



25

REASONS

to Try Vegetarian



This brochure explores 25 of the countless reasons more and more Canadians are choosing to forgo meat, and enjoy a diet based on health, compassion, and sustainability.

1 To Reduce Your Risk of Cancer

According to the Dietitians of Canada, vegetarians have lower rates of certain types of cancer.

For example, the massive Adventist Health Study found that meat-eaters had a 54% increased risk for prostate cancer and an 88% increased risk for colorectal cancer, even after controlling for age, sex and smoking.

2 To Reduce Your Risk of Diabetes

The Dietitians of Canada states that vegetarian diets are associated with a lower risk of type 2 diabetes.

In one study, risk for diabetes was 80% higher in men who ate meat, compared to vegetarian men.

3 To Prevent Global Climate Change

According to the United Nations, raising animals for food produces more greenhouse gas emissions than all of the cars, trucks, planes, ships and other forms of transportation combined.

Researchers at the University of Chicago calculated that each person who adopts a vegan diet prevents the equivalent of 1.5 tons of CO₂ emissions every year.

Which causes more global warming?



transportation



meat

The Vegetarian 4 Food Groups



FRUIT

3 or more servings a day



BEANS & LENTILS

2 or more servings a day



VEGETABLES

4 or more servings a day



WHOLE GRAINS

5 or more servings a day



We Don't Have to Kill to Be Healthy

Animals value their lives just as we value ours. They don't want to be killed. Nor do they want to see their friends or family members killed. Is it morally justifiable for us to take animals' lives – and force them to endure lifetimes of suffering – simply to satisfy a palate preference?

According to the Dietitians of Canada, a vegan diet can meet all nutritional needs, and “[i]t is safe and healthy for pregnant and breastfeeding women, babies, children, teens and seniors.”

Not only are vegetarian diets appropriate for people of all ages, but our bodies can thrive on them. In fact, studies of vegetarian Seventh Day Adventists – one of the largest populations of vegetarians in North America – indicate that they are among the healthiest and longest-living people in the world.

“My best year of track competition was the first year I ate a vegan diet.”

- Carl Lewis, Olympic Champion

VEGETARIAN HEALTH

WHAT ABOUT PROTEIN?

It's easy to get enough protein on a well-balanced vegan diet. High-protein plant foods include beans, lentils, peanut butter, oats, veggie burgers, tofu, tempeh, seitan, soy milk and more.

DON'T I NEED TO EAT DAIRY PRODUCTS FOR CALCIUM?

Humans have no need for cow's milk. Just as dog's milk is intended for puppies, and human's milk is intended for human infants, cow's milk is intended for calves – not humans. There are many excellent sources of plant-based calcium, including kale, broccoli, collard greens, fortified non-dairy milks and fortified orange juice.

TAKE YOUR B12

The one vitamin vegetarians should pay special attention to is B12 – a vitamin not reliably found in plants. Luckily, getting B12 is as easy as taking a supplement or a multivitamin.

Visit VeganHealth.org for more information.



BRANDING: Cattle are branded with a red-hot iron, causing third-degree burns to the skin.



CASTRATION: The piglet's scrotum is cut open and his testicles are ripped out.

5 Farmed Animals Are Mutilated without Painkillers

Farmed animals are mutilated in a number of ways to re-purpose them for the economic objectives of factory farms.

For example, animals are castrated to change the taste of their flesh, and they are branded and tattooed for identification purposes.

In an attempt to cut costs, these agonizing mutilations are usually performed without any painkillers.



DEBEAKING: Part of the hen's beak is seared off with a hot blade or laser.



6 To Reduce Your Risk of Heart Disease

Vegetarian diets are associated with a lower risk of heart disease, and on average, vegans have cholesterol levels more than 40 points lower than meat-eaters.

Physicians such as Dr. Dean Ornish and Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn have stopped and even reversed heart disease by placing patients on programs that include plant-based diets.

Visit HeartAttackProof.com for more information.

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Male Chicks Are Ground Up Alive by the Egg Industry

Since male chicks of the egg-laying breed do not lay eggs, and do not grow quickly enough to be raised profitably for meat, they are disposed of by the egg industry.

Every day, thousands of chicks are ground up in macerators – blender-like machines that rip the birds apart while they're still alive.

Other killing methods include suffocation, decapitation, gassing and being left to die in dumpsters.



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No Grass. No Fresh Air. No Exercise. Just Misery.

Factory-Farmed Animals Are Denied Nearly Everything That Is Natural to Them

The vast majority of egg-laying hens spend their lives packed into tiny wire cages so small they can't even spread their wings.

Nearly every natural instinct and desire is thwarted by the cages that confine them – the ability to build nests, forage, roost, dust bathe, see the sun, or even feel the earth or grass below their feet.

“Forget the pig is an animal. Treat him just like a machine in a factory.”

- Hog Farm Management Magazine

The majority of mother pigs spend most of their lives confined to metal crates barely larger than their own bodies.

Unable to turn around or lie down without touching the metal bars, many pigs develop painful sores.

Some pigs go mad and exhibit behaviors such as repetitive bar-biting or rubbing their snouts bloody on the concrete floor.



Over 95% of eggs in Canada come from hens crowded into wire cages the size of a file drawer.



Many sows are confined in cages barely larger than their bodies.

9 To Conserve Land, Water and Energy

Vegetarian foods take a fraction of the land, water and energy required to produce meat. Meat production's squandering of our most important resources affects everyone, but hits the global poor the hardest.

As *Time* magazine notes, "Around the world as more water is diverted to raising pigs and chickens instead of producing crops for direct consumption, millions of wells are going dry."

In a growing world in which over 1 billion people are already malnourished or lack access to clean drinking water, meat is an extremely wasteful food choice.



To produce one pound of animal protein vs. one pound of soy protein it takes:

6 to 17 times as much land

4 to 26 times as much water

6 to 20 times as much fossil fuel



10 To Prevent Deforestation and Species Extinction

The United Nations reports that "**the livestock sector may well be the leading player in the reduction of biodiversity**, since it is the major driver of deforestation, 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."

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Vegetarians Spare the Lives of Hundreds of Animals Each Year

By eating a vegetarian diet, we can each spare the lives of about 30 land animals as well as over 200 aquatic animals who are killed to serve human consumption every year. This adds up to many thousands over our lifetimes.



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Because Fishing Hurts

A growing body of scientific evidence demonstrates that fish are sophisticated animals who exhibit intelligence, complex social structures, long-term memory, and the capacity to feel pain, but the fishing industry treats them as if they were nothing more than inanimate objects.

Dragged from the ocean depths, fish undergo excruciating decompression, which can rupture their bladders and pop out their eyes. They are then tossed onboard where they slowly suffocate.

Some fish are gutted, filleted, and frozen while still alive and conscious.

EAT FLAX, NOT FISH -----

Flax seeds and vegan DHA (algae oil) are excellent sources of Omega 3 fatty acids, without the cruelty or mercury that come with fish consumption.



Untold millions of non-target aquatic animals, such as dolphins, turtles, and “by-catch” fish, are killed by the fishing industry each year.



Fish suffer tremendously when caught and suffocated.

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To Keep Antibiotics Working

Imagine getting an infection that won't go away, even when treated with antibiotics. The broad-scale use of antibiotics on factory farms – fed in mega dosages to animals to promote rapid growth and fight off illnesses induced by filthy, disease-ridden, and overcrowded living conditions – is creating antibiotic-resistant superbugs, making these same antibiotics less effective at treating human illnesses.

It's not appreciated until it's your mother, or your son, or you are trying to fight off an infection that will not go away because the last mechanism to fight it has been usurped by someone putting it into a pig or chicken.

- Dr. Kellog Schwab, John Hopkins researcher



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Animals Are Burned and Drowned in Scalding Tanks

At the slaughterhouse, many chickens and turkeys are not dead by the time they reach the scalding-hot feather removal tanks. According to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada statistics, tens of thousands of birds every year have their bodies submerged in scalding hot water (about 60°C, well above the pain threshold) while they are fully conscious. **The animals are burned and drowned.**

According to a Tyson slaughterhouse worker, “They often come out the other end with broken bones and disfigured and missing body parts because they’ve struggled so much in the tank.”

Many pigs meet a similar fate. *The Washington Post* reports, “Hogs ... are dunked in tanks of hot water after they are stunned to soften the hides for skinning. As a result, a botched stunning condemns some hogs to being scalded and drowned.”



When chickens are scalded alive in the feather removal tanks, their skin becomes bright red.

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Caring for Some Animals (Like Dogs and Cats) and Eating Others (Like Pigs and Chickens) Is Morally Inconsistent

Chickens, turkeys, pigs and cows possess intelligence, individual personalities, and emotional lives just like dogs and cats do. All animals value their lives and wish not to suffer.

If you wouldn't eat your dog or cat, why eat any other animal when it's completely unnecessary?



“There’s a schizoid quality to our relationship with animals, in which sentiment and brutality exist side by side. Half the dogs in America will receive Christmas presents this year, yet few of us pause to consider the miserable life of the pig – an animal easily as intelligent as a dog – that becomes the Christmas ham.”

The New York Times Magazine, Michael Pollan,
“An Animal’s Place”



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Today's Chickens and Turkeys Have Been Bred for Pain

Modern chickens and turkeys are bred and drugged to grow so large, so quickly, that their legs and organs can't keep up, making heart attacks, organ failure and crippling leg deformities common. Many become crippled under their own weight and eventually die because they can't reach the water nozzles.

Researchers have found that this lameness is so chronic and painful that modern breeds of chickens will repeatedly choose food that has painkillers added to it over regular feed.

As many as 26% of chickens raised for meat are severely crippled and 90% cannot walk normally by the time they reach slaughter-weight.



Many birds have difficulty standing, due to leg disorders induced by unnatural weight.

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Animals Are Defenseless

Farmed animals, whose every moment in life and death is controlled and manipulated, are entirely defenseless against cruelty and exploitation, and their fates rest squarely at our mercy.

"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, consists of its attitude towards those who are at its mercy: animals."

- Milan Kundera
The Unbearable Lightness of Being, 1984



See the shocking truth behind meat production at MeatVideo.com.

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Because You Wouldn't Want to Watch What They Do to Sick Pigs

According to Twyla Francois, an investigator who spent seven years documenting routine practices in the Canadian pig industry:

"Sick pigs are seen as unprofitable. They are often simply abandoned, left to suffer long, drawn-out deaths. If they are still young, they will be 'PACed' (an industry term meaning 'pounded against concrete') or 'thumped' (their heads repeatedly smashed against the floor until they die). Others are shot in the face or skull with nail guns, or beaten until they die. Those unable to walk off trailers have cables tied to their legs and are dragged off - head first - in an attempt to break their necks."



Feces runoff from factory farms often pollutes local groundwater.

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To Prevent Water Pollution

The United Nations reports that animal agriculture "is probably the largest sectoral source of water pollution," contributing to:

dead zones in coastal areas, degradation of coral reefs, human health problems, emergence of antibiotic drug resistance.

The major sources of pollution include:

animal waste, antibiotics, chemicals from leather tanneries, fertilizers and pesticides used for feed crops.



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In order to reduce costs, sickness and injuries often go untreated, causing prolonged suffering.

Factory-Farmed Animals Are Denied Adequate Veterinary Care

Viewed as mere production units by an industry seeking to maximize profits, factory-farmed animals are often denied individual veterinary care.

Many animals are left to suffer for days or weeks with painful and sometimes debilitating infections and illnesses.

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To Treat Animals as We Would Want to Be Treated

- If we wouldn't want to be forced to live in a cage...
- If we wouldn't want to be mutilated without painkillers...
- If we wouldn't want to have our necks sliced open with a knife...

If we wouldn't want these things for ourselves, then why should we force them upon animals?



“One should treat all beings as he himself would be treated.”

- Mahavira

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Because No One Should Have to Kill for a Living

The nature of slaughtering animals, day in and day out, requires workers to suppress their empathy or even “develop a sadistic sense of reality,” as one former slaughterhouse worker puts it.

This is an extremely dangerous mindset that can have serious consequences both inside and outside of the slaughterhouse. A recent sociological study found that areas with slaughterhouses consistently have higher rates of violent crime, such as murder and rape, even when compared with demographically similar counties.



“The worst thing, worse than the physical danger, is the emotional toll. If you work in the stick pit [where the hogs are killed] for any period of time, you develop an attitude that lets you kill things but doesn't let you care.”

- Former hog slaughterhouse worker

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To Maintain a Healthy Body Weight

Obesity is a growing health concern in Canada, and it is expected to surpass smoking as the leading cause of preventable illness and death.

Studies indicate that vegetarians have low rates of obesity and on average weigh approximately 3 to 20 percent less than meat-eaters.



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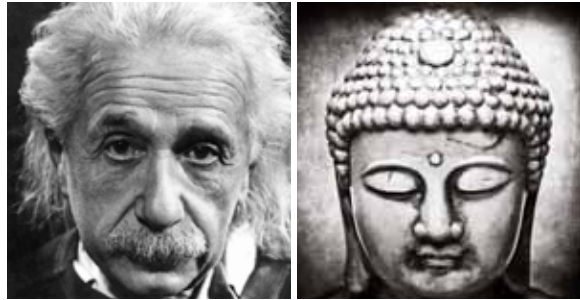
You'll Be in Good Company

Some of the world's greatest thinkers and humanitarians have recognized the moral importance of a vegetarian diet, including:

Albert Einstein, Jane Goodall, Plutarch, Cesar Chavez, Pythagoras, **Buddha**, **Leonardo da Vinci**, Mahatma Gandhi, Mary Shelley and Coretta Scott King

"I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals."

- Henry David Thoreau, Walden, 1854



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To Live Our Values

Choosing to go vegetarian is simply a matter of living according to the values so many of us hold dear, such as fairness and kindness to others.

Most people would never think of cramming six egg-laying hens into a file-drawer-sized cage, ripping the testicles out of a screaming baby piglet with no painkillers, or cutting the throat of a cow as she stares back at them with her big brown eyes.

How then, as compassionate individuals, can we justify paying others to carry out these atrocities on our behalf?

Tips for making the switch

1 Enjoy vegetarian versions of your favorite foods!

Becoming vegetarian doesn't mean you have to give up the tastes you love. There are now delicious vegan versions of almost every meat, dairy and egg product with all the flavor but without the cruelty. Next time you are at the grocery store, fill your cart with these healthy and humane alternatives.



2 Try new foods from around the world.

After exploring foods from other cultures, most new vegetarians find that they really have more food choices – not fewer. Here are just a few choices from around the world.

Chinese - veggie stir-fry, garlic eggplant, fried tofu **Thai** - veggie pad thai, tofu coconut curry **Japanese** - veggie sushi (avocado, carrot, cucumber, mushroom, tofu, inari), edamame, miso soup **Ethiopian** - lentils, collard greens, yellow split peas, injera **Indian** - chana masala, aloo gobi, dal, veggie samosas **Mediterranean** - hummus, falafel, baba ganoush, mujadara, stuffed grape leaves **Mexican** - bean burritos, veggie tacos



3 Meet other vegetarians.

Being vegetarian is more fun when you're not alone. See if a friend or family member will try going vegetarian with you, or find vegetarian organizations in your area to get involved with.

Meetup.com is a good starting point, since they list numerous vegan and vegetarian "meetups" across the country.

6 meal ideas



1

Vegan Pizza

Order your favorite veggie pizza without the cheese. Or try making your own!

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2 Veggie Burgers

Sauté a delicious veggie burger in a little bit of oil and serve on a bun with all the fixings!

3 Stir-Fry

Heat up your favorite veggies in a little oil over medium/high heat. Add your favorite stir-fry sauce at the end and serve over rice.



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<< Tacos and Burritos

Try these fillings and toppings: beans, rice, salsa, spinach, cilantro, fresh tomatoes, olives, guacamole, and bell peppers.



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<< Steamed Veggie Combo

Put veggies and tofu in a steamer for a few minutes. Serve over rice and top with lemon juice, soy sauce, or your favorite salad dressing.

6 Lentil Soup

This hearty, high-protein soup can be purchased at most grocery stores. Serve with sliced whole wheat bread or chips for dipping.

To see references for facts in this brochure, visit:
25reasons.ca/references



"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

- Anne Frank (1929-1945)

WEB RESOURCES:

MeatVideo.com - Watch the video the meat industry doesn't want you to see.

ChooseVeg.ca - Online guide to vegetarian living, with recipes, videos, tips, & more.

VegGuide.org - The ultimate restaurant and shopping guide for vegetarians.

VeganHealth.org - Info on how to live a healthy vegan lifestyle.

Mercy For Animals Canada is a national non-profit organization dedicated to preventing cruelty to farmed animals and promoting compassionate food choices and policies.

Visit **MercyForAnimals.ca** to learn more or make a donation.

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