

Vegan for Our Values

by Delisa Renideo

People often ask me why I choose to be vegan. The simple answer is: for my values. It is the one simple choice I can make that has more far-reaching positive effects on things I care about than anything else I can do.

But this isn't just about *my* values. Almost everyone I know wants most of the same things.

Health

Everyone wants to feel good -- to be healthy. Americans spend LOTS of money on medical care: drugs, doctor visits, medical tests, and procedures. In 2008, the total spent on health care in the U.S. was \$2.3 trillion, which translates to \$7681 per person. For a family of 4, this is \$30,724. Of course, it's not equally spread out. Coronary bypass surgery is hugely expensive, diabetes costs thousands per person every year, and treatments for obesity are increasing as fast as the obese population itself. Nobody wants to be fat or sick. But ironically, spending all this money to treat these diseases doesn't make us healthy! The Standard American Diet is the primary cause of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, some cancers, and other chronic diseases suffered by

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Americans. All the drugs and treatments in the world can't make up for an unhealthy diet. However, eating a whole-foods, plant-based diet would make these diseases a rarity, rather than the norm.

Since I value my health, I choose to eat a vegan diet.

Animals

Ninety-five percent of Americans feel it is wrong to unnecessarily hurt and kill helpless animals. Yet, ninety-five percent of Americans continue to unnecessarily hurt and kill helpless animals -- in order to eat them. Choosing a vegan diet is estimated to save about 2000 animal lives

over our life-time. So the same diet that can save our lives also saves countless animal lives.

Since I value the lives of animals, I choose to eat a vegan diet.

Clean air, water, and soil

Most people reading this, like me, are



privileged to live in a part of the world where we have drinkable water, fairly clean air, and unpolluted soil. But much of the world is not this privileged. In parts of Africa, people walk 4 miles, each way, to get water. And this water is often dirty and polluted. In parts of the U.S., near

factory farms, the water is also polluted, causing birth defects, cancers, and unexplained rare diseases. No one wants to turn on the tap and have toxic water come out. No one wants to drink the agricultural chemicals from the runoff of huge farms that are growing feed for animals. No one wants to breathe the stench of the mountains of manure collecting in gargantuan feedlots where cows are fattened before being sent to slaughter. And no one wants to tell their kids they can't play in the backyard because the soil is polluted with toxins.

In the U.S., there are 10 billion land animals raised for food each year. Most of the crops raised



by farmers in the U.S. go to feed these animals. And most of these crops are grown with chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, which get into our

water supply and our soil. They also run off into streams and rivers, eventually ending up in the ocean. No one wants the ocean to be polluted, killing fish

and making beaches unsafe for swimming.

A plant-based diet requires a small fraction of the amount of land and water required to raise animals for food. By choosing a vegan diet, we greatly reduce the pollution of our land, water and air. And choosing organically grown plants makes it even healthier for our planet.

Since I value having clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, a healthy ocean, and clean soil, I choose a vegan diet.

Many people resist being labeled a “health nut.” But who doesn’t want to be healthy?

Many people aren’t interested in animal

rights. But who wants to cause the unnecessary suffering and death of countless animals?

Many people want to avoid being called “an environmentalist.” But who wants toxic water in their wells, polluted air to breathe, and soil that is unsafe for their children and pets to play on?

I believe it is only natural for all people to care about these things. And if we do care, it only makes sense to live in such a way that supports these values. A vegan diet is the single, most important, and simplest way to support these values.

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Coats for Cubs

What can you do with a fur coat that you no longer feel comfortable wearing?

Many of us have experienced a shift in our consciousness regarding wearing animal fur. We are now aware of the cruelty involved in trapping animals for their fur or raising animals on fur farms, but we may still have a fur coat, hat, boots, or stole in our closet from a former time in our lives, before we were sensitive to it. We may not want to sell the fur or give it to a thrift store because we don’t want to promote anyone else wearing



a coat that belongs to animals.

Now there is a perfect solution to this dilemma. Give the fur back to the animals!

The Humane Society of the United States has begun a program utilizing fur items to help orphaned or injured baby animals. The HSUS sends the donated furs to wildlife rehabilitators to provide comfort to the animals. These babies are much more comfortable snuggling into fur than into a towel or blanket.

If you have a fur coat, stole, boots, hat, or fur trimmed garment that you would like to donate, you can contact the program at www.humanesociety.org/coatsforcubs or call 301258-1490. The animals will thank you, and you can feel good about giving the fur back to the animals.

BREAD BAKING CLASS

Instructor: Delisa Renideo

There’s nothing quite like home-baked bread, especially bread you make yourself. But how do you do it?

Come to this class to learn:

- How to make 100% whole grain bread that tastes great.
- More about different kinds of wheat, and what works best for bread.
- How to make vegan pizza with a homemade crust.
- How to bake a vegan cake.



This new class is offered only at Dayspring Enrichment Center in Wasilla. It is not a series! It is a single, 5-hour class. Just pick one date!

When (pick one date):

Saturday, July 16

Saturday, August 6

Saturday, September 17

Time: noon to 5 p.m.

What: Instruction, demonstration, a pizza lunch and potluck dinner

Cost: \$50

To register, go to the Yes to Life website, (www.YesToLife.info) or call Delisa and Charlie at 907-373-1526. *Class size is limited to 12.*

It Was Time to Take as Good Care of Myself as My Car

Mark Gartell's Vegan Story

Ten years ago I had a physical and found out I had high cholesterol and high blood pressure. I realized then that it was time to take as good care of myself as I did of my car! The doctor prescribed medications for both problems, and with some changes in my job and living situation, I got my blood pressure under control and stopped taking that medication after a couple of years. But I stayed on the cholesterol meds.

The medication did help bring my cholesterol down some, but not enough. On December 30, 2010, my lab tests revealed that my cholesterol was a whopping 355! The other numbers were bad too: My LDL (that's the bad kind) was 238 and my triglycerides were 302. My blood glucose was also a little high, 112, and the doctor said I'd need to watch that.

Fortunately, my wife, Cricket, read [*The China Study*](#), by T. Colin Campbell, Ph.d. She learned that many of the chronic health problems Americans face are caused by the typical meat-based diet, also called the Standard American Diet (SAD). And these problems can actually be reversed by switching to a plant-based diet. She also read [*Eat to Live*](#), by Joel Fuhrman, M.D. This book reinforced what she learned in *The China Study* and also gave her some specifics about what

to eat, plus some recipes. Armed with this information and the resolve that we could do something to turn my high cholesterol around, we began eating a plant-based diet on Feb. 15.

A friend of Cricket's also told her about the Food for Life Classes and recommended she take them. So Cricket began the Food for Life Diabetes classes the last week of February, 2011. This class really helped her learn how to choose and prepare healthy foods, and she brought the information and recipes home to share with me.

We stuck with the program and I started seeing immediate results. I lost 22 pounds, which helped me feel better. But the most amazing thing was getting lab work done again on March 21, just 5

weeks after starting the vegan diet. My total cholesterol dropped from 355 to 144! My LDL went from 238 to 74. Triglycerides went from 302 to 72. And my HDL stayed about the same, from 57 to 56. Everything was GREAT! Even my blood glucose went down, from 112 to 83.

My doctor was amazed. He said those results would never be possible just with medication.

Sometimes people tell me, "I could never do this!"

My question is, "Why not?" It's not hard to do and the food tastes great.

This is something I know I will do the rest of my life, and I have a lot of peace of mind knowing that I have reversed the dangerous path I was on.



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Alaska Vegetarian Society

Mission Statement:

To create a compassionate and sustainable world by inspiring and supporting reverence for all life and the adoption of a plant-based diet.

5010 W. Lakeside Drive
Wasilla, Alaska 99654
907-373-1526 www.AlaskaVeg.org

HOW TO BECOME AN AVS MEMBER

Online at www.alaskaveg.org (click the "Membership" button) or contact Peggy Robinson at 907-373-1901 or her email fmlyrob@mtaonline.net.

The Alaska Vegetarian Society is under the umbrella of Rays of Hope, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation.

Nutrition Nuggets: Secret Ingredients from Milk

Excerpts from Chapter 19 of [The Vegan Sourcebook](#), by Joanne Stepaniak

It's amazing how frequently animal products are incorporated into many packaged and processed foods. You need to read food labels closely to find hidden animal ingredients. The following are a few of the ingredients derived from cow's milk:

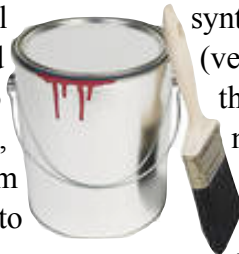
Casein (may also be listed as caseinate, ammonium caseinate, calcium caseinate, potassium caseinate, or sodium caseinate): An animal milk protein that is added to most commercial cheese substitutes to improve their texture and to help them melt better. It is also added to many dairy products such as cream cheese, cottage cheese, and sour cream, to make them firmer. Outside the food industry it is used to make paint, bio-plastics and glue.

Lactose: This sugar occurs naturally in cow's milk and is also called milk sugar. It is commercially produced from whey and is widely used in the food industry as a culture medium (such as in souring milk), as a humectant (a substance that helps a product retain water), and as an ingredient in a wide variety of processed products including baby formulas and confections. Outside the food industry, it is used in bacteriological media, in pharmacology as a diluent (a substance that dilutes the strength of a

solution or mixture) and excipient (a substance added to a drug to give it consistency or form), and as a medical diuretic and laxative.

Lactic acid: A bitter-tasting acid that is formed (1) by fermenting starch, cow's milk whey, molasses, potatoes, or other foods and neutralizing the acid with calcium or zinc carbonate, then decomposing the result with sulfuric acid, or (2) synthetically by the hydrolysis of lactonitrile (vegan). Used to impart a tart flavor, as well as in the preservation of some foods. It occurs naturally in the souring of cow's milk and can be found in dairy products such as cheese and yogurt. It is also used in the production of acid-fermented foods such as pickles, olives, and sauerkraut, and is used as an acidulant (a substance added to foods to increase either tartness or acidity) and flavoring agent in beverages, candy, frozen desserts (sherbets and ices), chocolate, fruit preserves, and other processed products. Outside the food industry, it is used chiefly in dyeing, textile printing, and in medicines.

Whey: The watery liquid that separates from milk solids in cheese making. It is found in crackers, breads, cakes, and many other processed foods.



EATING It's the biggest cause of disease, disabilities and death in the U.S. today. *By Michael Anderson*

Saturday, June 11, 2011

You'll not only want to see this film, but will want to bring your friends, relatives, and anyone you care about to see it with you.

This 88 minute documentary presents an in-depth look at how the Standard American Diet is causing widespread death and disease and how a plant-based diet can prevent and reverse these diseases.

Even if you have watched other videos and read books on the subject, this video is sure to broaden and deepen your knowledge and understanding about the affects of our dietary choices.

Eating is an award-winning documentary with 5 stars at Amazon.com.

"A mind-blowing video experience that will forever change the way you think about food."

Dr. Joel Fuhrman

"Eating is a brilliant program."

Dr. Neal Barnard

FREE and open to the public

WHEN: Saturday, June 11, 2011, 7 - 9 p.m.

WHERE: *Palmer Public Library*

For the rest of 2011, the location of our films will alternate between Palmer and Wasilla.

Recipe of the Month:

Onion, Dill, and Horseradish Cheez

A favorite of Delisa Renideo

*Adapted from [The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook](#),
by Joanne Stepaniak*

This is a sliceable cheese that is simple to make and extra good with sliced veggeroni and rye bread!

1-1/2 cups water	2 Tbsp. agar powder
1/2 cups chopped raw cashews	2 Tbsp. tahini
1/4 cups nutritional yeast flakes	1 tsp. salt (or less)
3 Tbsp. lemon juice	2 Tbsp. mustard w/horseradish
1 tsp. onion powder	1 tsp. garlic powder
2 Tbsp. dried onion flakes	2 Tbsp. dried dill weed

1. Lightly oil a 3 cup plastic storage container and set aside.
2. Combine the water and agar in a small sauce-pan and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring often.
3. Transfer to a blender and add all the other ingredients except the dried onion flakes and dill weed.
4. Process until completely smooth.
5. Stir in the onion flakes and dill weed by hand, or with blender on slowest speed.
6. Pour into the prepared container and cool, uncovered, in the refrigerator. When completely cool, cover and chill several hours or overnight.
7. To serve, turn out of the container and slice.
8. This will keep 5 to 7 days in the refrigerator

You can substitute other herbs or add minced jalapeños or olives for other delectable and exciting flavors.

Nutrition information per 2 Tbsp. serving:

*32 calories, 1 g protein, 2 g fat, 2 g carbohydrate,
12 g calcium, 97 g sodium*

Food for Life Nutrition and Cooking Classes

Anchorage

Cancer Prevention & Survival
Providence Family Medicine Ctr

1201 East 36th Avenue

Wednesdays, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
June 8 - July 20, 2011

Wasilla

Cancer Prevention & Survival
Dayspring Enrichment Center

Mile .5 Edlund Road

Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
June 9 - July 21, 2011

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED!

**All classes meet weekly
for 7 weeks.**

Cost: \$90

To register:

**Online: www.yestolife.info
or call Delisa or Charlie,
907-373-1526**

For more information:

delisa@yestolife.info

AUS Second Annual Picnic

Food, fun and friendship will be in abundance on Saturday, June 25th as AVS enjoys it's 2nd Annual Picnic Potluck at Matanuska River Park from noon until ??

Bring your favorite vegan food dishes to share and your own tableware (plate, utensils and cup). Let's keep those disposables out of the landfill!



Polish up your hula-hooping skills. It's time for more fun and games led by "game guru" Toni. And don't forget the sun block, 'cause we're going to have sunny weather this year!

[Click on this text to see more photos of last year's picnic.](#)