



## VEGETARIAN FACT SHEET

How Eating Animals, Affects Our Health, The Environment, and Animal Welfare

### TAKE THE VEGGIE PLUNGE: DO IT FOR YOUR HEALTH!

- According to New Century Nutrition (a project of **Dr. T. Colin Campbell**, the Principal Investigator in the Cornell-Oxford-Beijing China Health Study): "The evidence is in from the scientific and medical communities that individuals who consume a plant-based diet have lower blood cholesterol levels, lower heart disease risk, lower blood pressure, and reduced risk of cancer, diabetes, and other 'diseases of nutritional extravagance.'"
- The **American Dietetic Association** reports that "scientific data suggest positive relationships between diets containing vegetables and reduced risk for several chronic degenerative diseases and conditions, including obesity, coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes ... and some types of cancer. Eating the recommended 2-3 servings of fruits and 3-5 servings of vegetables each day is a good place to start. Fruits and vegetables provide important nutrients including antioxidants such as vitamins C and E, beta carotene and lycopene. Antioxidants have disease-fighting properties that protect cells from damage by substances called free radicals. Antioxidants work by neutralizing free radicals."
- Esteemed cardiology expert, **William Roberts**, has concluded that the most significant risk factor for heart disease is the lifetime presence of a blood cholesterol level above 150. While people at high risk for heart disease may have cholesterol levels of over 300, the average cholesterol level of vegans in the U.S. is 128.
- **Dr. Dean Ornish**, founder and president of the nonprofit Preventive Medical Research Institute and author of five best-selling books on health and reversal of heart disease, notes that: "Chicken has as much cholesterol, ounce-for-ounce, as beef. And whether your fat comes from meat, poultry, eggs, or milk, a high ratio of the fat will be saturated, which further drives up your blood cholesterol levels. This link between animal products and heart disease is very well documented. It's no surprise that half of all Americans develop heart disease, because the typical U.S. diet puts almost everyone at risk. Every meal that is rich in animal products has an immediate impact on heart risks. The blood literally becomes thick with cholesterol and other lipids, which are deposited on the body's arteries."
- **Erik Marcus**, author of *Vegan: The New Ethics of Eating*, notes: "One major study published in the British Medical Journal involving 6,000 adults determined that meat eaters are twice as likely to die from cancer as vegetarians. After adjusting for non-dietary lifestyle factors, the vegetarians' risk of dying of cancer was still 40 percent less than that of the meat eaters! These findings corroborate studies from Britain, Germany, Japan, and Sweden, all showing that meat eaters suffer greater overall cancer deaths than do vegetarians. Dr. T. Colin Campbell's China Project shows that not just meat but all animal proteins have the potential to promote cancer, and Campbell cites other studies that show that carcinogenesis can be 'turned on' by animal protein and 'turned off' by plant protein."
- The **American Cancer Society's** nutritional guidelines advise people to "limit consumption of meats, especially high-fat meats. Emphasize beans, grains, and vegetables in meals to help shift dietary patterns to include more foods from plant rather than animal sources." In comparing the cancer risk of vegetarians to that of the general population, Dr. Marion Nestle, of the American Cancer Society, offered that "vegetarians and vegans have one-third to one-half the cancer risk of omnivores."
- According to a new report from **Mintel Consumer Intelligence**, research shows that the vegetarian food market will continue to grow for the next five years at a rate of 100% - 125%. The market is projected to be worth \$1.25 billion in 2001. As more Americans move into their middle years, the report offers, they are becoming more proactive about their own health and the health of their families. While only 2.5% of American consumers are consistent vegetarians, it is estimated that 25% of consumers replace meat with meat alternatives at least for some meals.

## TAKE THE VEGGIE PLUNGE: DO IT FOR OUR PLANET!

- The **Union of Concerned Scientists** identifies meat eating as the second most eco-destructive practice (after driving cars) in which individual citizens partake.
- The **Worldwatch Institute** notes that meat consumption creates “new pressures on land and water resources, contributing to water pollution and exacerbating global warming.”
- A report prepared for Iowa **Senator Tom Harkin (D)** and the **Senate Agricultural Committee** says that animal waste is the largest contributor to pollution in 60 percent of the rivers and streams classified as “impaired” by the Environmental Protection Agency.
- In Maryland, chickens outnumber people 59 to 1 and produce 350,000 tons of manure per year. Much of this manure ends up in tributaries leading to Chesapeake Bay. The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s** W. Michael McCabe calls chicken waste the single greatest threat to the water quality of Maryland’s Eastern Shore.
- According to an article published by the **Sierra Club**, more than 100 North Carolina hog operations have been caught illegally dumping manure into waterways during the past few years, and about half of the lagoons in the state are leaking. In a single year, 35 million gallons of animal waste — three times more than the oil spilled by the Exxon Valdez — poured into state waterways, killing 10 million fish.
- Manure runoff has been identified as a culprit in the contamination of fisheries along 60,000 miles of streams, according to the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**.
- According to **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA) tests, the groundwater of 17 states is impaired by feedlot manure containing fecal streptococci and fecal coliform bacteria.

## TAKE THE VEGGIE PLUNGE: DO IT FOR THE ANIMALS!

- According to the **United States Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service**, 9.713 billion animals were killed for food in the U.S. in the year 2000. This does not include fish and sea animals, for whom the numbers range close to 15 billion per year.
- Each full-grown chicken in a factory farm has as little as six-tenths of a square foot of space. Because of the crowding, they often become aggressive and sometimes eat each other. This has led to the painful practice of debeaking the birds. (Horrigan, Leo, Lawrence, Robert S., Walker, Polly, “How Sustainable Agriculture Can Address the Environmental and Human Health Harms of Industrial Agriculture,” **Johns Hopkins University’s Center for a Livable Future**, July 9, 1999)
- Hogs become aggressive in tight spaces and often bite each other’s tails, which has caused many farmers to cut the tails off. (Ibid)
- Concrete or slatted floors allow for easy removal of manure, but because they are unnatural surfaces for pigs, the animals often suffer skeletal deformities. (Ibid)
- Ammonia and other gases from manure irritate animals’ lungs, to the point where over 80% of US pigs have pneumonia upon slaughter. (Ibid)
- Due to genetic manipulation, 90% of broiler chickens have trouble walking. (Erik Marcus, *Vegan: The New Ethics of Eating*, McBooks, 1998).
- A **Washington Post** report (Washington Post, 4/10/01) based on enforcement records, interviews, videos and worker affidavits detailed repeated violations of the Humane Slaughter Act at dozens of US slaughterhouses. The violations ranged from overcrowded stockyards to animals being cut, dismembered, skinned, or scaled while still conscious.