



2021 Issue 3

The Vegan

The Vegan Society magazine



VEGAN GARDENING

Top tips for beginners

INDIAN RECIPES

Comforting classics from Nishma Shah

OPEN HEART

A doctor's health journey

Free online event

Virtual Vegan Luncheon Club

4th Tuesday of the month, 1-2pm

Open to vegans, vegetarians and meat-reducers aged 65 and over



Find our Facebook group:
'Virtual Vegan Lunch Club'

Dates for 2021

- 22 June – Garden Picnic
- 27 July – Barbecue
- 24 August – Cooking with Tofu
- 28 September – Brunch
- 26 October – Bake Off
- 24 November – Pot Luck Dinner

We'll provide the recipes a week in advance for you to cook on the day. Then join us at 1pm on Zoom to enjoy it, chat about the recipe and all things cooking-related with our Roving Chef.

For more info please contact V for Life:
0161 257 0887
ellie@vegetarianforlife.org.uk

V for Life is a charity registered in England & Wales, number 1120687



0161 257 0887 | vegetarianforlife.org.uk |  VFLUK  @VFL_UK

EDITOR'S LETTER



Like many of us, over the past 18 months I took refuge in growing plants. During a time of chaos and confusion, finding moments to notice a spider plant which had grown its first baby, or a flower on the brink of blooming, gave my mental health a little boost.

That's why I'm delighted to share an article on veganic gardening for beginners by Danielle James, otherwise known as @TheVeganVegGardeners on Instagram.

Please do email editor@vegansociety.com with your tips and stories about growing plants – as well as your photos, of course.

In this issue we have also included a fascinating article from Dr Akil Taher, a US physician who

turned his own health around later in life. As a septuagenarian marathon runner who only gained confidence as a swimmer and cyclist in his 60s, Akil embodies the Vegan and Thriving message and shows just what is possible when you tune in to what your body needs.

You can also find some incredible Indian recipes from Nishma Shah of Shambhu's Catering Company. Please do get in touch if you try any of them out – don't forget, the Star Letter prize is always up for grabs!

Elena Orde, Editor

Elena

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FROM THE CEO

At The Vegan Society, live events, shows and festivals have previously been a staple of our summer activities. Like last year, this summer is more pared-back in terms of live events than it has been in the past – but rest assured that we have many exciting plans to share our messages and campaigns with the public.



Vegan and Thriving, our health and nutrition campaign, is in full swing. We know that concerns around nutrition can be a barrier to many people who would otherwise be interested in going vegan – so we're here to bust some myths and share the message that we can get everything we need to feel fantastic, all from a plant-based diet.

To mark World Environment Day at the beginning of June, we ran a week of sustainability sessions for staff and announced new incentives to encourage staff members to choose environmentally-friendly travel options and give back to the community via volunteer days. We kicked this off with a clean-up day in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, just around the corner from The Vegan Society office.

I am pleased to say that recently we have begun to work with Diverse Matters, a specialist training consultancy, on bettering our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion knowledge and practices. We will be working with them over the coming months to improve our recruitment, communications and outreach.

In May we reached an incredible milestone, with 50,000 products registered with our trusted Vegan Trademark. Since then, registration numbers have continued to soar with some very exciting new companies coming on board. You can keep up with all the latest by following @vegantrademark on Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Thank you to all who participated in our AGM on 22 May, either by attending remotely or voting beforehand. You can see the results of voting on page 23. Holding the event remotely allowed more people to join than in previous years. Going forwards we will run hybrid AGM events, with the option to attend in person or take part online.

Louise Davies, Interim CEO

Staff updates

Rachel Bowcutt and Lauren Williams have joined us in the role of Communications Managers.

Amit Mohan has joined us in the role of Trademark Sales Executive. Phaedra Johnson, Kamala Middleton and Laura Scougall joined the Business Development Team as Trademark Account Assistants.



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HIGHLIGHTS



Vegan and Thriving

Our health and nutrition campaign, Vegan and Thriving, shares the message that we can get everything we need to thrive from a totally plant-based diet.

Over the past few months, we have been promoting a new raft of online content, including six creative recipe videos, available at vegansociety.com/thriving. Have you been inspired to try out the Falafel Burgers or the Tofu Pancakes with Plum Sauce yet?

We have also added some inspirational interviews to the Thriving hub, including one with incredible athlete Kate Strong. At the end of May, Kate took on three world record attempts over a 24-hour period cycling on a static bike – and she smashed all of them! Kate's records will be verified by Guinness over the next few weeks. Kate was kind enough to use her attempts to support the Vegan and Thriving campaign, and we're delighted that together we raised awareness of what can be achieved on a vegan diet.

Did you spot one of our Vegan and Thriving billboards outside your local Tesco? Our wonderful model Wanausha (pictured on the right), found herself outside her local supermarket in Manchester.

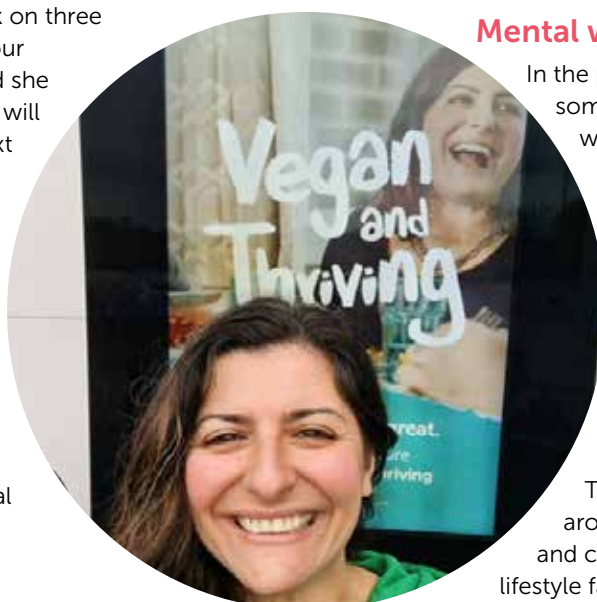
Grow Green conference

At the beginning of June, we held the second Grow Green conference. The online event explored the

policy changes needed for a transition to plant-based food production, and the role of vegan organic farming as a pioneering climate-friendly solution.

The conference was sponsored by The Vegan Society and organised by Safe Food Advocacy Europe. It featured talks and lively panel discussions with MEPs, food policy experts, farming groups and food producers.

Vegan Society CEO Louise Davies highlighted the need to transition away from animal farming for the EU to meet its climate and environmental ambitions and outlined key policy changes required.



Mental wellbeing and veganism

In the past few months, we have shared some excellent blogs relating to mental wellbeing and veganism. For Mental Health Awareness Week, Kaya Gromocki wrote a piece about veganism and anxiety, drawing on her own experiences with Generalised Anxiety Disorder and sharing how this intersects with her vegan lifestyle and beliefs.

We also shared a number of articles on our Research News page relating to veganism and wellbeing.

The blogs examined academic literature around mental health and veganism, and considered how a variety of different lifestyle factors contribute to positive mental wellbeing. We have plans to examine this topic further, and look forward to sharing the results with you.



We supported Fiji Willets to win her rights case

VegAPPG discusses inclusive medicines

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Vegetarianism and Veganism brought together healthcare professionals to discuss the topic of more inclusive medicine development and labelling. The meeting focused on the issues faced by patients and the healthcare professionals responsible for their care. These include the lack of clear labelling of animal ingredients, the lack of guidance and training for staff on offering support and gaining consent when patients have concerns over medicine ingredients, and the lack of animal-free alternatives to common medicines.

The meeting was chaired by Christina Rees MP, Chair of the VegAPPG, and we heard from several guest speakers including Sheetal Ladva, a Medicines Information Pharmacist and member of the Plant Based Health Professional group.

We are following up on this event with communications to the Department of Health and other key stakeholders. If you have relevant experience as a patient or a healthcare professional, please get in touch with us by emailing VegAPPG@vegansociety.com.

Victory in vegan rights case

Vegan Society Rights Advocate Jeanette Rowley was instrumental in supporting a student win a rights case against her college.

Fiji Willets is studying for a qualification in Animal Management which was advertised in the college prospectus as being 'great for people who love animals'. After enrolling, Fiji discovered she had to pass a module on Farm Husbandry, the branch of agriculture that focuses on raising animals for meat, milk, eggs or other products. Fiji, who had been vegan for four years, started suffering with anxiety and during

national Mental Health Week brought up her concerns with her tutor. She was told that she would fail her course if she did not complete the module.

Jeanette worked with Fiji to submit a formal complaint to the college, which was then escalated to the awarding body for non-compliance with equality law. The college has now allowed Fiji to complete a more suitable module. Read more on vegansociety.com/news.

VEG 1

Our vegan multivitamin, VEG 1, has recently been given a more sustainable makeover. We're very pleased to say that the affordable and expert-made nutritional supplement now comes in plastic-free packaging. We have moved away from the original plastic tub to a sleek recyclable aluminium tin. You can still order VEG 1 in the original orange or blackcurrant flavour, in either three or six-month supplies, over the phone (0121 523 1730) or on vegansociety.com/shop. Members still receive 10% off VEG 1.



International Grants programme

The International Grants programme is now active, and runs alongside the existing Vegan Society Grants programme. The new programme awards grants to projects based in countries that have a third of the GDP of the UK, or less. In just the first 10 days of the programme being live, the grants panel were delighted to receive applications from countries including Jordan, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Uganda and Malawi.

Our first grant awarded via the new programme was to a project in Bujumbura, Burundi. The project seeks to raise awareness of veganism, animal rights and plant-based nutrition in the local area.

We have recruited a specialist volunteer to help us ensure the new programme is as effective as possible. If you also have expertise in this area and would like to get involved, please do email volunteer@vegansociety.com.

Catering for Everyone

As part of our Catering for Everyone campaign, we often hear stories from vegans who struggle to receive suitable meals in hospital settings. Many report being given very basic options, such as a plain jacket potato or a piece of fruit, which does not constitute a nutritious meal. Ensuring all menus include vegan options would help guarantee that veganism is given the same due diligence as other beliefs.

We have therefore worked to put together a CPD (Continuing Professional Development)-accredited webinar series to support healthcare professionals in improving patient outcomes for vegans. The series is structured to give insight on how to provide vegans with person-centred

care, whilst specifically addressing key nutrition principles for caterers and looking at medical nutrition for healthcare professionals.



Future Normal sponsors debate

Future Normal, our animal rights campaign, sponsored a debate entitled 'Humans and Other Animals' at the online How the Light Gets In Festival run by the Institute of Art and Ideas.

The debate featured philosopher, cultural critic and author of *Aping Mankind* Ray Tallis, poet and animal researcher Melanie Challenger, farmer and politician Jamie Blackett and Professor of Sociology at Kingston University Kay Peggs. It was hosted by Myriam Francois.

The panel discussed the hypocrisies in the ways in which humans relate to other animals. A video of the debate is available on iai.tv/video/humans-and-other-animals.



The 'Humans and Other Animals' debate discussed animal rights

IN THE NEWS



Vegan rights

Arguably the biggest media story of the last couple of months centred around an 18-year-old vegan student who was facing discrimination at college (see page 4).

Our press release about Fiji went viral with hundreds of mentions across both mainstream and vegan press and social media, landing write-ups in Metro, Daily Mail, The Mirror, The Telegraph and BBC News Online. Fiji was also interviewed by BBC Bristol and BBC Points West – her local radio and TV stations – while the case was also debated on Channel 5's The Jeremy Vine Show.

Lockdown diets

As the national lockdown continued to dominate the headlines, we decided to repeat our 2020 survey about changing consumer habits during the pandemic. The results were extremely positive, with one in four Brits revealing they have actively cut back on some form of animal products since the first lockdown. While 20% said they have reduced the amount of meat they are eating, 12% say they've minimised their intake of eggs and dairy.

The press release proved to be a huge success with a dozen write ups – including in national outlets Plant Based News, Vending International and Vegconomist. Meanwhile, Senior Insight and Policy Officer Louisiana Waring discussed the incredible findings on BBC Leeds with Sanchez Payne, and also appeared on BBC World News to talk through the results with Sally Bundock.

Dairy words ban

At the end of May we had cause to celebrate again when the European Parliament rejected controversial Amendment 171, which would have seen 'dairy words' such as 'creamy' or 'alternative to' banned from several plant-based products.

Back in February, The Vegan Society signed an open letter asking EU Council Members to rethink plans to introduce the ban. While CEO Louise Davies was quoted in Vegan Food and Living, Food Ingredients First and Totally Vegan Buzz to name a few, Media and PR Officer Francine Jordan went on Ireland's Flirt FM to discuss the results and the positive impact it will have on the plant-based sector.

Vegan Trademark

Every month the number of Vegan Trademark mentions in the media is on the up, with April and May smashing all previous records and landing more than 150 individual mentions. The top stories dominating the headlines included Burger King's decision to register several products with the Vegan Trademark, including the Vegan Royale, The Body Shop confirming they will be fully certified globally by 2030, Just Love Food Company's launch of Archie – the vegan version of the classic caterpillar cake – and the Vegan Trademark hitting a huge milestone in registering its 50,000th product.

We were also cheering from the sidelines when Vegan Trademark holder Rebecca Birtwell, the founder of bECOSy – the first animal companion bed to be registered with the trademark – appeared on Channel 4's Steph's Packed Lunch.

Double trouble

And finally, just weeks after Campaigns Manager Mark Banahan appeared on talkRADIO to debate Ethical Butcher co-founder Glen Burrows, Campaigns and Policy Officer Tim Thorpe was invited on talkRADIO to debate... Glen Burrows. Tim put forward a fantastic case for veganism and animal rights, leaving the show's audience with plenty of food for thought.

The London Walker

A versatile and very comfortable shoe from EVS



The London Walker is a beautiful shoe with a casual look. You can combine them perfectly with a suit, smart trousers or jeans. They won't let you down!

These shoes are made of the best materials available today. The specially designed sole provides an ideal grip, even on slippery surfaces. The well thought out construction and the high-tech insole make this shoe very comfortable and suitable for all-day wear. No wonder it is one of EVS's most popular shoes.

"These are really great shoes. My feet have widened a bit over the years, but the London Walkers still fit really well!" – Kenneth



The London Walker series are available in sizes 2.5 up to 14, but please select your size for availability information.



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VEGANIC GARDENING

Danielle James from *The Vegan Veg Gardeners* shares her top tips for beginners.

Since the Victorians started importing exotic plants into the country, gardening has been incredibly popular. But still, most gardeners can't place how working with plants isn't necessarily vegan. Tell someone that you're a vegan gardener and you'll probably receive a slightly bemused expression in return.

So what is 'veganic gardening'? It is the use of vegan and organic methods within our green space. Being vegan denotes that we strive to cause no harm. In a gardening context this means no use of animal waste to 'fertilise' our land; no chemical weedkillers and definitely no killing of garden 'pests'.

The Vegan Organic Network explains that veganic food is "Grown in an organic way with only plant-based fertilisers, encouraging functional biodiversity so pesticides are not necessary. No [harmful] chemicals, no GMO and no animal by products are in any part of the chain." And you know what? I think this all sounds pretty good!

Veganic gardening is the use of vegan and organic methods within our green space.

Green beginnings

As a child in the 1980s I remember following my grandparents around garden centres in Hertfordshire and London. At that age, I mainly enjoyed the ride in the trolley and getting my dungarees dirty – although I must say that I have totally re-embraced the dungaree look as an adult! My family have always been keen gardeners and when I look back now, the one smell from my childhood that stays with me is that of tomato leaves after watering.

After university I discovered a love of cooking and, in turn, wanted to know where my ingredients came from. In 2014 I went vegan overnight and my love of gardening continued to grow. During my first year of veganism, I learned about the horrors contained within our food chain. My lifestyle completely changed, and I soon made connections between this and my passion for gardening.

Flash forward to 2021, and my fiancé Jon and I have had an allotment for six years. We have a small microgreen and mushroom business, and I'm retraining in horticulture. Our market garden dream is starting to look like a reality.



“
**Dipping
your toe into
gardening can be
like the first steps
to becoming
vegan**”

Rescue chicken Evie exploring the veggie patch

First steps

Starting your own vegan garden can be easy. It all starts with a seed, or you can even buy a plant or two. Dipping your toe into gardening can be like the first steps to becoming vegan. The questions to ask yourself are: “Did someone get harmed in the making of this product?” and “Am I causing harm by carrying out this action?”

Plants are simple – they need good soil, water and sunshine. The key to good soil is good compost. For vegans this can be the first hurdle. The majority of shop-bought composts don't display their ingredients and when you delve deeper, they are often bulked out with well-rotted farmyard manure, 'Blood, Fish and Bone' and peat. Peat is a non-renewable resource which plays a massive part in sequestering carbon within our peat-bog environments. However, you can find some composts which are registered with the Vegan Trademark (see page 11).

With patience comes a more rewarding method – home composting. Simply mixing your household veg scraps with an equal amount of brown material (such as shredded paper, wood chip or cardboard) and frequently turning will create some beautiful vegan compost and provide a use for your kitchen waste.

Once you have your compost sorted, it's as easy as planting a seed (season depending), watering and waiting patiently for the first sprout. If your garden is fed every year with fresh compost, your soil will have enough nutrients for your plants to thrive. Honestly, your plants don't need to be fed with products such as 'Blood, Fish and Bone' or eggshells – feed the soil and the plants will feed themselves. A person of interest for further reading is Charles Dowding who promotes the 'No Dig' method of gardening.

Encouraging wildlife

As your garden grows, you will find that wildlife will grow with it. Yes, you will see more bees, birds and butterflies as your micro eco-system takes on its own personality. But you will also see the less desired aphids, slugs and hungry larvae. In a non-vegan garden, this is when the pest sprays come out. In an organic garden, chemical-free products are used to kill pests.

So what do we do as vegans? We can adjust our environment to encourage more wildlife. Provide ground cover for ladybirds over winter or hang bird feeders to encourage birds to graze in your space. Build a pond (even in a washing up bowl) to encourage frogs, which will rein in your slugs. Put a ground level hole in your fence to create a green highway for our hedgehog friends, who are sadly in



a massive decline. Build an eco-system and watch it thrive. Don't try to be a controlling force within your garden – aim to be an overseer. Watch and observe.

No garden? No problem

Now, all of the above information is assuming that you have your own green haven to play with. What if you don't? Indoor gardening has exploded with #plantshelvie photos taking over Instagram.

Growing indoors is just as easy, and all of the above ideas can be used in an indoor space. For a bit of inspiration, I suggest James Wong (@botanygeek) for some incredible indoor gardening ideas and tutorials.

Often, buying grown houseplants means you can't be sure they were grown veganically. My advice is to buy plant cuttings online. They are most likely started off in water and you know that you can provide a vegan environment for them when they arrive.

If an indoor jungle doesn't work for you but growing your own food does, get your name down on an allotment waiting list. You can find a list of local allotments on your council website. We need to protect these community spaces, which are also green pathways, as they are fast being transformed into land for housing as councils sell them off.

Alternatively, for something small, you can try your hand at growing microgreens. Soak some seed overnight, place them on damp vegan compost (Fertile Fibre is ideal for this) and cover for a few days. Put them in light and you could harvest within two weeks – it's that easy!

Green benefits

Now more than ever it is so important to learn skills that help us thrive on our own. We should be encouraged to grow our own food, look after our green spaces and ensure that our children are gaining this knowledge too.

Gardening is often not lucrative, but it is fundamental to our wellbeing. Firstly, we need to grow food in order to survive. Secondly, the benefit to our mental health when we are outside is incredible. If I can encourage more people to grow some veganic food or take some time outside to slow down their pace of life, then I will be a very happy, dungaree-clad vegan gardener!

@theveganveggardeners
theveganveggardeners.com
Please send in pictures of your veganic harvests to editor@vegansociety.com



SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE VEGAN TRADEMARKED GARDENING FINDS

Garden wipes, organic plant feed and organic tomato feed

from Wilko (wilko.com)

A range of specialist organic plant foods including Bloom feed, Leaf nutrients and Root stimulant from BAC (BAConline.co.uk/vegan-certified-products)

Liquid fertiliser, soil conditioner and compost

from Natural Grower (naturalgrower.co.uk)

Compost

from Fertile Fibre (fertilefibre.com/compost/vegan-composts)

Home and garden sanitiser

for use on patios, paths, decking, driveways, greenhouses, garden waste bins and more, from Bio-D (biod.co.uk)

Gardeners' hand cream

from Elixirs of Life (elixirsoflife.co.uk)

Gardeners' balm

from Silvan skincare (silvanskincare.com) and Holistix herbs (holistixherbs.com)

THE VEGAN ORGANIC NETWORK

The Vegan Organic Network (VON) is an education charity established in 1996. It is the only organisation in the UK solely working for food to be grown the veganic way. Visit veganorganic.net to see their fantastic gardening advice webpages, learn about their Save Our Wildlife video competition and learn about the annual Vegan Organic Fest.

CHANGE THE WORLD

FROM YOUR KITCHEN TABLE

**“CRAFTED BY OUR
FAMILY FOR YOURS”**

Tammy — 2nd Gen Fry Family



30 years ago we started making meat from plants. People really did think we were crazy! We were on a mission to change the world from our kitchen table. And now, we'd love for you to join us and enjoy delicious plant-based meals from your own kitchen table.



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INCREDIBLE INDIAN RECIPES

*from Nishma Shah, Vegan Cookery
Educator and Founder of Shambhu's
(shambhus.uk)*



BAKED ONION BHAJIAS WITH MINTY RAITA

(Image on page 13)

Makes 12

This recipe is free from wheat and nuts and contains no added sugar.

Ingredients

For the onion bhajias

- 200 g white onion
- 100 g gram (chickpea) flour
- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp dried thyme leaves, or equivalent amount of fresh thyme leaves
- 4 sprigs coriander
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- Salt to taste
- ~5 tbsp water
- ¼ tsp baking powder

For the minty raita

- 200 g plain unsweetened soya yoghurt
- 50 g cucumber
- ¼ tsp split mustard seeds
- 20 mint leaves
- Salt to taste

Directions

Halve the peeled onions, then slice the halves to produce semi-circular slices. Separate out the half-rings and put them into a mixing bowl. Wash and finely chop the coriander sprigs. Wash the fresh thyme, then remove and finely chop the leaves. The stalks will not be needed.

Add all of the ingredients, apart from the water and baking powder, to a bowl. If you're unsure how much salt to use, try 1 tsp. Leave the mixture for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat your oven to 200°C, and line a baking tray.

While you are waiting, wash and very finely dice the cucumber. Wash and very finely chop the mint leaves. Mix all of the raita ingredients together and store in the fridge.

Once 20 minutes have elapsed, add 2 tbsp of water to the mixture and mix it in. The batter must have the consistency of a very thick liquid, like treacle, and it must be thick enough to hold the onion pieces together. Add more water until you achieve this consistency. Then add the baking powder and mix thoroughly.

Scoop up some batter with a spoon and press it into a tablespoon, which will act as a mould. Then gently urge it from the tablespoon onto the lined baking tray, and gently flatten it to produce a rough circular piece, about 3–5cm in diameter. Repeat until all of the batter is used up, being careful to minimise the space between each bhajia, so that they all fit onto the baking tray.

Place the baking tray into the preheated oven and bake for 15 minutes. The baked onion bhajias should have a lovely golden colour. Serve with the minty raita.



Serves 2

VEGETABLE PULAO

This recipe is free from wheat, gluten, soya and nuts and contains no added sugar.

Ingredients

150 g uncooked brown rice
 100 g onions (~1 regular onion)
 4 sprigs coriander (for decoration)
 1 tbsp oil
 3 x 1-inch shards of cinnamon
 5 cloves
 2 star anises
 ½ tsp cumin seeds
 ½ tsp chilli flakes
 50 g cashew nuts
 100 g petits pois (or garden peas)
 ¼ tsp turmeric powder
 500 ml water
 Salt to taste
 ½ lime (~2 tbsp)
 5 curry leaves (optional)

Directions

Wash the rice twice, using approximately 300 ml of fresh water each time. Discard the water, and add a third round of 300 ml of fresh water. Let the rice soak in the water for 20 minutes.

Peel and finely dice the onion into pieces less than 3 mm across. Finely chop both the leaves and stalks of the coriander sprigs.

Add the oil to a large frying pan which has a lid, or something suitable to cover it later on. Heat the oil on medium heat. With the exception of the turmeric, add all the spices and the optional curry leaves. Next, add the finely diced onions and cashew nuts. Cook until the cashew nuts start turning golden and the onion pieces become translucent.

Drain away the water that the rice has been soaking in. Next add the petits pois (or garden peas) and the rice, followed by the turmeric. Use a wooden spoon to gently stir the rice in, so that the rice grains become coated with the oil, spices and the other ingredients.

Add the 500 ml of water and some salt (according to your taste preference). Cover the pan with its lid/cover and let the pulao rice cook on medium heat for 20 minutes, or until the grains of rice are soft.

Once the rice is cooked, give the pulao a good stir and keep the pan covered. Garnish with the finely chopped coriander and serve hot.

Tip Minty vegan raita (page 14) is a delicious accompaniment to this vegetable pulao rice dish.







CREAMY AUBERGINE AND PEANUT CURRY

Serves 2

This recipe is free from wheat, gluten, soya (depending on vegan cream used), and can be made sugar-free.

Ingredients

100 g white onion (~ 1 regular onion)
 50 g red peanuts
 1 large aubergine (~400 g)
 400 g tomatoes
 4 sprigs coriander for garnishing
 1 tbsp oil
 1 tsp black mustard seeds
 5 fenugreek seeds (optional)
 1 tsp cumin seeds
 3 curry leaves (optional)
 300 ml water
 2 tsp coriander and cumin powder
 1 tsp turmeric
 ½ teaspoon chilli flakes
 10 g jaggery (optional)
 100 ml vegan cream
 Salt to taste

Tip Jaggery is an unrefined sugar found in some health food stores or Indian grocers. You can substitute it with dark brown, demerara or muscovado sugar.

Directions

Peel the onion and finely dice it into pieces smaller than 3 mm across. Roughly crush the whole peanuts using a pestle and mortar.

Wash the aubergine. You can check if the aubergine is bitter at this stage by tasting a small piece, including some of the skin. If it tastes bitter, try to find another aubergine that is not bitter-tasting. Then halve the aubergine, leaving the crown on. While firmly holding the crown, slit the aubergine into three equal parts and then chop it into approximately ½-inch wide pieces. Store the aubergine pieces in a bowl of water to prevent them turning brown.

Roughly chop the tomatoes and pulp them using a blender or hand-blender. Finely chop both the leaves and stalks of the coriander sprigs.

Add the oil to a large frying pan which has a lid, or something suitable to cover it later on. Heat the oil on medium heat. To the heated oil, add the mustard, fenugreek and cumin seeds. When the mustard seeds sizzle, immediately add the curry leaves, diced onions and crushed peanuts. Cook on medium heat until the onions soften and the peanuts become a toasted golden colour.

Drain the water from the stored aubergine pieces and add the aubergine to the pan. Add 200 ml fresh water. Cover the pan and leave to cook on medium heat until the aubergine (including skin) is soft. This could take several minutes. Check if the pieces are soft enough by seeing if a sharp knife can easily pierce the skin and flesh.

Add the pulped tomatoes, coriander and cumin powder, turmeric, chilli flakes and jaggery (optional). Leave to simmer until the tomatoes are cooked, then mix in the vegan cream. You can add the remaining 100 ml water if the curry is becoming too dry.

Taste the curry and add salt. Garnish it with finely chopped coriander, and serve hot.

Tip This curry is delicious on its own or served with plain rice, roti or vegan naan.

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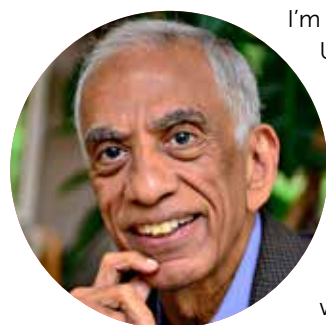
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OPEN HEART

Dr Akil Taher on his journey from heart bypass surgery to marathons and beyond



I'm a practising physician in the US. I came to the US from India pretty late in life – in my 40s. Trying to achieve the American dream led me to a reckless pursuit of success and fame. I let my career rob me of my ability to lead a healthy life. I worked hard, and was great with my patients.

But I was paying scant attention to my health, whether physical or mental, to my own self, my family and my friends.

Standard American Diet

I was a lover of rich, unhealthy food. The so-called 'Standard American Diet', very aptly known as the SAD diet. All of my meals had to include animal products, and I was also a couch potato. Exercise was not in my vocabulary. The only exercise I got was for my eye muscles, seeing people run in the park. So, it was no surprise when heart disease came knocking at my door at the age of 56.

I was in London visiting a friend, and we were walking in Hyde Park. Every four minutes I would get a chest pain. And then I would wait for a while and it would disappear. This is typical angina, not a heart attack. I flew straight back to the

US, and had a stents angioplasty. This involves getting tiny tubes inserted into your arteries to keep them open.

You would have thought that I would change my life after this, but no. Somehow, I was not ready. I was depressed. I already had so many medical problems – diverticulitis, sinusitis ... I would get bronchitis every year. It was a standing joke in my clinic. If a patient came to me and said, "I've got this, Doc," I would most likely say, "Don't worry mate, I have it too!"

Open heart surgery

The stents failed, and at age 61 I had open heart surgery. This was my reflection point. I was tired of leading the life that I was. I knew that I could continue to live a cautious, mediocre, sedentary life, as I'd seen in most patients after a heart bypass surgery. Or I could change my lifestyle to incorporate healthy eating habits, meditation, yoga and exercise. I could have retired and sat in my rocking chair and lived through my children and grandchildren, waiting for the inevitable. But I wanted to make it an opportunity.

On my way into my bypass surgery I said to the nurses, "If all goes well, I'm going to run a half marathon." They laughed at me, and I don't blame them! Maybe they thought I was addled with the anesthesia. But after my surgery, I got on the treadmill just a few days later and I started taking small steps.

Meditation in motion

Those first few runs were frightful. I was so fearful. But I started small, doing a little 1 km jog, and then I fell in love with running alone. A lot of people say you need a running partner, but running alone to me is like meditation in motion. Looking at the trees and the birds chirping.

Seven months later and I was in Nashville for my first marathon. There are no hills in my small town, but when I arrived I saw that it was quite hilly. I said to myself – just enjoy



it. I even took a beer from people handing them out. And I finished the race in three and a half grueling hours.

Since that, nothing has ever stopped me. I've climbed Mount Kailash in Tibet. They insisted I should take a donkey

or a yak with me, and I refused. They insisted I take oxygen with me, and I refused. I've gone on to do the Chicago marathon, and the Mumbai marathon.

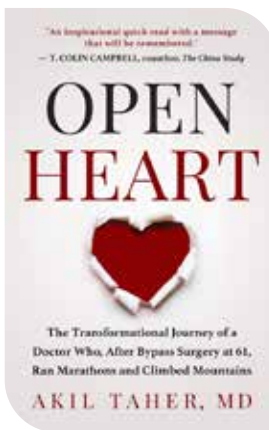
I took on a triathlon, even though I previously wasn't a confident swimmer or cyclist. Where I grew up in Mumbai there were only five swimming pools, so where could I learn? I loved being challenged by this, and I came second in my age group.

One of my proudest achievements was summiting Mount Kilimanjaro, which stands at 19,000 feet.

The final puzzle piece

At this point I was eating more healthily, but I would always eat a large piece of chicken before and after a race. It used to take me four or five days to recover after a long race. I said to myself – what is missing? And it was my diet. So I became vegan about seven years ago.

My recovery times improved dramatically. I did a 100-mile bike race, and at the end I heard from my clinic that a doctor had reported sick for the next day. So I went back home, slept for five or six hours, got up the next morning and worked a 10 hour shift like nothing had happened.



I want to share the message that it's never too late to start taking care of yourself. I'm 73, and I always joke with people that I am 13 years old. I got my life back at the age of 61. And I'm going to behave like that no matter whether people like it or not.

Read *Open Heart* by Dr Akil Taher Visit vegansociety.com/thriving for healthy recipes and more inspirational stories



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MEMBERSHIP

Letters

Veganism and videogames

I have just read the article by Lucas Vially (Veganism and Videogames: Issue 3, 2020). Great stuff!

Those interested could try *Banished* by Shining Rock Software. It is a village-building PC game with no warring clans, tribes or countries. It is based on the survival of the community. Bearing in mind the age range and size of the worldwide gaming community, this could be another communication media for the movement. Games have great potential for vegan development in learning and entertainment, for all ages. *John*

Star Letter



I'm a vegan and have been a member of The Vegan Society for four years. Here are some of my zero-waste tips.

I use the free Olio app to share and get free things from other users. These items would otherwise have gone to waste. I have had various amazing things for free like rice, pasta, canned and frozen food, dry legumes and beans, fresh veggies and clothes. I am also a Food Waste Champion with Olio. I organised volunteers to redistribute surplus breads and pastry, which were all vegan. I also redistribute things that other people might find hard to give away. For instance, I cycled 7 km to collect 1 kg of lavender and shared it with 15 people!

I also cut open tubes of toothpaste to get extra uses from it, buy items from reduced price sections and I have never bought a plastic bag in 25 years. But still there is lots more I could do. In some parts of the world, the person growing food can't afford to eat it themselves. So I have a lot of respect for food. A tomato is not just a fruit – it is the result of hard labour from people and the planet.

Satya

Congratulations Satya, who won the full range of LemonAid and ChariTea drinks for their letter.

The Star Letter winner for Issue 4 will receive a box of snacks from Sankofa Snacks. The box includes two packs of each flavour of their six African-inspired snacks. See the range at sankofasnacks.com.

Discounts

In return for supporting The Vegan Society and our campaigns, we offer our members 10% off our multivitamin VEG 1 (now newly launched in plastic-free packaging) and over 130 third-party discounts. These include 10% off at Holland & Barrett and 50% off *Vegan Food and Living* magazine. Our latest discounts include:

- 20% off your first order at GreenBox (GreenBox stocks a range of supplements, oils, skin and body products) greenbox.co.uk
- 10% off at Owl and Bee (an ethical brand of cosmetics) owlbee.eu
- 10% off at The Vegan Candy Man (vegan sweets pouches) thevegancandyman.com
- 15% off at TofuBud (tofu presses) tofubud.com

All member discounts can be found in The Members' Area of our website at vegansociety.com/my-account/shop-discounts.

Do you have any ideas on how we can improve the discount list? Contact us at membership@vegansociety.com or on 0121 523 1730.

Are you a business owner who would like to offer a discount to our members? Contact us at discount@vegansociety.com or apply online at vegansociety.com/your-business/discount-list.

Insight panel

Have you joined our Vegan Insights Panel? We are looking for vegan volunteers from the UK to help us conduct in-house consumer research by answering online surveys. The surveys are used in two ways – firstly, to conduct our own research looking into various aspects of veganism. Secondly, to help businesses that sell vegan products to understand their audience. For each survey you answer, you will be in with a chance of winning a £100 voucher from TheVeganKind supermarket. Visit vegansociety.com/insights-panel for more information.

Members' newsletter

Have you signed up for our monthly members' newsletter yet? The newsletter gives members an opportunity to keep up to date with society news, member exclusive competitions and discounts.

Most recent competition prizes have included a stunning Oxford Clay vegan ceramic vase, a selection of Hot Chocolate Mallow Bombs from Freedom Mallows and a GreenScents spring cleaning set. During July you can win a case of delicious Northern Bloc ice cream and August will see Friendly Soap offering a prize bundle. Enter here: vegansociety.com/my-account/extras/member-only-competitions.

Contact membership@vegansociety.com if you would like to sign up to the Members' Roundup.

AGM 2021

On 22 May, The Vegan Society held its Annual General Meeting, chaired by the Chair of The Vegan Society's Board of Trustees, Robb Masters. With a quorum of socially-distanced staff and trustees at our offices in Ludgate Hill, and all other members attending online via Zoom, this was our most widely attended AGM in recent history (undoubtedly boosted by online access).

On the advice of the Charity Commission and the society's lawyers (Bates Wells), the meeting opened with a motion for adjournment. However, after much discussion, this motion failed and the meeting continued.

Six candidates had stood for three spaces on the Board of Trustees (Council) in advance of the AGM. Incumbent trustees Robb Masters and Jenifer Vinell were re-elected, where they were joined by new trustee Mellissa Morgan.

Council motions were successfully passed on the appointment of auditors, the setting of the auditors' fees, and updates to the society's Articles to facilitate online or 'hybrid' AGMs in future (i.e. those that are both physical and online simultaneously). A members' motion on the establishment of a working group for elderly vegan issues was also successfully passed.

While Council motions on the use of an independent arbitrator for appeals, and term limits for trustees achieved a majority of votes in each case (i.e. a little over 60%), these did not receive the 75% threshold required to update our Articles. Similarly, there were majority votes for setting an age limit on voting of 16 (72.51%) and 14 (50.63%) but these did not reach the 75% threshold.

The Treasurer presented the Annual Report and Accounts and took questions from attendees. Trustees and senior staff addressed other written questions from members, and additional oral questions from those in attendance.

The meeting closed with the Chair extending thanks to all staff, members, and volunteers.

A full breakdown of the AGM voting results is available in the Members' Area of the website, or you can contact us by phone or post.



The Star Letter winner for Issue 4 will receive a box of Sankofa Snacks



Herbatint wins the Parisian award **Victoire de la Beauté 2017-2018** (Beauty hero 2017-2018)

A panel consisting of 70 female consumers tested and selected Herbatint as home haircolour* product of the year 2017-2018 based on its quality and effectiveness.

*(N and D tones)



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VEGAN AND THRIVING CHALLENGE

Keeping active and raising funds for The Vegan Society



Over the last year and a half, millions found themselves with a lot more time on their hands. Some of us got to know our gardens better and many picked up a new hobby. Exercise was a real comfort to a lot of us, providing structure and boosting our wellbeing. During the strictest periods of lockdown, when we were only permitted to go outside for essential travel or to exercise, the focus on keeping active to stay healthy was really apparent.

Exercise is such an important part of everyday life, not only to keep your body healthy but also to keep your mind active. As Kate Strong, vegan world champion athlete says, "Keeping active clears my mind and lets me focus on what's important, as well as putting a smile on my face."

Live life to the fullest

We know that, with a little planning and nutritional knowledge, we can all thrive on a vegan diet. The Vegan and Thriving campaign is all about sharing this message far and wide – we want the world to know that vegans can be active and healthy, and live life to the fullest.

This is why we are really excited to have created the Vegan and Thriving Challenge. This is the first event of its kind and thanks to social media, people will be able to take part virtually from all over the country.

The challenge will be accessible to all ages and a broad range of abilities, with different options available based on your interests and current levels of activity. We have developed a quiz, which will be available from the beginning of September, to help you decide which challenge to go for. We'll provide tips and advice on training and fundraising,

and you will be added to a supportive Facebook group with others who are taking on a challenge. You'll even get an exclusive, eco-friendly Vegan and Thriving medal upon completion.

By taking part and raising funds you will be helping the vegan movement to thrive. We will use the funds raised to support our charitable objectives, which includes providing expert advice and support for people like Flora.

Flora contacted us when she wasn't sure if her newly vegan teenage daughter was getting all of the nutrients she needed. She says, "I contacted The Vegan Society on behalf of my daughter, who is 15. The expert advice and clear, easy-to-follow-guidance from Heather the Dietitian has put my mind at rest and ensured that my daughter has the optimum diet."

Challenge accepted

To register to take part in our Vegan and Thriving Challenge, keep an eye on our social media channels and newsletters for more information or contact us using the information below.

If you're keen to get back to physical events, the good news is that organised challenges will likely be taking place throughout September and October. To see a list of the events you could take part in, please visit vegansociety.com/take-action/raise-funds or contact us using the information below.

To find out more or send us any comments please contact Ruby on 0121 728 5841 or ruby.jones@vegansociety.com.

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BONE HEALTH



EPIC-Oxford Study

In November 2020, EPIC-Oxford researchers released results from a large-scale study, showing increased rates of bone fractures among vegans in the UK. This paper considers a number of factors, including calcium, vitamin D, protein, vitamin B12, activity and body mass index (BMI). Also, previous EPIC-Oxford research has suggested that vitamin A, zinc and selenium deserve attention when planning a vegan diet.

It is unclear what caused higher fracture rates in this group of vegans and more research is required before we can draw firm conclusions about vegan bone health. However, this finding gives us an opportunity to look at potential factors associated with increased bone fractures, and how we can advocate vegan health through well-planned diets and healthy lifestyle choices, optimising bone health for present and future generations.

Bone health of vegans

When it comes to bone health, two nutrients that receive particular attention are calcium and vitamin D. Vitamin D is required to regulate calcium and phosphate balance to keep bones healthy and strong. Sunlight is our main source of vitamin D, and UK public health guidance recommends that people supplement their daily diets with 10 micrograms of vitamin D between October and March as a minimum.

The UK target for calcium is 700 mg a day, and it is recommended that everyone's daily diets contain at least two rich sources. A 'rich source' of calcium is one with high calcium content and good absorbability, such as fortified alternatives to milk and yoghurt (organic versions will not be fortified), calcium-set tofu, fortified ready oats and soya and linseed bread fortified with extra calcium.

Optimal protein intake benefits bone health when accompanied by an adequate intake of calcium, and this type of food can be a good source of essential minerals such as iron and zinc. Therefore, quality proteins such as chickpeas, lentils, tofu, shelled hemp seeds, garden peas and edamame beans should be included in meals.

Combining these protein sources with nutrient-rich grains such as wild rice, amaranth, buckwheat and quinoa can provide a well-balanced, protein-rich meal, particularly useful for fuelling an active lifestyle. Some activities help to keep our bones strong, such as muscle strengthening activities like weightlifting and higher impact activities like jumping and skipping.

Vitamin K is involved in the process of maintaining and regenerating bone tissue. Sources of vitamin K are not hard to find in a vegan diet, and include green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale and broccoli.

Some reports suggest that overconsumption of vitamin A can have adverse effects on bone health, however this is thought to be from over-use of supplements as opposed to food sources. Ensuring an adequate intake of vitamin A from food sources can help to maintain bone health – for example, you could include sweet potato, carrots, spinach or butternut squash in your daily diet.

The EPIC-Oxford paper found higher fracture rates in vegans with lower BMI. Maintaining or working towards a healthy weight can help us to look after our bones. Also, BMI does not consider muscle health and it is possible that vegans with lower BMI may have poorer muscle strength, which can increase fracture risk.

Take home tips

- Eat at least two calcium-rich foods daily
- Supplement vitamin D from October to March as a minimum
- Include dietary sources of vitamin A and vitamin K daily
- Include quality proteins at each meal
- Aim to maintain or work towards a healthy BMI
- Include muscle strengthening and higher impact exercises in your routine

For information about vegan nutrition, check out the resources at vegansociety.com/nutrition. For well-balanced vegan recipes, head over to vegansociety.com/thriving.

Andrea Rymer, Dietitian

Not only is this recipe an excellent source of quality plant protein, it also provides two thirds of your daily calcium needs – a perfect combination for prime bone health!

TOFU TACOS *serves 4*

Ingredients

For the sour cream

120 g calcium-fortified soya yoghurt
1 lime, juiced
1 tsp nutritional yeast flakes

For the tacos

1 tsp smoked paprika
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp chilli powder
4 garlic cloves, crushed
Black pepper, to taste
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 x 400 g block of firm calcium-set tofu
1 x 400 g tin of kidney beans, washed and drained
1 x 400 g tin of chopped tomatoes
1 medium white onion, sliced
2 bell peppers, deseeded and sliced into strips
8 x taco shells
1 bunch of coriander, chopped

Directions

For the sour cream, mix the soya yoghurt, lime juice and nutritional yeast together.

Make a marinade for the tofu by mixing paprika, cumin and chilli powder, crushed garlic, black pepper

and oil together. Take the block of tofu and remove excess water by patting it dry. Grate the tofu into the marinade, mix and coat well.

Heat a pan and fry the minced marinated tofu until browned. Drain and wash the kidney beans and add to the pan along with the chopped tomatoes and heat through.

In a separate pan, lightly fry the onions and peppers in oil.

Heat the tacos in a preheated oven for 5–6 minutes until warm and crisp.

Fill the tacos with the cooked mixture and top with peppers, onions, sour cream and chopped coriander.

Nutrition tips

- Calcium-set tofu and fortified soya yoghurt are some of the richest calcium sources you can get from a plant-based diet.
- Consider adding smashed avocado or a chunky salsa for some extra veg.

Recipe provides

kcal 407 **fat** 14 g **sat fat** 2.7 g **fibre** 11 g **protein** 23 g
salt 0.54 g **mg calcium** 450



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30 YEARS OF THE VEGAN TRADEMARK

The sunflower mark has been reassuring customers for 30 years – and UK-based cleaning products company Bio-D has been with us since the very beginning.



How many members of staff did you start with in 1989?

We started with just one member of staff, the founder of Bio-D Michael Barwell. Our second team member, Lloyd Atkin, joined as the second employee seven years later in 1996. Lloyd is now the Managing Director and owner of the company.

We now have 49 team members at Bio-D working across a wide range of roles and disciplines to get our products on the shelves.

Tell us about how the pandemic has affected the business.

As a business we have grown significantly, especially over the last five years. Though 2020 was a difficult year, we saw a 53% increase in wholesale sales compared to 2019 – which is a testament to all of the hard work put in by the team during the pandemic.

Our number of stockists has also increased by 6.8% over the past year, and we have recently expanded to include department store Robert Dyas on the list, alongside Ocado, our independent stockists and Oxfam stores across the country.

What changes are you excited about?

We are always looking for new ways to give consumers access to the Bio-D range, and innovating to create new products for them to enjoy. Product development is a huge part of the business, and we're continuously working on

testing new formulations to make sure they reflect our ethos and key values.

We have also recently announced the launch of our updated range of sanitising hand washes, which are now available to customers. The update includes our new Plum and Mulberry scent, which smells wonderful! We have also incorporated the citrus flavour of grapefruit to our geranium scent to refresh the fan favourite.

It is great to see customers becoming more interested in and dedicated to reducing their plastic use. We provide refill stations at independent stores across the country, where customers can fill their own containers at the store. We've seen a 65% increase in refill sales over the past three years.

Tell us about the decision to register with the Vegan Trademark

We first signed up for the Vegan Trademark back in 1990. We were surprised and delighted to hear that Bio-D is officially the oldest trademark holder! The trademark really aligns with Bio-D's ethics and beliefs around animal rights, so it is something we pride ourselves on holding.

Having the Vegan Trademark gives our customers peace of mind that we are following the requirements for your accreditation. Having the sunflower mark on our products is an easy way for customers to know the formulations don't include any animal byproducts and that we haven't tested them on animals.

Visit vegansociety.com/trademark and biod.co.uk to learn more.



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VOLUNTEER HUB

Kaya Gromocki

Volunteering and Engagement Officer



As Vegan Society staff continue to work mainly from home, our remote volunteering has also continued to thrive.

I am currently recruiting for another remote role, a Specialist Grants Advisor Volunteer. So far, I have been lucky enough to recruit Ritu, a volunteer who is supporting the International Grants Programme

(see page 6). The fact that I can

find skilled volunteers for roles that require such specialised experience is an incredibly rewarding aspect of my job.

This statement could not be more fitting than when it comes to our proofreading volunteers, who have been a true asset over the course of the pandemic. We currently have 12 active proofreading volunteers who support us every single day. These individuals improve the quality of our blogs, articles, newsletters, social media posts, website content and this very magazine, ensuring that our written content is clear, consistent and accessible.

Proofreading volunteers take on tasks ranging from 100 to 45,000 words. For the first time in The Vegan Society's 77-year history they are based right across the globe, from Europe and Australia to the United States. They come from a wide range of backgrounds, each bringing their own specialist knowledge and interest to our work. When they are not giving their time to us, they are science editors, attorneys, teachers, software testers, translators, and business owners.

Many aspects of global and remote volunteering that might be considered a hurdle have actually proven to be beneficial. Tight deadlines, for example, can more easily be met if you have a volunteer in a different time zone who can proofread your article overnight, while a volunteer who is fluent in multiple languages can translate and proofread copy.

The pandemic has undoubtedly been a tragedy, but more than anything it has also taught us that as a charity we are more capable and more adaptable than we knew, thanks in part to those who support our work through volunteering.



Jennifer Konsen

Volunteering as a proofreader for The Vegan Society has been such a great experience so far. There are so many different topics I learn about. From newsletters to academic research, no text is ever boring, and it really helps me keep up to date with new vegan developments.

Even though I have been working remotely, the communication with each person at The Vegan Society has been so easy and everyone has been amazing to work with.

I enjoy being able to support The Vegan Society by utilising my skills and I am happy that I can do so from my home in Scotland.



Viktoria Toth

I initially decided to apply for the proofreading volunteer role as I wanted to contribute to a cause I believe in, and to implement my newfound love for writing in a new environment.

With each task, I meet and exceed these goals. I always learn something new, and I love the variety of responsibilities I get to take on. I recently started transcribing interviews, which has proven both interesting and useful for a university project that I am working on.

Although I volunteer remotely, from Houston, Texas, seeing my work's impact through the gratitude of people I help has been invaluable this past year of isolation. I love that I get to support The Vegan Society's work no matter where I am.



Lee Hawkins

After completing a doctorate in Pure Mathematics, I have spent my career in the IT industry, specialising in software testing. Volunteering with The Vegan Society gives me a great opportunity to utilise my research, IT and other skills for the benefit of a vegan organisation.

I've been a proofreading volunteer for six months, in which time I've proofed short articles, blog posts, *The Vegan* magazine and even a 40,000-word research paper! I'm the first volunteer from Australia so it's been a challenge with time zones sometimes, but I've always found the organisation to be mindful of my location and considerate in terms of the amount of work being sent my way.

Given the great experience I've had as a proofreading volunteer, I've recently also taken on some web research volunteer work to help improve The Vegan Society website. It's awesome to work with even more of the dedicated Vegan Society staff and other volunteers through this new work.



Tracie B

After leaving my job I wanted to make good use of some of the time I have available. I passionately believe that a fairer, kinder society is possible and that by making information available and campaigning for good, we really can change the world.

Language is my 'thing', so when I saw that The Vegan Society needed volunteer proofreaders I applied straight away.

As a vegan and lifelong campaigner for animals, the role felt perfectly suited to me. Reading the documents and articles is really interesting and I particularly enjoy transcribing interviews. Working to deadlines keeps me on my toes and I get to keep my skills current. I've always believed that by helping others, we help ourselves – volunteering has proven that to me.



VOLUNTEER OF THE SEASON

Meet **Simone Hencke**, our Web Editor Volunteer who has been working from her home in Germany since November 2020



What did you think volunteering with The Vegan Society would be like before you started, and how has your perception changed?

This is the first time I've volunteered 100% remotely, so I honestly had no idea what to expect. I initially thought that I would mostly be doing website maintenance tasks, and was pleased that there are also a lot of tasks involving development, programming, research, analytics and design.

I was also positively surprised by the amount of training I received before getting started. The Web Team spent a lot of time making sure that I had the right software and setup. Whenever I have a problem or a question, they are always happy to have a quick chat to figure things out together. They take my work and time really seriously and always give thorough feedback.

What do you do when you're not volunteering?

I work full-time as a social media and online content creator and manager for a sustainable cleaning product start-up. I am also responsible for relaunching and further developing our current website and have been able to apply some of the skills I've learned through volunteering with The Vegan Society. In my free time I love to read and write, go for hikes, travel (when there's not a global pandemic going on) and watch movies, especially documentaries.

You have a background in research around veganism, can you tell us more about that?

I wrote my master's thesis on the developments, dynamics and challenges of veganism in Japan, while living in Tokyo. I was already vegan when I moved there and found myself struggling to find food, even though I could speak and read Japanese. As the Tokyo Olympic Games drew closer, I started to notice more options pop up everywhere. I was curious about the connection between the Olympics and these new developments, and how this would impact the perception and understanding of veganism in the future.

What do you hope to do in the future, and how will being a volunteer play a part in this?

My dream is to work in – or, at least, with – a sustainability or veganism-related NGO or NPO, ideally in a field like journalism, social media or PR. Volunteering with The Vegan Society is an amazing opportunity because I am getting to see behind the scenes of a vegan charity.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself

I have spent a lot of my time abroad. I grew up in a somewhat rural area in a small German town but have always wanted to get out and "discover the world" for as long as I can remember. I lived in Canada for two and a half years when I was in high school, then moved to the Netherlands and then Japan. Now I am back and working in Germany, but I can't wait for the pandemic to end so that I can move to and discover a new place.

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Members of The Vegan Society get 10% discount off VEG 1. The discount is automatically applied at checkout when logged in to the Members' Area, or quote your membership number when placing orders over the phone (0121 523 1730).

EVENTS

Covid-19 disclaimer: the following information is accurate at the time of printing. Please refer to the website for each event for the latest updates and always follow government advice.

Animal Place's Farmed Animal Conference E-Summit

Monday 2 August–Sunday 8 August (8am–11pm PST)
facesummit.org

Goodheart Farm Animal Sanctuary Open Day

Sunday 8 August (10am–3pm)
 Goodheart Farm Animal Sanctuary, The Nickless, Milson, Kidderminster, DY14 0BE
goodheartanimalsanctuaries.com

Portobello Vegan Night Market

Wednesday 11 August (5pm–10pm)
 281 Portobello Road, London, W10 5TZ
facebook.com/events/180611870279388

Cheshire Vegan Fair

Saturday 21 August (10am–5pm)
 Sandbach Town Hall, High Street, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1AX
labl.org.uk

Ormskirk VeganFest

Monday 30 August (11am–4pm)
 Moor Street, Ormskirk Town Centre, Ormskirk, West Lancashire, L39 2AW
facebook.com/events/1163756870769439

Southend Vegan Fair

Sunday 5 September (10am–5pm)
 The Boundary, Garon Park, Eastern Ave, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 4FA
facebook.com/events/292323092348093

Live A Better Life Vegan Fair Liverpool

Saturday 18 September (10am–5pm)
 St George's Hall, St George's Place, Liverpool L1 1JJ
labl.org.uk

Exeter Vegan Market

Saturday 25 September (10am–2:30pm)
 Exeter Corn Exchange, Exeter, Devon, EX1 1BW
facebook.com/exeterveganmarket

Plant Based World Europe Conference & Expo

Friday 15–Saturday 16 October (9am–5pm)
 52 Upper St, The Angel, London, N1 0QH
plantbasedworld europe.com

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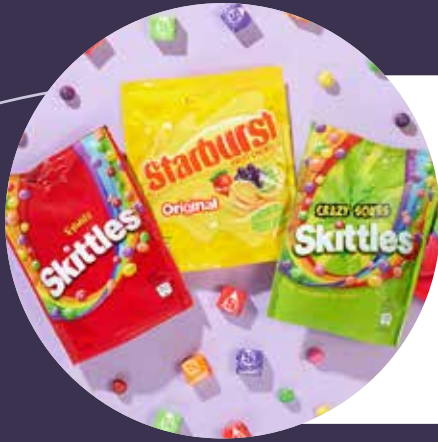
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Skittles and Starburst

Taste the rainbow ... it's vegan! It's official – all current Skittles and Starburst flavours in the existing ranges are now Vegan Trademark certified. The vegan flavours include: Skittles Fruits, Giants, Crazy Sours, Tropical, Chewies, Pride, Wild Berry, Darkside, Winter Fruits, Smoothies and Sweet Heat, as well as Starburst Original, Fave Reds, Very Berry, Minis and Strawberry. You can indulge your sweet tooth with the confidence that The Vegan Society has ensured these much-loved classics are suitable for vegans. Available at all major retailers, as well as independent stores.

The Body Shop Haircare

The Body Shop recently announced plans to be the first global beauty brand to register its complete product formulation portfolio with the Vegan Trademark by the end of 2023. Along with their body butter range and reformulated vegan White Musk fragrance and toppers, the latest to join The Body Shop's Vegan Trademark certified products is their haircare range. It offers five new and improved vegan routines for all hair needs. Available at The Body Shop stores and thebodyshop.com.



Smooth Health Protein Smoothies

Are you on the lookout for a vegan protein smoothie to complement a balanced diet, or for some pre/post-workout fuel? Check out Smooth Health's silky smooth vegan protein smoothies in a choice of Chocolicious or Fruitlicious. Both flavours are registered with the Vegan Trademark, and they are not only high in protein, but they are also a source of fibre made with real fruit, as well as being GMO-free and low in sugar. Available at smoothhealth.co.uk.

Nuud Gum

Did you know that chewing gum often contains plastic and is not always vegan? Because of the plastic in most chewing gum, it can take over half a century to break down. Nuud Gum is a vegan, plastic-free, biodegradable and sugar-free chewing gum looking to rid the world of the plastic gum that sticks to your shoe and outlives you. Vegan Trademark certified, they are naturally flavoured with peppermint and spearmint, and the packaging is completely plastic-free, too. Available at Waitrose and nuudgum.com.





Ristorante Margherita

If you've been waiting on Ristorante to bring out a vegan pizza, the wait is over! Ristorante recently launched their Vegan Margherita Pomodoro. The frozen pizza features a thin and crispy base, topped with Ristorante's signature sauce, vegan cheese, juicy sun-dried and cherry tomatoes, along with a basil "pesto-style" garnish. Serve with a fresh salad or potato wedges for a weekday dinner treat. Available at Tesco and Asda.

Opal Eco Disinfectant

Opal Eco Disinfectant is a unique, broad-spectrum, all-in-one disinfectant, cleaner and deodorizer that has been extensively and scientifically tested. It meets 17 EN standards, including EN11476, which is the test to prove effectiveness against Coronavirus. It's dermatologically tested and is therefore safe on skin. It can be used in hospitals, care homes, veterinaries, food manufacturing and preparation areas and in homes. Opal Eco recently partnered with Earthly and the Eden reforestation project to plant mangrove trees in Madagascar for every order made. Available at Amazon and opal-eco.com.



Illogical Drinks Low-Alcohol Mary

If you're after a low-alcohol vegan tippie without sacrificing taste, try Mary! It's a sophisticated, dry, botanical blend, perfect for anyone wanting to drink more mindfully. It's gluten-free, low-calorie, has no artificial flavours, and is free from any sweeteners, sugars, carbs or allergens. When mixed in the beautifully simple way recommended by Illogical Drinks, you'll have a fresh drink with only 1.5% ABV: try 1 part Mary, 2 parts tonic, ice and your favourite garnish. Available at Amazon and drink-mary.com.



AM Foods Nature's Horizon Chia Seeds

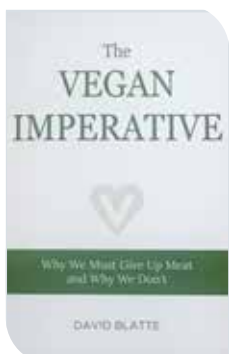
Many vegans will include chia seeds in their diet for their wonderful health benefits. But they also make great puddings and can be used as a vegan egg substitute too! Simply add 3 tbsp water to 1 tbsp chia seeds (grind them if you prefer), stir and leave to thicken for 5 mins for the equivalent of about 1 egg for use in pancakes, cupcakes and other baked recipes. Stock up on AM Foods' Nature's Horizon chia seeds in bulk to help reduce packaging waste. Available on Amazon where you'll also find their other whole-food staples and recipes.



REVIEWS



The Vegan Imperative by David Blatte reviewed by William Gildea



Crankish and sentimental: that's how popular opinion imagined veganism and animal rights in decades past. In the future, veganism might be recognised as the most intellectually respectable position, but only if extremely strong arguments are offered.

Does *The Vegan Imperative* offer such arguments? It does offer intriguing personal vignettes. We meet Syl, whose cash-strapped father

took to raising chickens in the garden. After roasting one, guilt took hold, and he wept. We're also taken on a tour of the author's fascinating career in American animal law. Apparently, dogs in America enjoy no more legal protection than mailboxes.

But Blatte's vegan conclusion isn't supported by strong arguments. If you're anti-racist, Blatte says, you must reject speciesism, and so must reject meat-eating. To strengthen this, Blatte should unpack each logical step with care. Instead, he implies that if you disagree, you're being defensive.

The book also risks being inconsistent. Blatte rehearses the argument that humans can't matter morally more than other animals just because they are human. Later, he implies that whether an entity matters depends on whether it's an animal. But being an animal is irrelevant for the same reason as species membership: they are both merely biological categories. More broadly, the book fails carefully to articulate the precise moral reasons we have to be vegan.

If we can build a philosophically sound vegan ethic, veganism's perceived intellectual credit will rise. Popular opinion might then conclude that if any view is crankish and sentimental, it's that which defends the habits of the past.

William Gildea is writing a PhD thesis on the moral status of animals at the University of Warwick. His twitter handle is @wil_gildea.

The Vegan Guide by Alex Bourke reviewed by Georgina Petty



I loved the gentle humour and simplicity of this guide. I found it included a useful variety of topics, and it was surprisingly in-depth. At first, I was tempted to skip the section on ethics, thinking I would already be aware of the messages. However, I'm glad I didn't, as it's all too easy to lose focus on our core reasons for veganism.

As well as reasons to go vegan, the book also includes sections on cooking, nutrition, clothing, activism and more. If you're a complete novice looking for inspiration this book is for you. I found myself smiling and nodding a few times. I also scribbled a few 'notes to self' to motivate myself to reach beyond my favourite dishes.

The arguments for veganism are very well crafted, succinct and most importantly, relatable. Deep-diving into the science of nutrition can feel a little overwhelming, but this book cuts topics down to size. It shares the message that you can take it a step at a time, and keep revisiting the book to reflect, and feel proud you're committing to change.

Veganism as a lifestyle choice is covered in detail. It's very easy to take for granted the research and vigilance involved. I identified with the comments about hypocrisy; as someone who has very small feet, I struggled to find non-leather shoes as a child. I now have several pairs of vegan shoes.

There has never been a better time to choose kindness. This book gives food for thought, a tiny morsel to get you thinking, discussing and changing not just your mindset but eventually that of others too.

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