



# Why Vegan?



Vegan  
— OUTREACH —

Becoming vegan is a powerful way  
to oppose cruelty to animals.

# THE TRANSFORMATION OF ANIMALS INTO FOOD

Many people believe that animals raised for food must be treated well because sick or dead animals would be of no use to agribusiness. This is not true.



## INDUSTRIALIZED CRUELTY: FACTORY FARMING

The competition to produce inexpensive meat, eggs, and dairy products has led animal agribusiness to treat animals as objects and commodities. The worldwide trend is to replace small family farms with “factory farms”—large warehouses where animals are confined in crowded cages or pens or in restrictive stalls.

U.S. society is extremely naive about the nature of agricultural production.

[I]f the public knew more about the way in which agricultural and animal production infringes on animal welfare, the outcry would be louder.

**BERNARD E. ROLLIN, PhD**

*Farm Animal Welfare, Iowa State University Press, 1995*



Hens in crowded cages suffer severe feather loss.



Bernard Rollin, PhD, explains that it is “more economically efficient to put a greater number of birds into each cage, accepting lower productivity per bird but greater productivity per cage...individual animals may ‘produce,’ for example gain weight, in part because they are immobile, yet suffer because of the inability to move...Chickens are cheap, cages are expensive.”<sup>1</sup>

In an article recommending space be reduced from 8 to 6 square feet per pig, industry journal *National Hog Farmer* suggests that “Crowding pigs pays.”<sup>2</sup>



**Birds** In the United States, virtually all farmed birds are raised in factory farms.<sup>3</sup> Under the crowded, stressful conditions, birds peck each other. To combat this, the ends of their beaks are cut off with hot blades, causing severe pain for weeks.<sup>4</sup> Some are unable to eat afterwards and starve.<sup>1</sup> Manure fumes can cause eye and respiratory infections and other diseases.<sup>5</sup>

**Egg-Laying Hens** Packed in wire cages (the industry average is less than half a square foot of floor space per bird),<sup>6</sup> hens can become immobilized and die of asphyxiation or dehydration. Decomposing corpses are found in cages with live birds. When her production declines, a U.S. hen is either slaughtered or “force molted”—deprived of food and water for days in order to shock her body into another laying cycle.<sup>3</sup> Since there is no profit in keeping male chicks alive, they are either suffocated in plastic bags, decapitated, gassed, or crushed.<sup>1</sup>

- 1 Bernard E. Rollin, PhD, *Farm Animal Welfare* (Iowa State University Press, 1995).
- 2 11/15/93.
- 3 Peter Cheeke, PhD, textbook *Contemporary Issues in Animal Agriculture*, 1999.
- 4 *Br Poultry Sci*, 1989;30:479.
- 5 *Diseases of Poultry*, 1997.
- 6 USDA APHIS VS, *Reference of 1999 Table Egg Layer Management in the U.S.*, 1/00.

Chick being debeaked.

For modern animal agriculture, the less the consumer knows about what’s happening before the meat hits the plate, the better.

If true, is this an ethical situation?

Should we be reluctant to let people know what really goes on, because we’re not really proud of it and concerned that it might turn them to vegetarianism?

PETER CHEEKE, PhD

Oregon State University Professor of Animal Agriculture  
*Contemporary Issues in Animal Agriculture*, 1999 textbook

For more information on factory farming (including its impacts on the environment), and other reasons to become vegan, please visit  
[www.whyvegan.org](http://www.whyvegan.org)

**Pigs** In the September 1976 issue of the industry journal *Hog Farm Management*, John Byrnes advised: "Forget the pig is an animal. Treat him just like a machine in a factory."

Many breeding sows spend their adult lives in stalls without room to turn around. This sow is strapped to the floor.



Today's pig farmers have done just that. As Morley Safer related on *60 Minutes*: "This [the movie *Babe*] is the way Americans want to think of pigs. Real-life 'Babes' see no sun in their limited lives, with no hay to lie on, no mud to roll in.

The sows live in tiny cages, so narrow they can't even turn around. They live over metal grates, and their waste is pushed through slats beneath them and flushed into huge pits."<sup>7</sup>



Cow with swollen udder on modern dairy farm in California.

**Dairy Cows** From 1940 to 1999, average per-cow milk production rose from 2.3 to 8.9 tons per year;<sup>8</sup> some cows have surpassed 30 tons.<sup>9</sup> High milk production leads to udder ligament damage, mastitis, and lameness.<sup>3,10</sup>

It is unprofitable to keep cows alive once their milk production declines. They are usually killed at 5–6 years of age,<sup>10</sup> though their normal life span exceeds 20.

Dairy cows are rarely allowed to nurse their young.<sup>10</sup> Many male calves are slaughtered immediately, while others are raised for "special-fed veal"—kept in individual stalls and chained by the neck on a 2–3 foot tether for 18–20 weeks before being slaughtered.<sup>11</sup>

Mrs. DeBoer said she had never milked a cow by hand, and never expected to. In the factory that is her barn, the employees, almost entirely Latino, manage the machinery.

"It's just a factory is what it is," she said. "If the cows don't produce milk, they go to beef."

"Urban Sprawl Benefits Dairies in California"  
*New York Times*, 10/22/99

Calf raised for veal.



**Transport** Crammed together, animals must stand in their own excrement while exposed to extreme weather in open trucks, sometimes freezing to the trailer.<sup>12</sup> These conditions can result in “downers”—animals too sick or weak to walk, even when shocked with electric prods or beaten. Downers are dragged by chains to slaughter or to “dead piles” where they are left to die.<sup>13</sup>



Turkeys on truck.

**What about Fish?** An Institute of Medical Ethics (U.K.) panel tentatively concluded that fish feel pain. Panel member Patrick Bateson wrote, “Few people have much fellow feeling for fish even though many fish are long-lived, have complicated nervous systems, and are capable of learning complicated tasks.”<sup>14</sup>

Industrial fishing is seriously damaging ocean ecosystems.<sup>15</sup> Each year, in addition to countless fish, approximately 80,000 dolphins and thousands of other marine mammals are snagged in fishing nets worldwide. Most die.<sup>16</sup>

Like this bull I had last year—this bull was one of the biggest bulls I’ve ever seen. It was at the very front of the trailer. And the spirit it had, he was just trying his hardest to get off the trailer. He had been prodded to death by three or four drivers...but his back legs, his hips have given out. And so basically they just keep prodding it. So it took about 45 minutes to get it from the front nose of the trailer to the back ramp....

Then from there it was chained with its front legs, and it fell off the ramp, smashed onto the floor, which I don’t know how many feet that would be but quite a racket...I just said, “Why don’t you shoot the damn thing? What’s going on? What about this Code of Ethics?”

This one guy said, “I never shoot. Why would I shoot a cow that can come off and there’s still good meat there?” When I first started, I talked to another trucker about downers. He said, “You may as well not get upset. It’s been going on for many years. It will go on for the rest of my life and your life. So just calm down about it. It happens. You’ll get kind of bitter like I did. You just don’t think about the animals. You just think that they aren’t feeling or whatever.”

interview with a Canadian livestock trucker  
from *A Cow at My Table*, 1998 documentary



A downed cow is left to die at an Oklahoma stockyard as her calf watches.

7 “Pork Power,” *60 Minutes*, 9/19/97.

8 USDA NASS, *Agricultural Statistics 2001*.

9 Associated Press, 9/20/96.

10 Textbook *Scientific Farm Animal Production*, 6th edition, 1998.

11 USDA, *Animal Welfare Issues Compendium*, 9/97.

12 USDA, *Survey of Stunning & Handling*, 1/7/97.

13 Video footage from *The Down Side of Livestock Marketing* (Farm Sanctuary, 1991).

14 *New Scientist*, 4/25/92.

15 “Overfishing Disrupts Entire Ecosystems,” *Science*, 2/6/98.

16 *Science*, 5/14/99.





## IF SLAUGHTERHOUSES HAD GLASS WALLS...

If they survive the farms and transport, the animals—whether factory-farmed or free-range—are slaughtered.

Federal law requires that mammals be stunned prior to slaughter (exempting kosher and halal). Common methods:

- ▶ Captive bolt stunning – A “pistol” is set against the animal’s head and a metal rod is thrust into the brain. Shooting a struggling animal is difficult, and the rod often misses its mark.<sup>17</sup>
- ▶ Electric stunning – Current produces a grand mal seizure; then the throat is cut. According to industry consultant Temple Grandin, PhD, “Insufficient amperage can cause an animal to be paralyzed without losing sensibility.”<sup>12</sup>

It takes 25 minutes to turn a live steer into steak at the modern slaughterhouse where Ramon Moreno works....

The cattle were supposed to be dead before they got to Moreno. But too often they weren't.

“They blink. They make noises,” he said softly. “The head moves, the eyes are wide and looking around.”

Still Moreno would cut. On bad days, he says, dozens of animals reached his station clearly alive and conscious. Some would survive as far as the tail cutter, the belly ripper, the hide puller.

“They die,” said Moreno, “piece by piece.”





"Hogs, unlike cattle, are dunked in tanks of hot water after they are stunned to soften the hides for skinning. As a result, a botched slaughter condemns some hogs to being scalded and drowned. Secret videotape from an Iowa pork plant shows hogs squealing and kicking as they are being lowered into the water."<sup>18</sup>

At the slaughterhouse, this pig has collapsed in his own vomit.



To induce paralysis in birds for ease of handling, electric stunning is normally used. However, it is not known whether stunning renders the birds unconscious;<sup>1</sup> the shock may be an "intensely painful experience."<sup>19</sup> Each year, large numbers of chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese reach the scalding tanks alive and are either boiled to death or drowned.<sup>20, 21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Meat & Poultry*, 3/97.

<sup>18</sup> "Modern Meat: A Brutal Harvest," *Washington Post*, 4/10/01.

<sup>19</sup> "Humane Slaughter of Poultry: The Case Against the Use of Electrical Stunning Devices," *J Ag & Env Ethics*, 7/94.

<sup>20</sup> USDA FSIS Animal Disposition Reporting System, 1998.

<sup>21</sup> USDA FSIS, *Meat and Poultry Inspection Manual*, part 11.

In my opinion, if most urban meat eaters were to visit an industrial broiler house, to see how the birds are raised, and could see the birds being "harvested" and then being "processed" in a poultry processing plant, they would not be impressed and some, perhaps many of them would swear off eating chicken and perhaps all meat.

**PETER CHEEKE, PhD**

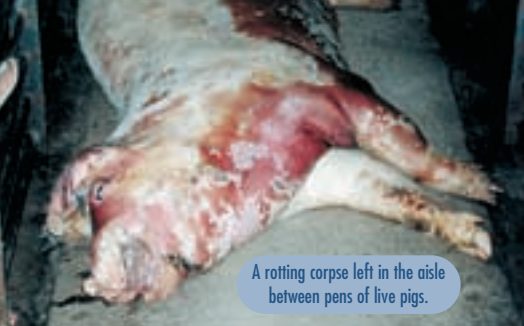
*Contemporary Issues in Animal Agriculture*, 1999 textbook



You have just dined, and however scrupulously the slaughterhouse is concealed in the graceful distance of miles, there is complicity.

**RALPH WALDO EMERSON**

"Fate," *The Conduct of Life*, 1860



A rotting corpse left in the aisle between pens of live pigs.

## Stories from BEHIND THE WALLS

If you go behind the walls the industry erects to hide the truth, you will find the situation worse than you could have imagined.

### Not Your Childhood Image by lauren Ornelas, [www.vivausa.org](http://www.vivausa.org)

When I saw what life is really like for pigs on today's farms, I was left feeling physically sick for days. I suppose I knew they lived on concrete, indoors in factory farms. However, I was not prepared for the intensity of their confinement, and the awful reality of their boredom.

Do we, as humans, having an ability to reason and to communicate abstract ideas verbally and in writing, and to form ethical and moral judgments using the accumulated knowledge of the ages, have the right to take the lives of other sentient organisms, particularly when we are not forced to do so by hunger or dietary need, but rather do so for the somewhat frivolous reason that we like the taste of meat?

In essence, should we know better?

**PETER CHEEKE, PhD**

*Contemporary Issues in Animal Agriculture, 1999 textbook*

In the gestation shed, I heard a constant clanging noise. It was the sows hitting their heads against their cage doors as if trying to escape. After a while, some would give up and lie down, while others again took up their futile action.

I saw the pens where pigs are fattened up for slaughter—essentially concrete cells, each holding about a dozen pigs. In one pen, there was a pig missing an ear. Another had a rupture the size of a grapefruit protruding from his stomach. A dead pig was constantly nudged and licked by others. The stench in these places is overwhelming.

Pig with stomach rupture.

At the larger farms I visited in North Carolina, there were thousands of pigs housed in sheds. Many were dead or dying—one actually died right in front of me as I videotaped. Dead pigs had been left in the pens with the living; other pigs had been tossed in the aisles—barely alive, unable to reach food or water.







Lynn, just rescued from the manure pits, her comb caked with feces.

With increased knowledge of the behaviour and cognitive abilities of the chicken, has come the realization that the chicken is not an inferior species to be treated merely as a food source.

**LESLEY J. ROGERS, PhD**

*The Development of Brain and Behaviour in the Chicken, 1995*

## The Rescue from [www.isecruelty.com](http://www.isecruelty.com)

On May 23, 2001, investigators openly rescued eight hens, in dire need of immediate veterinary care, from a factory farm in Cecilton, Maryland.

Jane, a hen found pinned by one wing in the wire bars of her cage, survived the amputation of her wing and enjoyed sunbathing, running through the grass, dust-bathing, jumping onto her perch at night, and eating her favorite treat—grapes.

Jane was free from the exploitation of the egg industry for six months before succumbing to cancer.

The hens, practically featherless and very despondent when rescued, were given a second chance at life. One year later, Jane's seven friends are alive and doing well—enjoying a virtual paradise compared to their former existence inside a factory farm. Unfortunately, approximately 280 million hens remain in U.S. battery cages.



Above: Jane, immediately after rescue, waiting to be examined by a veterinarian before being taken to her new home. Right: Jane, just three months after rescue.



Christina had a fluid-filled cyst covering her eye when rescuers found her.

The question is not,  
*Can they reason?* nor,  
*Can they talk?* but,  
*Can they suffer?*

**JEREMY BENTHAM**

*An Introduction to the Principles of Morals & Legislation, 1789*





Above: Tooth clipping, debeaking, dehorning, tail docking, branding, and castration are standard agricultural practices—often performed without anesthesia.<sup>11</sup> Right: Entangled in the bars of her cage, a hen is left with no access to food or water.



Historically, man has expanded the reach of his ethical calculations, as ignorance and want have receded, first beyond family and tribe, later beyond religion, race, and nation.

To bring other species more fully into the range of these decisions may seem unthinkable to moderate opinion now. One day, decades or centuries hence, it may seem no more than “civilized” behavior requires.

“What Humans Owe to Animals”  
*Economist*, 8/19/95

## Widening the Circle

True human goodness, in all its purity and freedom, can come to the fore only when its recipient has no power.

Humanity’s true moral test, its fundamental test (which lies deeply buried from view), consists of its attitude towards those who are at its mercy: animals.

And in this respect humankind has suffered a fundamental debacle, a debacle so fundamental that all others stem from it.

MILAN KUNDERA

*The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 1984



Crated calves live in their own excrement.

Humans—who enslave, castrate, experiment on, and fillet other animals—have had an understandable penchant for pretending animals do not feel pain. A sharp distinction between humans and “animals” is essential if we are to bend them to our will, make them work for us, wear them, eat them—without any disquieting tinges of guilt or regret.

Ducks and geese are forced to produce liver pâté.

It is unseemly of us, who often behave so unfeelingly toward other animals, to contend that only humans can suffer. The behavior of other animals renders such pretensions specious. They are just too much like us.

DR. CARL SAGAN &  
DR. ANN DRUYAN

*Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, 1992



# A Healthy Way to Live

A vegan diet can be very healthful. In fact, many people initially stop eating animal products to benefit their health.

According to the American Dietetic Association's position paper, vegetarian diets are associated with a reduced risk for obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, colon cancer, lung cancer, and kidney disease.<sup>22</sup>

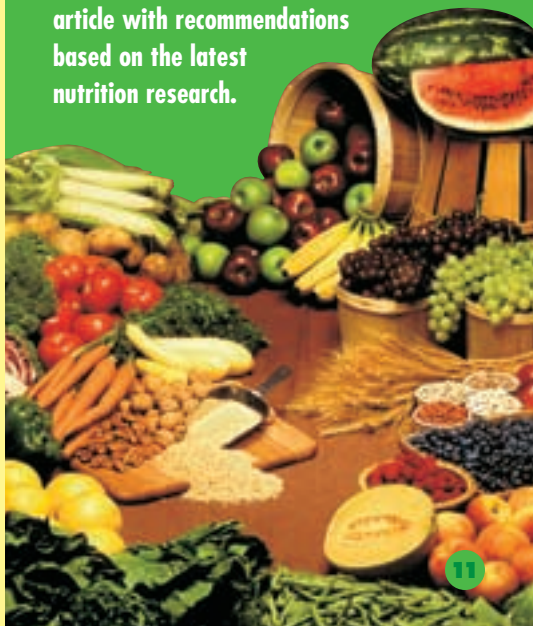
The *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* recently published a series of papers<sup>23</sup> describing the benefits of basing one's diet on plant foods:

- High fruit and vegetable consumption is associated with a reduced risk for cardiovascular disease, several common cancers, and other chronic diseases (such as macular degeneration and cataracts).
- Legumes (e.g., beans, peas, lentils, and peanuts) are excellent sources of protein, fiber, and a variety of micronutrients and phytochemicals that may protect against disease.
- Regular consumption of nuts is linked with a lower risk for heart disease and lower mortality rates.
- Whole-grain consumption is associated with a reduced risk for heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and stomach and colon cancers.



Simply avoiding animal products will not ensure optimal health. Like everyone, vegans should eat a balanced diet. **Protein, vitamins B12 and D, omega-3 fats, calcium, and iodine are important.**

See [www.veganoutreach.org/health](http://www.veganoutreach.org/health) and/or contact us for a free copy of our **Vegan Starter Pack**, which includes "Staying a Healthy Vegan"—a detailed article with recommendations based on the latest nutrition research.



22 J Am Diet Assoc, 1997 Nov;97(11):1317–21 ([www.eatright.org/adap1197.html](http://www.eatright.org/adap1197.html)).

23 Am J Clin Nutr, 1999 Sep;70:429–634.





Vegan bacon bits and cheeses made from soy, rice, or almonds are available in supermarkets.

When I met my first vegetarian, he told me he had not eaten meat for fourteen years.

I looked at him as if he had managed to hold his breath that entire time.

Today I know there is nothing rigorous or strange about eating a diet that excludes meat.

**ERIK MARCUS**

*Vegan: The New Ethics of Eating, 1998*



Popular favorites, such as burgers and apple pie, can be prepared with vegan ingredients.

## What to Eat?

When changing your diet, it may take time to explore new foods and develop a routine. There are many different products from which to choose—keep experimenting to find your personal favorites.

You can generally shop for vegan foods at supermarkets, natural food stores, and co-ops. Vegan selections are usually offered at Chinese, Indian, Italian, Mexican, Middle Eastern, Thai, and other ethnic restaurants, as well as many chains, such as Papa John's, Pizza Hut, Subway, and Taco Bell—just ask!

When baking, you can substitute eggs with Ener-G Egg Replacer, cornstarch (2 T per egg), or bananas (one per egg).

Soy, rice, and nut milks can be used in place of cows' milk. These and other dairy alternatives—including vegan cheeses, yogurts, and frozen desserts—can be purchased, or prepared at home.



Vegan twists on familiar recipes, often made with seitan (or "wheat meat") and other meat substitutes, can be found in many cookbooks (such as

*Vegan Vittles*) and on a large variety of Internet web sites.

Our free **Vegan Starter Pack** contains a vegan foods glossary and several easy recipes, including seitan and "cheezes." See page 15 for ordering information.



A growing number of vegan products are on the market.

## Some simple meal ideas:

### ► Breakfast

- Pancakes
- Soy yogurt
- Fruit smoothie
- Bagel or toast with jelly
- Oatmeal or other hot cereal
- Cereal or granola with nondairy milk



### ► Lunch/Dinner

- Mock lunchmeat sandwich
- Vegetarian hot dog
- Grain or soy burger
- Bean burrito
- Tofu lasagna
- Seitan casserole
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Pasta and tomato sauce
- Baked tempeh or tofu sandwich
- Soup or chili (over pasta or rice)
- Baked, mashed, or fried potatoes
- Tofu, tempeh, or seitan stir-fry



Vegans enjoy delicious dairy-free desserts.

### ► Snacks/Dessert

- Pie, cookies, cake, or vegan ice cream
- Raisins, figs, or dried apricots
- Peanuts, almonds, or walnuts
- Banana, apple, or orange
- Pretzels or popcorn
- Chips and salsa
- Trail mix
- Clif Bar





# Vegan Outreach

Being vegan isn't about avoiding a list of ingredients—it's about working to reduce suffering.

Regardless of any other beliefs we hold and however else we choose to lead our lives, each of us can decide to act with kindness and compassion.

Making humane choices is the ultimate affirmation of our humanity.



[W]hen non-vegetarians say that "human problems come first," I cannot help wondering what exactly it is that they are doing for human beings that compels them to continue to support the wasteful, ruthless exploitation of farm animals.

**PETER SINGER**

*Animal Liberation, 1990*



If you would like to share the information in this brochure, Vegan Outreach can provide you with copies of *Why Vegan?* and/or *Vegetarian Living* to distribute in your area. Our free *Vegan Advocacy* booklet provides more ideas for outreach.

Anyone considering becoming vegan is encouraged to contact us for our free *Vegan Starter Pack*, which includes "Staying a Healthy Vegan"—an article important for optimal health. The booklet also contains a vegan foods glossary, recipes, essays, questions & answers, and a list of other resources.





**A 2000 National Zogby Poll estimated the number of U.S. vegans to be about two and a half million.**

Also available from Vegan Outreach:

- **What Would Jesus Eat...Today?** from the Christian Vegetarian Association...free
- **Animal Liberation** Philosophical discussion of animal exploitation; P. Singer...\$14
- **Becoming Vegan** Excellent compilation of current nutritional understanding and menu planning; B. Davis & V. Melina...\$19
- **Vegan Vittles** Seitan, tofu, "uncheese" recipes and more; J. Stepaniak...\$15
- **Meet Your Meat** VHS documentary...\$9

*All prices include shipping and handling.*

See [www.veganoutreach.org/catalog](http://www.veganoutreach.org/catalog) to place an order on-line, or write to us at

## **Vegan Outreach**

211 Indian Drive ■ Pittsburgh, PA 15238

[vegan@veganoutreach.org](mailto:vegan@veganoutreach.org)



For more information, visit our web site at

**[www.veganoutreach.org](http://www.veganoutreach.org)**

or call us at 412-968-0268

Many of the photographs that appear in this booklet were provided courtesy of Compassionate Action for Animals, Compassion Over Killing, Farm Sanctuary, Mercy For Animals, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, USDA, *Viva! USA*



**Veganism has given me a higher level of awareness and spirituality.**

**DEXTER SCOTT KING**

son of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
*Vegetarian Times*, 10/95



I think everybody has that capacity  
to stop and think and say,  
"If I knew you, I wouldn't eat you."

And in some ways, it really is that simple.

**TOM REGAN, PhD**

North Carolina State University Professor of Philosophy  
from *A Cow at My Table*



It is easy for us to criticize the prejudices  
of our grandfathers, from which  
our fathers freed themselves.

It is more difficult to distance  
ourselves from our own views,  
so that we can dispassionately  
search for prejudices among  
the beliefs and values we hold.

**PETER SINGER**

Princeton University Professor of Bioethics  
*Practical Ethics*, 1993

*Distributed courtesy of...*



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web site [veganoutreach.org](http://veganoutreach.org) • email [vegan@veganoutreach.org](mailto:vegan@veganoutreach.org)



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