

5

Switch to a Meatless Diet

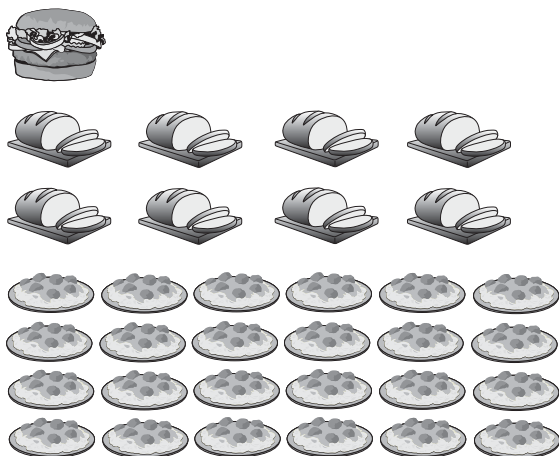
One of the simplest, most fundamental ways to reduce animal suffering is to stop eating them. There are so many reasons to do so.

For You and Your Family

Vegetarians live longer than average and suffer less from high cholesterol, heart problems, diabetes, cancer and other ailments linked to the consumption of meat.¹ Vegans consume absolutely no animal products at all and share the health benefits of vegetarians.² Meat contains protein and other important nutrients because animals eat plant sources that are high in these nutrients. Vegetarians and vegans go straight to the source.

For the Planet

A 10% reduction in our meat consumption could feed every starving man, woman and



1 hamburger = 8 loaves of bread = 24 plates of spaghetti.

Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances of survival for life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet.

— Albert Einstein

child on this planet,³ since it takes far more resources to grow food for meat production than it does to feed humans. Twelve pounds of grain go into the production of every hamburger. That's enough grain to make 8 loaves of bread or 24 plates of spaghetti.⁴ And it goes way beyond that. Animals (livestock) bound for our dinner tables are sucking up our water supply much faster than nature can replenish it. The Ogallala Aquifer, a gigantic underground body of water that stretches from South Dakota to Texas, is being drained so quickly that, at its current rate of depletion, it will be empty by 2050.⁵ The environmental and social impact of this catastrophe to people who live in the US Midwest isn't fully comprehensible, but it will be devastating. What's draining the aquifer so quickly? Mainly cows and pigs destined to become beef and pork. A single pound of beef requires over 5,000 gallons of water to produce. A pound of tomatoes requires just 23 gallons.⁶ And it's still more than that. Our forests are in crisis. We have lost 80% of our old-growth forests worldwide,⁷ often to clear land to range more cows to produce more beef for North American dinner tables. At the current rate of deforestation, there will be virtually no rainforest left by 2050.⁸

For the Animals

People argue that if you don't eat farm animals there will be no need for them to live, and they won't be born at all. But perhaps not being born at all is better than being born into a life of captivity, overcrowding, manipulation, fear and

slaughterhouses. Over 10 billion animals are slaughtered every year in the United States alone. Right now, as you read this, animals are being slaughtered for food at the rate of 317 per second. If you stop eating meat right now and don't eat any more meat for the next year, you will save the lives of 35 animals.⁹

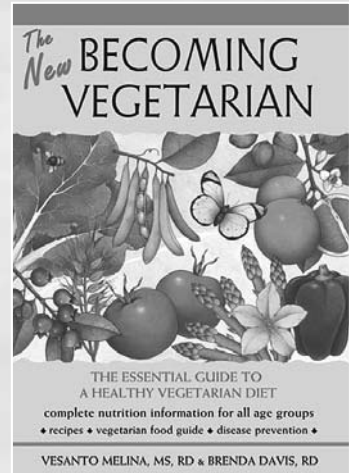
But Don't We Need Meat?

Ask Jo Stepaniak. She's an author and educator who has pursued vegan and vegetarian issues for over four decades and who has raised three beautiful, healthy children on a vegan diet.

Or ask Carl Lewis. One of the most famous and decorated Olympians ever, he won nine Olympic gold medals and he's a vegan.

Or ask actor Alicia Silverstone, rock star Bryan Adams, Dr. Benjamin Spock, US Congressman Dennis Kucinich, actor Ed Begley Jr., singer Fiona Apple, actors Joaquin and Summer Phoenix, actor Keenan Ivory Wayens, artist Peter Max, tennis champion Peter Burwash, three-time Ironman athlete Ruth Heidrich, singer Shania Twain, actor Tea Leoni or marathon runner Sally Eastall. All vegans, every one of them. The list is a lot longer than that. None of us needs to eat meat.

- EarthSave International: www.earthsave.org
- *The Food Revolution: How Your Diet Can Help Save Your Life and the World*, by John Robbins, www.foodrevolution.org
- Jo Stepaniak's site: www.vegsource.com
- Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine: www.pcrm.org
- Vegetarian Resource Group: www.vrg.org
- *The New Becoming Vegetarian*, by Vesanto Melina and Brenda Davis, Healthy Living Publications, 2003. An excellent guide for those who choose to make a dietary shift away from animal products. A comprehensive and wonderful resource for every home.



World Meat Consumption¹⁰

	Annual average per person (lbs)
United States	275
Canada	238
Argentina	215
Italy	199
Germany	181
Brazil	181
United Kingdom	175
Norway	136
Mexico	129
China	115
South Africa	89
All Developed Nations	176
The other end of the scale	
Indonesia	18
India	11
All Developing Nations	64

* Note: These figures are for land animals only. Averages include vegetarians, so the actual numbers are higher.