

## Welcome ...

to our March newsletter and the start of Spring. Many changes are afoot for veganism in the coming months the biggest of which being the relocation of the Vegan Society offices to Birmingham. This has created quite a few new posts so if anybody fancies moving to Birmingham and doing something for the benefit of veganism now could be your chance to act.

We have just returned from an excellent trip to Edinburgh. You will have no problem dining out as there is a great range of eating establishments. There is also an excellent vegetarian B&B (The Green House) that does a fantastic vegan breakfast. If you are thinking of visiting Edinburgh and need some advice please get in touch but for reference we found all the vegan information we needed at the excellent Cruelty Free Guide to Edinburgh website <http://www.crueltyfree.org.uk/edinburgh>.

I have included a polite reminder in the newsletter that everyone, including guests, should only consume vegan food at our events. I trust that everyone will be in agreement with this stance and as a number of you have pointed out people attending Hitchcock's with us get a Vegan Society discount so it is only right that they should stick to the vegan choices.

## ERVegans Events

Here is a list of our forthcoming events. You do not have to be a strict vegan to attend but you must agree to behave as a vegan at the event and eat only the vegan options. Please book all events with Mark on Hull 471119 or email:

[ervegans@merrydowncontrolware.co.uk](mailto:ervegans@merrydowncontrolware.co.uk). If you do email ensure that you are emailed back as confirmation of your booking.

### April

#### Thursday 5th April - Indonesian Night at Hitchcock's

A visit to the exotic far eastern Island of Indonesia is our April date. The Friday is a bank holiday so that those of you who normally have to get up for work the next day should be able to enjoy a later evening.

### May

#### Friday 11th May - Bob Marley Jamaican Night at Hitchcock's

Bob Marley night is now well established as an annual event. After our Christmas meal this is our most popular event so please book early if you want to come.

### June

#### Tuesday 5th June - Cypriot Night at Hitchcock's

A taste of the Mediterranean which will hopefully be accompanied by some suitably nice weather.

## Recipe - Jerk Vegetables

A tasty and colourful way to eat vegetables in a Caribbean style. Recipe adapted from **Vegetarian Cooking Caribbean Style** by Annette Norma Weekes.

Great on its own or with a rice dish (rice and peas are ideal) or a mashed potato dish (mashed sweet-potato is really tasty).

→ Dry Jerk Seasoning (makes 2 tablespoons - can be made up in advance and kept in a jar): mix together 2tsp ground dry thyme, 1tsp ground mixed spice, 1 tsp dried chives, ½ tsp sugar, ½ tsp salt, ½ tsp onion powder, ½ tsp hot chilli powder, ½ tsp garlic powder, ¼ tsp nutmeg, ¼ tsp ground cinnamon, ¼ tsp coarsely ground pimentos, ¼ tsp paprika

→ Various vegetables: red/green/yellow peppers, courgettes, onions, aubergines are good. Cut them into largeish bite-sized pieces/slices.

→ Corn on the cob cut into 2.5cm / 1" slices (if you use frozen boil it for 10 minutes first then cut into thick slices).

→ 4-6 cloves of garlic peeled and diced

→ 4 tbsp olive or vegetable oil

→ Salt

1. Place the aubergine on a plate and sprinkle with salt. Leave for 5-10 minutes then turn and sprinkle other side with salt. Leave for a further 5-10 minutes.
2. Put the aubergine, garlic and all the other vegetables in a bowl.
3. Mix the dry jerk seasoning with half of the oil and pour over the vegetables. Mix so that the vegetables are well coated then leave in a fridge for 30 minutes or longer.
4. Heat oven to 190 °C / 375°F.
5. Use the remaining oil to grease an oven-proof dish.
6. Add all the marinated vegetables to the oven-proof dish and bake for 20-30 minutes until vegetables are cooked and slightly charred.

When I made this I didn't actually leave it to marinate. Also I put all the vegetables straight into the greased oven-proof dish, mixed the garlic, oil and jerk seasoning which I then coated the vegetables with using the back of a spoon. It still tasted delicious!

## News & Events

### Jobs at the Vegan Society

The Vegan Society will be relocating to Birmingham this April and this has created a number of job opportunities. The salaried positions available will be; Chief Executive, Finance Officer, Education Office and Information Officer. In addition new volunteers will be required. For information about the jobs see [http://www.vegansociety.com/html/about\\_us/jobs.php](http://www.vegansociety.com/html/about_us/jobs.php).

### Fieldgate Centre website updated

The Fieldgate Centre have updated their website to fully illustrate the great work they do and to show you how you can have a great day out. The Fieldgate Centre is located near Doncaster and they have a vegan café, bed and breakfast places, camping facilities and conference facilities. To find out more see <http://www.fieldgatecentre.org>.

### Animal Aid Veggie Month Campaigns

March is the time of year when Animal Aid do a veggie push by having a veggie month campaign (actually all their recipes are vegan!!!) There is some good campaigning material on their website so why not improve vegan awareness with your friends, workmates or family during March. See <http://www.animalaid.org.uk> and navigate to campaigns, then vegetarianism for all the materials.

### Dr Hadwen donated over £660,000 to non-animal research last year

Dr Hadwen, one of too few non-animal medical research charities, donated over £660,000 last year for medical research that will improve peoples lives without harming animals. Amongst their major areas of research were; Pneumonia in a test tube, organ simulation by computer and a 3D human liver model. Dr Hadwen are a great organisation to support and you know any money you raise will help humans and animals.

In the recent annual review there was a mention of a group of Hull pole dancers who raised £1,400 for Dr Hadwen (Clare Bennett and 16 of her friends) – even our lord mayor attended (not sure if he partook in the dancing!). This is a good example of how people throughout society are realising that you don't have to harm animals to improve human health.

For lots more on Dr Hadwen see their website at <http://www.drhadwentrust.org.uk>

### Veggie Voyages

I have recently noticed a new (to me anyway) holiday company offering breaks in India and Malaysia. These are accompanied holidays and appear to be environmentally and socially sound as well as catering for all your vegan needs. If you fancy splashing out this year visit <http://www.vegvoyages.com>.

### The Most Remarkable Vegan Recipe Contest in History

Do you have a favourite vegan recipe that has not been published before – well it could win you a fantastic all expenses paid holiday for 2 to the paradise Island of Kaua'i, Hawaii!!! This amazing prize is being offered to anyone writing what the organisers think is the best recipe. Its an American website but I cannot see anything that states you must be an American citizen to enter so why not have a go. Closing date is September 2007. See <http://www.veganfusion.com/call-for-entries.php> for full details.

### Yaoh 007 vegan environmental awards

Yaoh are sponsoring a series of awards in various categories and your votes are needed. In addition to being grateful there is a great vegan hamper being offered as a prize to two lucky voters each month. For full details see <http://www.bristolveganfayre.co.uk/vote>.

### National Vegetable Society East Yorkshire website on beehive

For all of you keen on growing your own food the NVS East Yorkshire branch have set up a website via the Beehive network. They have a good selection of activities in the coming months and their front page states that...

*"We are a group of gardeners who have a passionate interest in growing vegetables to the best of our ability, both for the kitchen and for the showbench. Some of our members grow vegetables purely to eat while others exhibit their produce at local, regional and even national shows. All of us have an interest in many other aspects of gardening as well, including fruit and flowers.*

*The newcomer can be assured of a warm welcome from existing members who can offer a wealth of advice and expert opinion on all aspects related to growing and showing vegetables."*

The website name is a bit awkward so the easiest way to find it is to go to <http://beehive.thisishull.co.uk> and search for "vegetable" our you can email [nvseyda@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nvseyda@yahoo.co.uk).

### Vegetarian Society Awards

See <http://www.vegsoc.org/awards/index.html> for full details.

Its time for the Vegetarian Society awards again. Actually its a bit different this year. Rather than one big event it will be a rolling event over the whole year with a different category each month.

The current category is **Visitor Attraction** - vote now for the UK visitor attraction that caters best for veggies! Closing date 30th March 2007

Remember all vegan stuff is veggie too so why not vote. Now what would I like to see vegan-ised?



## Animal Aid survey find Waitrose the most vegan friendly supermarket

In August 2006, Animal Aid launched a nationwide survey to find Britain's most vegetarian-and vegan-friendly supermarket chain, monitoring more than 600 supermarkets across the UK. The results have now been announced and the winners of the 2007 Animal Aid Vegetarian & Vegan Supermarkets of the Year are Morrisons for its vegetarian provision and Waitrose for its vegan provision. Overall, Waitrose was found to be the most vegetarian and vegan friendly supermarket in Britain owing to its provision of meat-and dairy-free products across the spectrum. A full report is on the Animal Aid website; <http://www.animalaid.org.uk> .

## UK government acknowledges vegan food is better for the environment

On the Direct Gov website under the greener food initiative the government notes that eating meat and dairy is much worse for the environment. To my knowledge this is the first time they have acknowledged the fact. Although I suspect the Direct Gov website is not the most well read website in the world it is encouraging that the government are starting to share with the general public something we have known for years. For more government advice see <http://www.direct.gov.uk/greenerfood> .

## Vegan Diet more effective than Green Cars

Another article providing further evidence for the environmental benefits of a vegan diet appeared on the excellent website of Tony Bishop-Weston - <http://news-for-vegans.co.uk> . The reference was to a study entitled 'Earth Interactions - Diet, Energy and Global Warming' which showed that a vegan diet would make a saving of 1.5 ton of carbon dioxide emissions per year but using a car such as a Prius would only save one ton.

## Local Supplier News

### Hitchcock's price increase

Regrettably Hitchcock's will have to increase their prices from April for the weekday nights. From April the cost on any night will be £15 full price and £12 concession. When you come to an ERVegan event you pay the concession rate and if you are a member of the Vegan Society you get the concession rate on any night. This is only the second price rise that Hitchcock's have implemented in the 8 years I have been going and their prices still represent excellent value.

## Astonish cleaning products at Dove House shop on Chanterlands Avenue

The Dove House hospice charity shop now stocks some of the Astonish cleaning products. All Astonish products are vegan.

## National Supplier News

### Lavera

Another company I found for the first time was an organic and natural body care products company. Its called Lavera and is based in Kirckudbright near Dumfries. They have a terrific range of products but not all of their offering are vegan however they make it obvious which ones are. Lavera are against animal testing (always have been) and give full disclosure of their ingredients. You can shop online at <http://www.lavera.co.uk> or there is a stockist in York: Out Of This World 25 George Hudson Street or you should be able to get them at any Waitrose supermarket.

## Alternative soles

Another new vegan shoe supplier has appeared; Alternative Soles. This one offers more everyday shoes at prices starting at £10-£20. In addition they have some health and beauty products as well as chocolate and jewellery. They are based in Newcastle and you can call them on 0191 236 4904 or email [admin@alternativesoles.com](mailto:admin@alternativesoles.com) (the store owner is Vicky Elliott). The website is <http://www.alternativesoles.com> . If you do use them I would be interested to know what you think.

## Fantastic bargain offers at Animal Aid

Animal Aid are having a Spring clean to clear some space, so take advantage of the amazing prices and order now while stocks last. Every purchase will help Animal Aid to continue their vital campaigns. Of course, everything they sell is vegan and not tested on animals! Visit <http://www.animalaidshop.org.uk> for details.

## Vegetarian & Vegan Foundation free presentations at your group

The Vegetarian & Vegan Foundation are offering a free presentation on the V-plan diet to any interested group. Their website states;

*"Do you belong to a slimming, WI, or similar group which welcomes outside speakers? Or maybe you have an enthusiastic local health food shop, leisure centre or gym, keen to promote a healthy diet? Then let the Vegetarian & Vegan Foundation come to you! We'll travel within a 100 mile radius of our Bristol HQ to promote our new V-plan diet. In return for your hospitality and/or organisational skills, we'll offer your group/shop/gym etc a talk on the V-plan diet, to include a cookery demo and a Q&A session with our nutritionist. Weekdays/evenings preferred - simply email your suggestion to [amanda@vegetarian.org.uk](mailto:amanda@vegetarian.org.uk)"*

Their website is at <http://www.vegetarian.org.uk> .

## Ahimsa Peace Silk – vegan?

The largest environmental and animal welfare organisation in India – People for Animal – have come up with the idea of Ahimsa Peace Silk. Ahimsa is a Hindu and Buddhist teaching that can be loosely defined as treading lightly through life, doing as little damage as possible and causing no injury to any living creature. Ahimsa peace silk uses silk thread from

cocoons that have been vacated by the hatching moths thus does not involve animal cruelty (normal silk production involves the boiling alive of the caterpillars still inside their cocoons).

Several companies are starting to use this silk so it might be appearing soon. See <http://www.ahimsapeacesilk.com> for full details.

I included this item because it raises an interesting issue; Ahimsa Peace Silk does not involve any animal cruelty but it is an animal product so is it OK for vegans to wear? The issue is similar to those for and against the use of wool collected from posts, hedges etc by passing sheep and turned into clothes. Personally I don't think that wool collected like this is suitable for vegans as the sheep are being farmed and it is a by-product of that process. The silk issue is more tricky as the caterpillars are "encouraged" to spin their cocoons in the area where the silk is produced but other than that they are not harmed and their life is not altered by humans. Again I don't think this meets my personal definition of vegan but it is a growing business and you may see many more examples of Ahimsa Peace Silk in the near future.

## The ERVegans 2007 Project - Update

The first draft of the questionnaire has been created and is awaiting proof checking. This should hopefully be complete by the middle of March. I will then test the questionnaire on a few establishments in my vicinity before commencing more widespread surveying.

I have had several volunteers for proof reading – thanks to all and I shall be taken some of you up on that. Towards the end of March I shall need people to take questionnaires to establishments and collect them when complete.

## Eating vegan at ERVegans events

There has been a bit of questioning about people eating non-vegan food at our events. I have consulted the vegan membership of the group and so far there is an overwhelming majority who have backed my decision that we only want people to eat vegan food at our vegan events. I feel this is definitely the right way to go and thank you all for your comments of support.

ERVegans was created to organise vegan events so that vegans had an opportunity to socialise in an environment they find most comfortable. We have always been a very welcoming group to non-vegans providing they respect our views by choosing vegan options when at our events. Obviously at Hitchcock's we cannot control the whole restaurant so while there and while at similar establishments our line has been to have exclusively vegan food tables.

There is no wish to change this policy as it is very successful and we have had some great evenings together with hopefully many more to come.

I therefore graciously ask all those that come to our events to make sure they respect our policy and that any guests you bring know what our stance is. Thank you.

## Bird flu comment

The outbreak of bird flu in the UK is very concerning because if it has not been contained it could lead the government to issuing a cull of many millions of wild birds in addition to the factory farmed ones. Obviously the factory farmed ones are going to be slaughtered anyway but the government seems to go mad with the gun when anything like this breaks out. From the very start ministers and experts spouted that it must be a wild bird carrying the disease until someone pointed out that birds don't migrate at this time of year. It is looking ever more likely that it was caused by the Bernard Matthews empire itself. The images we saw on telly of the obscene conditions that the turkeys are kept in was disturbing enough but think what it must be like in the Poland factories of BM. BM didn't open a factory up in Poland for the benefit of the Poles – its because its cheaper than in Britain. Britain has some of the most stringent animal welfare laws in the world we are told and yet even the meat eaters I have talked to were disturbed by the conditions they saw (and obviously we didn't really see how bad the conditions could be – we were carefully shepherded).

The other aspect of the bird flu scare that I picked up on was hearing various ministers and farmers representatives continuously talking about the "turkey industry" and "the factories" rather than farming. When we challenge farmers we are always told that they have the animal welfare at heart and they only do it because they love animals etc. Well here were official representatives being honest with us for a change and using the correct name for this abhorrent practice. Many letters in the national press reiterated this sentiment too.

### East Riding Vegans (ERVegans)

a local group organising events and providing support for vegans and supporters in Hull and the surrounding area.

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*"As long as man continues to be the ruthless destroyer of lower beings, he will never know health or peace. For as long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other. Indeed, he who sows the seeds of murder and pain cannot reap joy and love" - Pythagoras (Philosopher and Mathematician)*

*"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." - Mahatma Gandhi*

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