have the protein group, which could imply soy or other legumes. Unfortunately, the diagram still has a blue circle for dairy, a class of foods that at best are

700 CAFO manure spills in Iowa alone

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a poor nutrition source (see #43). Nutrition expert Marion Nestle said it best: "Why do we have a milk group? Because we have a National Dairy Council."

38 Defined in terms of manure output, 1,000 head of cattle, 700 dairy cows, 125,000 broiler chickens, and 2,500 grow-out pigs are all "equivalent" minimums for CAFO designation (confined animal feeding operation). The U.S. has about 19,000 CAFOs, and each has its own manure pit. A typical one may be several acres and 22 feet deep. These "lagoons" can and will rupture. Iowa, alone, has had 700 manure spills over the last 15 years. One massive breach in North Carolina in 1995 spewed 22 million gallons into the New River, killing 10 million fish.

39 Aquaculture manifests all the environmental drawbacks of industrial agriculture on land, and then some. Fish farmers crowd the animals in cages, forcing a heavy reliance on genetics and pharmaceuticals. Catastrophic mortalities from disease, natural disaster, and even power failure are ever-present concerns. The animal wastes present costs that producers tend to externalize onto the environment and the public. Feed-to-flesh ratios range between 3 and 15 pounds to one. Over 50 percent of the world's fishmeal is used in aquaculture, an obvious stressor on wild fish stocks. Numerous instances exist of farmed fish escaping into the wild, corrupting the genetic purity of native species and spreading disease.

40 In the mid-1990s, when people were going crazy about Mad Cow Disease, they wanted to get everything having to do with the cow out of their lives. But when they asked, "where's the beef?" they learned, it's everywhere! Cow fat makes cookies and salty snacks taste rich and lipstick glide smoothly. Cow proteins are in shampoo. Collagen, extracted from hides, balms wounds and puffs lips. Gelatin, made from hides and bones, is found in ice cream, gummy candies, and marshmallows. Add to these, cows are in paints, floor wax, asphalt, chewing gum, upholstery, juices, wines and beers, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and brake fluid. A huge meat industry translates into a hugely annoying by-products industry.

41 An undercover employee video of a massive sow gestation facility revealed breeding pigs crammed inside crates so small they could hardly move. (Typically, such conditions continue over the course of repeated pregnancies.) In frustration, many sows had bitten their bars till blood dripped from their mouths. Half-dead pigs were seen thrown into dumpsters. Premature piglets were strewn in manure pits below stall slats. The company, Smithfield, the largest pork producer in the world, had pledged three years prior that such conditions would be phased out.

42 Twelve hundred head of cattle—a relatively small feedlot—produce 54 tons of manure every 24 hours. Faced with so large an accumulation, producers everywhere are apt to just let the stuff pile up and be tamped down by the cows. The piles, however, can actually spontaneously ignite due to the natural composting process. Once a manure fire starts, it's hard to extinguish. It's nothing but a huge densely packed mound of solid fuel. And it will spew a mighty stench of polluting particulate for miles and for months.

43 It's a given that cow's milk is a staple in the American kitchen. But most of the world gets along fine without it. Indeed, it's a foreign substance to the human body linked to childhood diabetes, anemia in infants and children, iron-deficiency, constipation, allergies, cramps, diarrhea, osteoporosis, obesity, heart disease, cancer, and zits. It's laden with saturated fat and cholesterol and may contain artificial hormones, pesticides, and antibiotics. The claim that it is a good source of calcium is a dubious one. Cow's milk is for calves.

44 Worldwide, fishers receive about \$34 billion per year in government subsidies, which naturally encourages overcapacity and unsustainable fishing practices. The U.S. spent \$246.7 billion on farm subsidies between 1995 and 2009, much of it on corn and soybean price supports that lower the cost of feed and increase the supply of low-cost meat. Less than one percent of U.S. subsidies goes to fruits and vegetables. "Conservation" subsidies often go to U.S. farmers to help them with manure management.

Less than 1% of subsidies to fruits & veggies

In general, subsidies to the meat industry can be outright or carefully buried in the budget. Lists of them can go on and on. But the greatest perk to the meat industry of all is that which is entirely hidden from view: the exemption from animal welfare laws (see #1).

45 According to the World Wildlife Fund, so-called Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing describes a complex but organized criminal activity that is professionally coordinated and truly global (see #98). A pirate vessel may seemingly be owned by a company in the Caribbean but really be owned by someone in Spain. It might have a Russian skipper and a crew from the Philippines or mainland China. Its flag, that of Togo. The ventures use various strategies to evade apprehension and avoid laws, all to disguise the origin of the illegal catches. IUU fishing undermines efforts to actually manage dwindling fish stocks. Ultimately, it's the result of a ravenous world demand for fish.

46 Approximately 38 million cattle, calves, and sheep; 117 million hogs; and 9 billion chickens are slaughtered for food every year in the U.S. These numbers do not include hundreds of millions of livestock (mostly chickens) who die from stress and disease before transport to the slaughterhouse. Farms regularly bury, incinerate, landfill, and compost the carcasses, often polluting the environment and potentially spreading disease in the process. Rendering is thought to be less environmentally invasive, although the processing plants emit odor and deadly gasses such as hydrogen sulfide. About 47 billion pounds of raw animal material per year—mostly inedible trimmings from the slaughterhouse but also roadkill and shelter animals—is boiled, centrifuged, siphoned, and refined into 18 billion pounds of soap, pharmaceuticals, personal care products, chemicals, and animal feed. Stray ingredients, such as cattle ID tags, insecticide patches, syringe needles, flea collars, euthanasia drugs, pesticides, and Styrofoam trays (from unsold supermarket meats), regularly get into the rendered mix.

47 Man has long threatened species and ecosystems with elimination—in recent decades to an alarming degree. Hunting alone is responsible for 23 percent of all known cases of animal extinction since 1600. A sting operation at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport found 134 passengers on 29 incoming flights over a period of 17 days to be smuggling in fish or meat from livestock and wild animals. The researchers found 11 different illegal "bushmeat" species, including Nile crocodiles, red river hog, primates, porcupines, and pangolins. It is estimated that over 11,000 pounds of contraband bushmeat passes through the airport in luggage each week. Twenty-five percent of all primate species today are at risk of extinction.

48 Fruit is richly imbued with health-giving phytochemicals, antioxidants, vitamins, and fiber. Fruit is indeed synonymous with life. The human hand is a dexterous appendage fashioned by nature to perfection for picking, holding, peeling, and conveying these foods to the human mouth. Apples, avocados, blueberries, cranberries, flax, grapes, kiwis, prunes, and nuts of all kinds are some of the most nutritious foods you can eat. Each tends to specialize in specific health-giving attributes, such as lowering cholesterol, preventing kidney stones, or inhibiting inflammation.

49 Roots, stems, and leaves, just like fruits (see #48), are sources for anti-aging and anti-cancer properties. Vegetables contain chemicals that protect them from disease as they grow, and these can be passed along to the humans who eat them. Broccoli, carrots, garlic, greens, kale, and sweet potatoes, respectively, fight cancer, improve lung function, fight flu, clot wounds, counter depression, and protect eyes. The deeper the color of the veggie, the more protection you'll receive.

50 Nine billion broiler chickens per year go through America's factory-farm system. In highly concentrated, dust-filled, toxic environments, they suffer leg, lung, heart, and respiratory disorders. Terrified, they are sent to slaughter where they are painfully shackled upside down by their legs,

which have already been bruised and broken by the gathering process. The electrified trough stuns just enough to conveniently immobilize the birds, but not nearly enough to dull pain. Some birds miss the trough and the knife altogether and are burned to death in the scald tank where feathers are loosened.

51 Agriculture pollutes more than 100,000 miles of rivers and streams and 2,500 square miles of inland lakes in the U.S. Since 80 percent of America's grain is fed to livestock (vs. 50 percent, worldwide; see #8), agriculture in the U.S. must be thought of as primarily *animal* agriculture. Just three days' worth of our nation's chicken dinners produce over a billion pounds of litter and manure. The "nutrients" inevitably get into the environment. The Chesapeake Bay is just one example. Only 10 percent of it contains adequate levels of dissolved oxygen during the summer months because of algae blooms "nourished" by chicken and dairy operations in the watershed. Shorelines become so inhospitable that some animals will literally leap out of the water to breathe during episodes now dubbed "jubilee."

52 Beef cattle are best suited to moist climates, such as those in Europe where their ancestors evolved. But ranchers in America's West continue the destructive tradition of grazing their animals on the nation's most arid land. Grazing destroys ecologically regenerative riparian zones. According to a 2006 U.N. report, "the livestock sector may well be the leading player in the reduction of biodiversity...as well as one of the leading drivers of land degradation, pollution, climate change, overfishing, sedimentation of coastal areas, and facilitation of invasions by alien species."

53 Undercover videotapes of chicken plants show it every time: employees caught inflicting egregious cruelties upon the birds, essentially out of boredom or frustration. Workers at a Pilgrim's Pride plant in West Virginia in 2004 were seen "tearing beaks off, ripping a birds' heads off to write graffiti in blood, spitting tobacco juice into birds' mouths, plucking feathers to 'make it snow,' suffocating a chicken by tying

Human/animal sex (AI), routine on the farm

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a latex glove over its head, and squeezing birds like water balloons to spray feces over other birds." Workers made a game of throwing chickens against a wall. In mid-2008, workers at a Gemperle Enterprises farm in California were videotaped stepping on chickens or twisting their necks and inflicting protracted acutely painful deaths. According to one veterinarian, "There are multiple shots of moribund chickens with ailments ranging from broken limbs to abscessed cloacae to illnesses so severe the birds are unable to open their eyes or stand." The video showed hens being stuffed as young pullets into file-drawer-sized cages only to be retrieved months later for the throat slitter when "spent"—barely recognizable as birds or being alive.

54 When the meat industry imprisons massive numbers of animals in cramped, stress-inducing confinement, it provides the perfect breeding ground for deadly pathogens that infect the meat. Technologies to kill these pathogens have become big business. We have trisodium phosphate, acidified sodium chlorite, hypochlorite, bacteriocins, iron chelating compounds, electrolyzed oxidizing water, chlorinated hot water, organic acids, steam chambers, hot water dips, lactic acid dips, high-pressure processing, UV and pulsed light, copper ions, electrostatic spraying systems, and irradiation. Such a waste!

55 Bestiality is integral to today's farming operations. Numerous Web sites instruct in the craft of artificial insemination of pigs, turkeys, and cows. AI for pigs follows. *Collection (male)*: "Allow the boar to mount the dummy (hobby-horse-type furniture). ...Grab and extend the penis to display the erection. ...With your strong hand, gently massage sheath back and forth until he starts to thrust. ...Never allow your grip to relax, particularly during ejaculation, which on average requires 5 to 6 minutes. ...Sperm is collected in a 'vagina' or lined plastic cup." *Insemination (female)*: "The stockperson must mimic some of the stimulation normally provided by the boar, i.e. back pressure and flank and udder rubbing. ...The head of the catheter is inserted into the vulva and gently pushed

forward and upward. ...Contractions will suck the semen out of the flat pack."

56 Every year in the U.S., 30 million head of cattle are fattened in feedlots with nearly all receiving growth-promoting synthetic hormones. Downstream, researchers have recorded disturbing anomalies. In one study, wild female fish were observed to display male traits and wild male fish were observed to display female traits. Needless to say, the reproductive capacities in these fish became grievously compromised. A university investigation found multi-drug-resistant bacteria was more than three times greater in streams near factory farms than in streams not impacted by the farms.

57 Heavy demand for animal-based foods has brought giant meat processors, such as Smithfield, IBP, Murphy, Tyson, and Purdue, to the marketplace. Each of these companies has bullied its way to enormity in recent decades. But none has committed crimes so terrible as DeCoster Egg. Examples include: stinking barns full of filth and chicken carcasses left to rot (in one case, 100,000 chickens burned to death in a fire); a nearby town plagued by beetles (the company brought them in to tackle its massive fly infestation); discrimination against Mexican workers (a lawsuit was actually brought by the Mexican government); employees forced to live in slave-like barracks (a slew of labor and OSHA violations were reported as well); several massive and deadly salmonella outbreaks; and, of course, animal cruelty.

58 Cold, hard cost analysis will show you that it is more profitable to maintain one cow than four, if one cow gives as much milk as four. Indeed, after just a few decades of selective breeding, exactly this kind of "efficiency" exists. Today's cow yields a staggering 9 tons of milk per year. A cow's udder can weigh as much as a full-grown man, causing painful leg problems. The cows must endure tremendous stress. Five hundred gallons of blood have to circulate through a cow's udder to provide the nutrients for a single gallon of milk. It takes 350 udder squirts to accumulate a gallon, as well.

59 More than 95 percent of animal cloning attempts fail. Horrible out-

Vegans get safe levels of protein, iron & zinc

comes, such as oversized heads, twisted limbs, bloated fetuses, malformed internal organs, and faulty immune and respiratory systems are the norm. Some 6,000 animals alive today are the product of cloning, not including the failures. The technology is a radical departure from conventional trait selection, which has already made farmed animals into freaks. In 2008, the FDA declared that cloned meat was safe to eat. Soon it will be in markets everywhere, without identifying labels.

60 Necessarily excessive cultivation of feedgrains to supply flesh foods to a meat-eating world has, with its exorbitant fertilizer needs, transformed coastal areas into "dead zones"—one of the world's greatest emerging environmental challenges. A scientific inquiry in 2006 found that a nationwide dietary shift in America away from grain-fed beef to vegetarianism could reduce total land and fertilizer demands of Mississippi Basin crops by over 50 percent, with no reduction in total production of human-food protein. Ultimately, such a change could diminish the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico—the third largest in the world—to small or non-existent.

61 Thousands of domesticated animal breeds in poor countries are today at risk of extinction. The threat: commercial breeds imported from industrialized countries genetically fashioned for intensive production. The new breeds require high-tech management techniques and costly inputs such as high-protein feed, medication, and climate-controlled housing. But, as the price for oil creeps higher, these industrial breeds will no longer be viable. Meanwhile, the old breeds with local immunities that tolerated local weather conditions may by this time be extinct. In Europe, half of all breeds of domestic animals that existed in 1900 are gone. Worldwide, 30 percent of breeds are classified as endangered and critical.

62 The U.S. federal government spends about \$60 million per year to exterminate coyotes, mountain lions, wolves, and other predator species from the American landscape, because they are considered nuisance animals

by privately owned ranches. The program, Wildlife Services, employs highly toxic poisons (Compound 1080 and sodium cyanide M-44), aerial gunning, steel-jawed leghold traps, and other inhumane kill methods, often indiscriminately. Non-target wildlife—some threatened and even endangered—get caught in the cross hairs. In some cases the government spends more money on the program than any losses that might otherwise have been incurred. And, by the USDA's own statistics, most livestock losses do not come from predation but from weather, disease, illness, and birthing problems. Non-lethal methods to ward off unwanted animals exist, but ranchers generally don't consider them.

63 Worldwide, 60 billion animals are processed for human consumption each year, not counting fish. Most are transported at least once in their lives. Filthy, crowded, cramped, noisy, and terrifying conditions over extended periods are the norm. Stress and crowding facilitate the transmission of disease. Some animals are forced on numerous trips as owners respond to favorable prices. Cull animals, by definition, are "spent." Their transport experiences are particularly cruel. International commerce in live animals—with shipping distances often over a thousand miles—is routine.

64 Virtually all of America's 280 million egg-laying hens are relegated to tortured lives in cramped battery cages (48–77 square inches) until "spent," about 12 months. Debeaking—a painful procedure—is a standard industry practice employed to mitigate pecking damage between cage mates. Today's hen has been selectively bred to lay an egg nearly every day, about 12 times the natural rate. Depending on market conditions, a farmer may elect to force-molt the birds—sometimes repeatedly—to eke out a renewed laying cycle. To this end, the hens are kept in darkness and starved for 5–14 days.

65 Up to a third of U.S. cows are dosed with the genetically engineered dairy hormone rBGH, which boosts milk production by 10–40 percent. The drug tends to give the cows masti-

tis, a painful udder infection, prompting farmers to administer antibiotics. The FDA approved rBGH in 1993 after just one small, initially hidden, study by the manufacturer. Health Canada eventually learned and revealed the study's questionable results, itself putting forth other significant issues. The EU, Japan, Australia, and Canada all outlaw the use of rBGH. Labels stating "rBGH-free" are prohibited in the U.S.

66 Around 60 percent of human pathogens are transmissible from animals; among new diseases, the rate is about 75 percent. Scientists theorize that humans are more and more acquiring animal diseases because increasingly larger flocks and herds are being kept closer to larger and larger human populations. Scientists are spotting one new disease roughly every four months. Most are insignificant; others, such as SARS, bird flu, Nipah Virus, and Mad Cow Disease are grave indeed.

67 Protein is readily obtained by vegans, particularly when there is plenty of variety in the diet. Tempeh, seitan, veggie burgers, beans, and whole grains, such as quinoa, are good sources. Iron can be obtained with a vegan diet. Good sources include cooked soybeans, blackstrap molasses, lentils, tofu, cashews, dried apricots, and dark leafy veggies. Meat sources of iron more easily allow absorption, but vegans are more apt to get iron's companion nutrient, vitamin C. Zinc can be obtained from a vegan diet. Good sources include sprouted seeds, grains, legumes, tempeh, and sourdough breads. New research actually suggests that high amounts of iron in the blood are associated with atherosclerosis and free-radical damage. Zinc overdoses can lead to nausea, vomiting, headaches, fatigue, and diarrhea.

68 One answer to today's ocean fish plunder and the many crashed populations of fish across the globe is a now time-tested solution: marine reserves. Relatively tiny areas of the ocean bear this designation today. But everywhere fishing is placed off limits (e.g.: the North Sea during World War II and Cape Canaveral after the *Challenger*

List of livestock diseases is never ending

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disaster), fish populations rebound in spectacular displays. In a sobering indication of the scope of the damage, biologists are proposing banning fishing from, no less, a third of the ocean in a system of marine reserves, monitored by naval patrols and GPS.

69 A seemingly endless list of diseases and infestations afflict animals raised for human consumption. Just to name a few: Marek's disease, Nipah virus, Swine flu, Newcastle Disease, Poultry Enteritis and Mortality Syndrome, H5N1, Johne's Disease, Pseudorabies, Mad Cow Disease (MCD), Bluetongue, Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD), Swine Fever, Flipover Syndrome, and Screwworm. An entire industry is there to help farmers and ranchers battle them all. Pharmaceuticals will be administered production-line style, sometimes haphazardly, often preemptively. Vets hope for the best. It's often more cost-effective to just destroy an entire flock or herd. Catastrophic regional outbreaks (e.g.: MCD, FMD, H5N1, & Nipah virus), which do happen periodically, will require state intervention often on a massive scale involving thousands of government workers called into a grisly task of mass extermination.

70 Methyl mercury is formed when inorganic mercury—primarily from coal-fired power plants—is transformed by microorganisms in the environment. Exposure causes irreversible damage to the central nervous system and is tied to mutations and cancer. Official health warnings tell women intending to some day become pregnant to avoid eating certain top-predator fish, species that lodge the poison in their bodies in great concentrations. About 60,000 U.S. children are born each year at risk for neurological development problems due to methyl mercury overexposure in the womb.

71 Every U.S. presidential administration in recent decades has been dedicated to coercing trading partners to open markets to American meat. In a typical, if not robotic, statement, U.S. trade representative Ron Kirk told the Meat Export Federation in 2009 that he was using every legal tool at his disposal to keep pork markets open despite a swine-flu outbreak at the time. He also noted

that he'd continue to help reverse or mitigate trade bans because of Mad Cow Disease and hormones in beef.

72 In 2001, an entrepreneurial company said it had developed a way to neutralize deadly *E. coli* in meat: ammonia injections! The company declared the process safe, especially for trimmings often susceptible to contamination and otherwise relegated for use in pet food. The meat might stink of ammonia, but those trimmings offer savings as filler for hamburger patties. The USDA approved the process and for a while even stopped bothering to test meat from the company that utilizes the technique. Sure enough, samples kept coming up positive for *E. coli* and salmonella. Nonetheless, ammoniated trimmings continue to legally be sold in fast-food chains, grocery stores, and to the National School Lunch Program.

73 Except for the llama/alpaca, all 13 of the world's large domesticatable animals originated in Eurasia. The pig, cow, sheep, goat, and others must, therefore, all be considered invasive species to the New World. And, of all that were transplanted into the Americas, none becomes more feral more easily or reproduces more rapidly or better survives the wild than the hog. Today, wild-hog populations exist in at least 35 U.S. states. They are considered by some to be a problem and even a menace to farms and public parks. But their numbers continue to grow and expand, thanks to escapees from overturned trucks transporting hogs to the slaughterhouse (about 60 per year, nationwide, involving some 10,000 hogs).

74 Okanawa is home to the longest-lived people in the world, having the highest percentage of its population living to 100 years old. For one thing, the country treasures its old people. Regular exercise and sensibly sized meals also play a part. But how Okanawans eat also factors in significantly: low fat and primarily vegetarian. Most of the diet consists of vegetables, tofu, and miso with very little meat and fish. It's a sad fact that in the 1980s Okanawa's sons and daughters adopted the fast-food diet, which has ushered in the current era where parents oftentimes outlive their children.

Alt omega-3 sources: hemp, flax, walnuts

75 Russia and Japan remain treaty-less because of fishing disputes in the southern Kurile islands. The Russians even killed a man in 2006 when they fired upon a Japanese fishing boat in the area. In 2010, the Libyans sprayed bullets on an Italian fishing boat after chasing it across the Mediterranean. And the Canadians once fired on a recalcitrant Spanish fishing boat in the Outer Banks of Newfoundland, later bringing the illegal driftnets they confiscated to the U.N. North Korea regularly aims gunboats at fishers from South Korea interloping in its fertile waters. These two countries are technically still at war, so such incidents can at any time result in renewed hostilities.

76 Large concentrations of pesticides, fertilizers, and farm chemicals are seeping into America's aquifers, thanks to roughly 165 million acres of corn and soybeans that are planted per year primarily to feed the livestock to regularly bring meat to America's dinner plates. Some towns in the Midwest have consequently come to rely on their neighbors for fresher, though expensive, supplies of water. But a recent boom in cattle and pig operations has poisoned these stores as well, prompting plans for government-subsidized pipelines to link towns with major rivers. With the demand for meat continuing unabated, such plans of action have become strangely logical.

77 The consumption of fish is gutting the oceans of its biodiversity and threatening consumers with mercury and highly toxic persistent organic pollutants (POPs). But aren't the omega-3 fatty acids found in fish vital to human health? Yes, but much better sources exist. Fish, just like every food of animal origin, strains the kidneys with animal protein (see #9), adds cholesterol and saturated fat to the blood, and lacks fiber for proper digestion and colon health. The best sources for omega-3 fatty acids are plant-based foods, including green leafy vegetables, walnuts, hemp, chia seeds, and ground flaxseeds.

78 Farmed animals endure branding, castration, debeaking, dehorning, desnooding, ear notching, mulesing

(skinning of sheep hind ends), pinioning (wing-joint removal), tail docking, teeth cutting, and tongue removal, among other painful mutilations. The operations are commonplace and performed routinely on a mass scale. They're done to increase productivity and/or to compensate for severe overcrowding and stressful conditions. In order to perform these procedures, laborers typically employ restraint not anesthesia.

79 When a cow is unable to walk to her own slaughter, red flags need to go up. It's a warning that an advanced stage of Mad Cow Disease could have set in. U.S. law prohibits these animals, known as downers, from entering the food chain. Such signs, however, were blatantly and habitually ignored at a large-scale California slaughterhouse with repeated incidences captured on undercover videotape. When the footage became breaking news in 2008, it led to the largest beef recall in U.S. history, 73,500 tons! Stock hands were shown inflicting unspeakable cruelties on non-ambulatory animals, prodding them to slaughter. Later, it was learned, over a quarter of the suspect meat had already been consumed via the National School Lunch Program.

80 Industrial factory production best describes farming today. Sentient life is conveyed and processed using the batch method—tight confinement of the "raw ingredients" by the tens of thousands and even millions. But things can, and do, suddenly go horribly wrong and more often than one would imagine—think hurricane, snowstorm, flood, tornado, heat wave, mechanical breakdown, electrical failure, disease, or fire. The April 2011 tornadoes that hit Alabama, for example, demolished 200 chicken houses containing 3.2 million birds, which all had to be destroyed. News accounts of such events are typically short and local, concentrating on the economic losses to the farmers.

81 A diet rich in animal fat is associated with hormonal cancers. The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine warns that daily meat consumption triples the risk of prostate enlargement, regular milk consumption

doubles the risk, and failure to consume vegetables regularly nearly quadruples the risk. According to the Cancer Project of PCRM, vegetarian and vegan diets tend to be low in circulating levels of Insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1). Clinical case studies have shown that those subjects with the highest levels of IGF-1 had a 3.5-fold increase in breast-cancer risk, compared to those with the lowest. Also, according to PCRM, the process of breaking down lactose (milk sugar) into galactose makes cow's milk a risk factor for cancer of the ovaries.

82 According to overwhelming scientific evidence, fish feel pain. They also feel psychological distress and memory of that distress. Fish grieve and experience physical affection as well. They're smart, too, remembering certain predators for long periods of time. Other studies have proven that crustaceans, which are typically cooked by being boiled alive, also feel pain.

83 Farmed-animal disease can span entire regions and even across continents. When one is particularly contagious and any existence of it puts a country's disease-free export status in jeopardy, unfathomable numbers of animals may be designated to be destroyed. Emblematic of this scenario was the United Kingdom's Foot & Mouth Disease outbreak in 2001. As many as 10 million cattle, sheep, and pigs were exterminated and incinerated as a buffer, though only 2,030 animals ever contracted the disease. Cost borne by UK taxpayers: £8.5 billion (\$13.5 billion).

84 Today's behemoth factory farms generate vast amounts of volatilized ammonia, which is then redeposited on the earth where it can damage the ecological stability of forests. On surface waters, it contributes to eutrophication, a key human stressor on coastal ecosystems; algae blooms and mass fish kills can be the result. Ammonia toxins and volatile organic compounds are associated with deadly particulate pollution as well. In California's San Joaquin Valley, emissions from the region's 2.5 million dairy cows mix with mountain-trapped car exhaust to create a smoggy soup you can just about cut

80% of cattle slaughtered by just four firms

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with a knife. Asthma is a major problem for the area's children.

85 An important decade-long study by the National Cancer Institute looked at the diets of more than 500,000 people aged 50 to 71, and showed that those who ate the most red and processed meat carried the highest risk of premature death from all causes, including heart disease and cancer. The study illustrated in its 2009 report that if its numbers were extrapolated out into society as a whole over the course of a decade, the premature deaths of one million men and half a million women could be prevented.

86 The "chickenization" of the beef market is a trend that has mostly run its course. Inconceivably, only four firms control over 80 percent of all the cattle slaughtered in the U.S. today. We actually have 200,000-head feedlots—as unfathomable as that is. Meanwhile, between 1980 and 2010, the number of U.S. cattle ranchers went down from 1.6 million to 950,000—at the same time product output increased. Those who favor the trend—as do all who shill for oligarchistic control—argue using the word "efficiency." But an oligarchy is an oligarchy, and with its power of the people to advocate for animals, workers, and the environment is utterly smashed. (See #11.)

87 Swedish researchers announced in 2008 that a gluten-free vegan diet full of nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables appears to offer protection against heart attacks and strokes for people with rheumatoid arthritis. These ailments, as well as clogged arteries, tend to show up together. According to the researchers, "these findings are compatible with previous results of vegetarian/vegan dietary regimens in non-rheumatoid arthritis subjects which have shown lower blood pressure, lower body-mass index, and lower incidence of cardiovascular disease." They added, those on the vegan diet had lower levels of C-reactive protein, a compound that indicates inflammation, which is tied to heart disease.

88 Cardiovascular disease, obesity, and diabetes are totally preventable for at 95 percent of us just by changing our diets and lifestyles. These afflictions are even reversible. Heart and

blood-vessel diseases kill more people worldwide than all others combined. To end the insanity, all it takes is a nutritionally balanced low-fat vegan diet (including regular omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin B12), regular exercise, and stress management. The researcher who proved these statements, Dean Ornish, put it best: "I don't understand why asking people to eat a well-balanced vegetarian diet is considered drastic while it is medically conservative to cut people open or put them on powerful cholesterol-lowering drugs."

89 Factory-farm lagoons emit plethoric amounts of toxic gases, most notably carbon dioxide, ammonia, methane, and hydrogen sulfide. All together they cause headaches, shortness of breath, wheezing, excessive coughing, and diarrhea for workers and residents nearby. When the contents of lagoons are periodically sprayed onto fields, ostensibly as fertilizer, harmful substances spread into the air. Hydrogen sulfide is especially dangerous even at low levels. Its effects range from sore throat to seizures to irreversible brain damage to comas and even death. Hydrogen sulfide is also a sickening feature of the several hundred rendering plants that today dot the nation (see #46).

90 Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is one of today's emerging superbugs, sometimes called a flesh-eating bacteria. Antibiotics are useless against it. By 2005, MRSA was killing more than 18,000 Americans a year, according to the CDC. One strain of the infection gaining strength on Dutch and U.S. farms (ST398) seems to freely jump between pigs and people. Episodes start with a pimple, then grow into a saucer-sized rash, highly tender to the touch. With the rampant overuse of antibiotics in hospitals and on farms, bacteria such as these will continue to emerge (see #18).

91 The trend today is for egg producers to attach tiny porches to their barns to give the semblance of "outdoor access" for their birds. They're able to label the eggs as "free range" or "organic" in order to charge more for the product. Though the birds live cage-free, they rarely go outside. Most importantly, the confinement inside is intense, with a single build-

Mitsubishi rakes it in as bluefin go extinct

ing typically containing a colossal mass of up to 85,000 birds. Approximately 80 percent of the organic eggs on the market are produced in this way, according to a 2011 report. The term “free-range” for chicken eggs actually has no legal definition in the U.S.

92A study of 49 island countries found 55 percent of their coral reefs overfished. To sustainably harvest the million metric tons of fish taken annually from the islands, 30,000 square miles more reef—or the equivalent of nearly four Great Barrier Reefs—would be needed. Demand for reef fish is largely coming from Hong Kong traders, who are now supplying a burgeoning market in Mainland China. Reef fish take 5 to 10 years to reach breeding age and so are particularly vulnerable. Fish are captured live with cyanide, which, of course, destroys the coral in the process. Three quarters of the fish die before getting to market.

93Eighty percent of seafood sold in America is imported, primarily from developing nations such as China, Indonesia, and Costa Rica. At the federal level, America’s Food and Drug Administration inspects less than two percent of it. And few states have testing programs at all. One that does, Alabama, rejects up to 50 percent of what it sees, typically for the presence of antibiotics, parasiticides, fungicides, veterinary drugs, poisons in general, and just plain filth. In 2007, Alabama’s agriculture commissioner visiting China found fish being farmed in sewage.

94Male calves are just a by-product to the dairy industry. If not immediately slaughtered, kept for breeding, or sent to a factory farm for standard fattening, they will be raised for “fancy veal.” To this end, each calf will be torn from his mother just after birth and locked away in an immobilizing stall until slaughter. Each will be kept in darkness except for feeding time. The diet will be devoid of roughage. Excessive doses of hormones and antibiotics promote growth and artificially prolong life. Results after 16 weeks: a nearly full-grown but thoroughly sickly animal driven insane from every frustration and

privation but with flesh as tender, white, and pasty as a newborn’s.

95The meat industry is always quick to cover itself about the risks for pathogens that are inherent in what it sells. It’s very careful not to guarantee a germ-free product. Raw flesh, it says, must be handled properly and cooked thoroughly. Good, in theory. In fact, when using an ingenious study, Utah State University researcher Janet Anderson discovered that your everyday home food preparer is amazingly lax when handling uncooked meats. Simple kitchen practices that could prevent cross-contamination were not employed 24 percent of the time. Undercooking meat was found to be the norm.

96Mitsubishi is today accused of overfishing bluefin tuna and then hoarding thousands of tons of them in deep freeze. The Japanese mega-conglomerate is suspected of not only racing the species to extinction, it plans to profit wildly as and when that takes place. Sustainable commercial hauls have been set at 22,000 tons per year, but the actual catch is nearly three times that. Mitsubishi admits to controlling 35 to 40 percent of it. Bluefin is one of the world’s most endangered fish and is expected to go commercially extinct as early as 2012.

97If you buy chicken, you’re supporting a system of serfdom and gladiator economics. Those who actually grow out the birds are part of a draconian contract system, where 100 percent control resides with the company: Tyson, Perdue, Sanderson, Pilgrim’s Pride. Growers are typically required to regularly spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on capital expenditures, which bury them in perpetual debt. Once a year in a contest of sorts, grower is pitted against grower, and, as always, some will be forced into bankruptcy.

98As long as crashing fish stocks are not taken into account, the money benefits of illegal fishing still outweigh the costs and risks. As much as 40 percent of landed fish is illegal in certain fishing regions. Many developing countries—where the world’s fish is increasingly derived—simply cannot afford to

police their own coastlines. Some say so-called Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing has been curtailed with recent regulation. Catch certificates must be presented at most docks. But without airtight oversight and compliance worldwide, conservation efforts amount to almost nothing.

99To produce foie gras, male ducks are force-fed a stomach-gorging cup of corn pellets three times a day with a 15-inch feeder tube. This torturous process goes on for 28 days until the ducks’ livers, from which the pâté is made, bloat grotesquely to 10 times normal size. Mortalities are high due to disease, intense stress, and burst stomachs. Activist undercover video has shown row upon row of birds panting incessantly for air in the days just leading up to slaughter. So cruel are the practices that foie gras production is outlawed in fifteen countries.

100Over a period of 21 years, the German Cancer Research Center sponsored a telling epidemiological study involving 60 vegans, 1,225 vegetarians, and 679 “health-conscious” non-vegetarians who said they ate only moderate amounts of meat. In the end, there were 41 percent fewer deaths among the study participants compared with the general population. And the vegetarians had a 30 percent lower risk of dying from coronary heart disease compared to the non-vegetarians.

101A 112-page U.N.-backed report in 2010 enumerated several top priorities for protecting the environment. Along with curbs on fossil fuel use, it said, world farming practices needed an overhaul and urban consumers needed to convert to vegetarianism. But why stop at them? We now have all the reasons. It’s time to get hip and go veg, wherever you are!

Pamela Rice

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101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian

BY PAMELA RICE



photo by Alan Rice

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pamela Rice has been a vegan advocate for over 20 years. She gives talks on government subsidies to the meat industry and the environmental impact of the meat-centered diet. In addition to writing and speaking, Ms. Rice has organized numerous veg-events, most notably the annual Veggie Pride Parade (2008–2011). She founded and has been at the helm of the Veggie Center of NYC since 1999. And she published 50 issues of *The VivaVine: The Vegetarian-Issues Magazine* in the 1990s (funding needed for its revival). Call 212-966-2060 for more information.

You've read this pamphlet. You've seen the inspiring images from the Veggie Pride Parade on the front. Now you're saying, "Where do I sign up!" Welcome to a world of delicious, flavorful, and nutritious foods and a life of true compassion. Taking meat out of your diet is the best decision you'll ever make. And, not to worry, these days, the marketplace is chock-full of veg-certified products to make any transition an easy one.

Now that you're thoroughly educated on the reasons to go veg, it's time to take things to their logical conclusion: activism. Consider tabling in your neighborhood. Use this pamphlet—or any other produced by a rich array of animal-advocacy groups out there—as a free hand-out. Volunteering is a great way to meet other vegans, learn valuable skills, and, of course, get the word out! Then, if you're truly dedicated, start a vegan blog or business, or organize an event. The ultimate endeavor: go undercover with a videocamera at a farm or slaughterhouse.

HISTORY OF VIVAVEGIE SOCIETY

VivaVeggie Society is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to public education about the vegan lifestyle. When Pamela Rice formed the group in 1991, the objective was street advocacy—reach-

ing out to New York City pedestrians with her then newly minted "101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian." Today, there are 245,000 copies of the pamphlet in circulation. It's also available in book form from Lantern Books. Back in 1991, as now, Pamela would wear a signboard—created by her sister, Julia Fauci—that reads, "Ask Me Why I'm a Vegetarian." And people would! Thanks to a gift in the mid-1990s from costume designer Janet Bloor, the group has enjoyed the use of a giant "pea pod" suit (see below) to draw interest from the crowds. In 1992, Pamela founded and produced the group's own magazine, *The VivaVine*. In 1999, Pamela opened a vegetarian center, which she continues to maintain.

VivaVeggie has often enjoyed mainstream-media coverage of its activities, most notably, from CNN, *The New York Times*, *New York* magazine, and *TimeOut New York*. These, and many others, have covered the annual Veggie Pride Parade NYC, another project of the VivaVeggie Society with Pamela Rice as the coordinator. The parade makes its way through Greenwich Village and ends in Union Square Park for a giant rally and expo.

photo by Pamela Rice

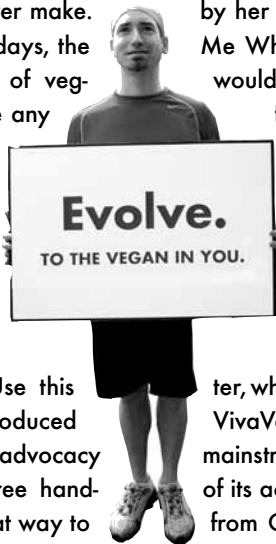


photo by Pamela Rice



FRONT COVER:

IMAGE DESCRIPTIONS & PHOTO CREDITS

Three images above title bar: 1. Left to right, behind banner: Bruce Friedrich (PeTA), Gene Baur (Farm Sanctuary), volunteer Kassinda Campbell, parade organizer Pamela Rice (photo by Alan Rice). 2. Volunteer Pei-Cen Lin (photo by Dave Bledsoe, FreeVerse Photography). 3. Penelo Pea Pod and Chris P. Carrot (photo by Derek Goodwin).

Banner shot, below title bar, left to right: Freya Dinshah (American Vegan Society), Marisa Miller Wolfson (documentary filmmaker), David Benzaquen (Farm Sanctuary), parade organizer Pamela Rice, Roberta Schiff (Mid-Hudson Vegetarian Society) author/speaker Tracye McQuirter, author/speaker George Eisman, and Dawn Moncrieffe (A Well-Fed World) (photo by Alan Rice).

Three images positioned vertically on right under title bar: 1. Volunteer Andrea Strauchler (photo by Dave Bledsoe, FreeVerse Photography). 2. Unknown subjects (photo by Gina Green). 3. Rachel Kay Platoni with sign by Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary (photo by Cristina Vinatoriu).

Cluster of 5 images at the bottom left, clockwise from upper left: 1. Volunteer Claude Matthews (photo by Alan Rice). 2. Speaker Wilson Morales (photo by Alan Rice). 3. Two unknown subjects (photo by Gina Green). 4. Name of baby unknown (photo by Gina Green). 5. Crowd (photo by Bill Goers).

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