

THE

# Jewish Vegetarian

*"...they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain" (Isaiah)*

No. 131

DECEMBER 1999 KISLEV (5760)

£1.50 Quarterly



The Noah Project

Chanukah & Vegetarianism

Vegetarianism – An Orthodox Jewish Perspective





# THE JEWISH VEGETARIAN

The Official Journal of the Jewish Vegetarian and Ecological Society

Founded by Philip L. Pick

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 258581

(Affiliated to the International Vegetarian Union)

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Full page £100	Half page £55	One-third page £45	Quarter page £30	1" (full width) £15
Full page \$200	Half page \$110	One-third page \$90	Quarter page \$60	1" (full width) \$30

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## WHY A JEWISH VEGETARIAN SOCIETY?

Because the original food for man is ordered in Genesis 1:29, "Behold I give you every herb-bearing seed and the fruit of every seed-bearing tree for you it shall be for food". Permission to kill and eat animals was only granted as a result of man's evil and was accompanied with a curse (Genesis 9:5).

Because 95% of all flesh foods are from factory farms and produced under conditions which contravene the Torah. Learned authorities have stated that their Kashruth must be considered as suspect.

Because nowhere in the Tenach is there a promise of fleshfoods of any kind as a reward for keeping the commandments. The promise is always the gift of produce of the vines, the gardens and the fields.

Because cruelty is indivisible, the Covenant of Peace was applicable to man and all creatures: to participate in the war against creation is incompatible with Judaism. We work for the prophetic era, "When they shall no longer hurt nor destroy".

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### THE JVS IS AN INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AND MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN TO EVERYONE

Non-vegetarians who are sympathetic to our aims are invited to join as associate members.

There are two grades of Membership as follows:

- A. Practising Vegetarians, i.e. those who refrain from eating the flesh of animals, fish and fowl
- B. Non-Vegetarians who are in sympathy with the Movement.

Annual Membership fee £10 or \$15. Family Membership £12 or \$18

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1. I would like to advance the Society's work and enclose a donation of.....
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3. I would like to help secure the future of the Movement by a legacy (large or small). Please send me details of the necessary wording.
4. I would like to help in one of the many aspects of the Society's work. Please send me details.

The Jewish Vegetarian is published quarterly by The Jewish Vegetarian Society. 853/855 Finchley Road London, NW11 8LX, England. Subscription price is USA \$15. Canada \$15.

Please note: Periodicals Class postage paid at Rahway NJ. Postmaster: Send address corrections to: The Jewish Vegetarian, c/o Mercury Airfreight International Ltd. 365 Blair Road, Avenel, NJ 07001. USPS 001-377.

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## Every Wednesday

### FELDENKRAIS CLASSES

Feldenkrais classes for ladies or men. 6.30 – 7.30 pm at JVS 855 Finchley Road, London NW11. For further details please contact Meir Pfeffer – 0181-346 0258.

### MONTHLY EVENTS

The Raw Food Centre in North London holds monthly weekend workshops. These all-day events include guest speakers on many different matters relating to raw food and good health, juicing, detoxification, and world food. In addition, a delicious raw food organic lunch is always provided. The whole event costs £10.00. Doors open 12 noon. For further details, please call 0181-446 2960 or 0181-441 6252, or write to the Raw Food Centre, 27 Grasvenor Avenue, Barnet, Herts, EN5 2BY England or E-mail [grant@rawfare.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:grant@rawfare.freeserve.co.uk)

### Sunday 30th January 2000

#### AROMATHERAPY LECTURE, JVS HQ, 855 FINCHLEY ROAD, GOLDERS GREEN, LONDON NW11 8LX, ENGLAND

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Write to 1800 S Robertson Blvd., Bldg. 6, PMB # 252, Los Angeles, CA 90035-4352 or respond by E-mail to [TIPTOPTEMP@aol.com](mailto:TIPTOPTEMP@aol.com)

**Friday 31st December 1999**

## **HYDE PARK, LONDON, ENGLAND**

### **1.00 PM – MILLENNIUM PLEDGE EVENT AND VEGETARIAN PICNIC**

The Young Indian Vegetarians are holding a mass vegetarian event in Hyde Park, London. As well as asking all those present to bring along their own food for a vegetarian picnic, participants are being invited to sign a Millennium Pledge to reverse Meat-Eating and Violence towards Animals. A number of celebrities will be present and there will also be a special awards ceremony taking place. For further message, please contact Nitin Mehta on 0181-681 8884.

## **ADVANCE NOTICE**

### **34th World Vegetarian Congress, 10th – 16th July 2000, TORONTO, CANADA**

The 34th World Vegetarian Congress will take place at the downtown campus of the world-renowned University of Toronto, the largest university in Canada. Hosted by the Toronto Vegetarian Association, the Congress offers a chance to meet vegetarians from around the world, listen to top international speakers and enjoy social activities.

For further details, please contact the Toronto Vegetarian Association, 736 Bathurst Street, Toronto ON M5S 2R4, Canada. Tel: (416) 533 3897, fax (416) 533 6327, E-mail: [wvc2000@interlog.com](mailto:wvc2000@interlog.com) or check out their new website at [www.veg.on.ca/](http://www.veg.on.ca/).

*Turning words into deeds*

## **THE JERUSALEM CENTRE**

Donations gratefully received towards repayment of the loan on the freehold premises.

1. Mr & Mrs M. Marin, 14 Quarry Chase, 30/34 Poole Road, Westbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset BH4 9DD.
2. R.A.L. Frank, 24 Lawrence Gardens, Mill Hill, London NW7 4JT. In memory of his late father Mr Julius Frank.
3. Lance Asner, 1514 Constance Street, Silver Spring, MD 20902, USA.
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## **BUILDING FUND DONATION – LONDON**

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## NEW LIFE MEMBERS

We would like to extend a hearty welcome to Sandra Liverman of Mississippi USA and Scott Kevelson of New Jersey USA on becoming Life Members of the Society. We are hoping they will send us more details about themselves for the next issue. We will always be happy to hear from any other members wishing to take this step and become a 'Pillar of the Society'. This not only encourages others, but it also secures the future of the Society.

**DONATIONS RECEIVED.** We wish to thank all those who send in donations towards the Society's Funds. Although items £3 and under are not listed to save expense, all are appreciated and put to good use.

£25 Mr & Mrs M.M. Bournemouth, Dorset. £20 Mr J.F. Ontario, Canada. £20 Mrs. H.B.W. NSW Australia. £18 Mr W.C. Co. Down, N. Ireland. £15 Mr & Mrs. E.H. Northwood, Middlesex. £15 Mr C.J.M. London NW11. £10 Mr C.B. London N8. £10 Ms D.G. Edgware, Middlesex. £10 Mrs J.S.H. Cumbria. £10 Dr. A.C.J. Kew Gardens, Surrey. £10 Mr R.R. Chigwell, Essex. £10 Mr M.S.S. Suffolk. £8 Mr & Mrs B. Pinner, Middlesex. £8 R.J.V.S. Newbury Park, Essex. £8 Mr J.R. London NW8. £8 Dr D.R. Oxford. £5 Mr R.F. London NW7. £5 Ms. M.K. Harrow Weald, Middlesex. £5 Ms D.K. London NW3. £5 Mrs. L.M. Leeds. £5 Mrs H.R. Chigwell, Essex. £5 Ms S.R. London NW8. £5 Mr. W.W. Paignton, Devon. \$36 Mrs A.F.R. TX. USA. \$18 Ms M.F.L. CA. USA. \$15 Ms R.S. \$5 S.F. & L.D. NM. USA. \$5 S & E.L. FL. USA.



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The JVS 'House Parents' home for deprived and homeless children is in the care of 'Orr Shalom' (Vegetarian) villages for children and is situated at  
POB 1837, 20 Hatzav St.  
Mevaseret-Zion 90805  
Israel. Tel: 972.2 5337059

**(Please note new address)**

Visitors are always welcome.

A phone call or letter is always advisable to ensure that a member of the friendly staff will be there to welcome you.

**DONATIONS RECEIVED:** £25 Mr & Mrs M. M. Bournemouth, Dorset. £20 Mr & Mrs F.P. Clacton on Sea, Essex. £5 Mrs R.F. Bushey Heath, Herts. \$50 Ms F.B. N.Y. USA. \$12 Mr L.A. MD. USA. \$5 Ms E.M. FL. USA.

## A JEWISH VEGETARIAN DIALOGUE

*The following material from Professor Mark Nagurka provides much food for thought, and it is hoped that it will help promote consideration about how best to promote the Jewish vegetarian cause, and how to respond to people who challenge us.*

Letter to Editor, *The Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle*, October 23, 1998, p.5.

Thank you for presenting the point-counterpoint articles on Judaism and vegetarianism (Oct 9, 1998) by Richard Schwartz and Rabbi Yoel Schonfeld. I was especially intrigued by Rabbi Schonfeld's comments.

He states that besides the Torah's 613 positive and negative commandments, "all other teachings are considered extraneous to Jewish thinking." This view discounts the Mishna, the Gemorah, the Commentaries, and the Rabbinic illuminaries throughout the ages who have interpreted the laws. Without these "extraneous" teachings, we would not know how to follow the laws nor understand their meanings. For example, the injunction "You shall not place a stumbling block before the blind" (Leviticus, 19:14) is interpreted by Jewish scholars not just literally, but broadly. A person can be "blind" if he is ignorant of a particular situation. This applies in business as well as in the seemingly-innocent purchase of cellophane-wrapped kosher meat – where the reality of the animal's life has been hidden from view.

The assertion that "we cannot extrapolate beyond the law itself" is countered by the Commentaries and Responsa literature, which are essentially human extrapolations of the intent of the Divine law. As Rachmanim b'nei Rachmanim (compassionate children of compassionate ancestors), we are to be on the side of justice and mercy. Would Rabbi Schonfeld argue that by not endorsing slavery, which is permitted in Jewish law, we have done something "inimical to Judaism"? This is silly. Vegetarianism does not "extrapolate beyond the law" nor "exceed or detract" from "traditional Jewish teachings".

Rabbi Schonfeld refers to wine as an example of something that is dangerous yet not forbidden. He states "to say that alcoholism is condemned by Torah law is a stretch." I see no positive messages of alcoholism in the Torah. It is not condoned and it is not a Mitzvah. The same can be said for meat-eating.

A case could even be made that meat-eating is an addiction similar to alcoholism or other drug habits. It involves a moral compromise (i.e., to satisfy the addiction, a living creature must be killed); it harms you (the negative health consequences are incontrovertible); it harms others (because of your habit, grain that would have fed starving humans was fed to animals raised for slaughter); it harms the world (with wasted resources, pollution of the environment); it is expensive (in terms of health-related costs) and yet it is socially acceptable. If consumption of meat and alcohol are analogous, then why are Jews such big meat-eaters whereas "sobriety is the norm in Jewish society"?

Rabbi Schonfeld cites Rabbi Yechezkel Landau and claims that hunting is not prohibited by Jewish law, even though the thought of Jews hunting for sport is abhorrent. Yet, Rabbi Landau states that causing any cruelty to an animal while alive is a desecration of the Torah (Noda Bi Yehudah,

Yoreh Deah, Resp. No. 10). In an essay on “Animals,” in his *The Jewish Encyclopedia of Moral and Ethical Issues*, Nachum Amsel, an Israeli Orthodox Rabbi, states, “hunting for sport is not considered legitimate, and is not only discouraged in the Talmud, but is also prohibited in Jewish law.”

It is not my intent to criticize Rabbi Schonfeld nor make light of his article. He is espousing a majority view, as evidenced by the widespread practice of Jews as meat-eaters. My comments are intended to spur further thought.

I see meat-eating as violating several Mitzvot, including Tsa’ar Ba’alei Chaim (the injunction to avoid cruelty to animals and not cause them pain), Pikuach Nefesh (preservation of human life), and Ba’al Tashchit (the law prohibiting waste). To me, endorsement of vegetarianism is implicit in the laws and teachings of Judaism. That the endorsement may not be couched as an explicit prohibition against meat-eating does not change the many indications of our tradition that point toward vegetarianism.

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin has stated, “The dietary laws are intended to teach us compassion and lead us gently to vegetarianism.” Dennis Prager and Rabbi Joseph Telushkin in their book, *The Nine Questions People Ask About Judaism*, say: “Keeping kosher is Judaism’s compromise with its ideal of vegetarianism. Ideally, according to Judaism, man would confine his eating to fruits and vegetables, and not kill animals for food. In the Garden of Eden, Judaism’s depiction of utopia, man was commanded to be vegetarian (Genesis 1:28-29). The future Kingdom of G-d on earth is also depicted as one in which all creatures will be vegetarian (Isaiah II:7f). However, Judaism did not legislate its vegetarian ideal.”

As much as we wish to discount it, animals on factory farms – the source of the vast majority of kosher meat – are mistreated while alive. They are raised according to manufacturing specifications and killed (by Shochtim in a kosher manner) with production floor efficiency. They are not treated as G-d’s creatures under our stewardship in accordance with Jewish law, but as inanimate objects in complete contravention of the Torah.

However Jewish carnivores wish to rationalize (i.e. create rational lies for) their lust for meat, by their action of eating meat they desecrate (intentionally or unintentionally, directly or indirectly) Torah laws. There is no Mitzvah here. A truly G-d-revering Jew would not or should not want to be an accomplice to the string of violations and offences. The simple act of refraining from meat is a statement of choosing life.

**Mark Nagurka**  
**Glendale, WI**

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when replying to adverts



## RESPONSE TO A FRIEND

by Professor Mark Nagurka

A friend sent me the following message in response to the letter above:

“You state that meat-eating violates some Jewish commandments. I see the possibility of people violating the prohibitions but it depends on how people conduct themselves. This is in the hands of individuals. The mistreatment of animals is certainly an example of this. There are many laws outside of eating where specific behaviour is allowed but a person needs to be careful of how they conduct themselves in the behaviour. Your argument of vegetarianism being implicit in Judaism is an interesting point. From parshot Breshit and Noach you certainly can argue that it is, since man at first is a vegetarian; it is the ideal state. I don’t agree however that it is contravention of the Torah, I think that’s a stretch.”

Here is my response:

“Let’s say someone commits a sin, such as hires someone to steal money, and then does something with the money that is neither a mitzvah nor a transgression. This is clearly not acceptable, and not in concert with our rich tradition. (Even if someone does something with the money that is a mitzvah, say give tzaddakah, this would be a “mitzvah haba’ah be’averah” – a legitimate end achieved through illegitimate means – which the Jewish sages prohibit. The means have to be legitimate as well).

Let’s change the situation. Let’s say someone buys “kosher” meat and then eats it. This person – unknowingly if ignorant or knowingly if thinking about it – has paid someone (more likely many people) to raise the animal that was “sacrificed” for him.

How does the person know the animal was treated properly, that is, by Torah laws, during its life? Let’s say the animal was not allowed freedom. Let’s say the animal was worked, that is, was not free, on Shabbat (a violation of the fourth commandment). Let’s say the animal was abused, say by being separated from its mother or offspring, or by not being allowed to eat natural food, or by being deprived of sunlight, or by being crammed in a small pen with many other animals, or by having its mouth muzzled. All of these conditions – violations of Torah laws regarding the treatment of animals – occur on factory farms.

The animal is then slaughtered by a shochet according to the “rules” and sold. Is the person who purchases parts of this animal responsible, not just for steps Y and Z (the slaughter and eating, which may be according to Torah) but also for steps A through X (the treatment of the animal during its life, not according to Torah)? I say yes.

We are responsible for our actions – this is a distinctly Jewish message. It is an unacceptable luxury to hide behind the veil of ignorance or the fear of the truth, to avoid understanding the full meaning of our actions. Being responsible for what we do includes knowing what we eat and where it comes from.

Those who think that by purchasing kosher meat they have relieved themselves of their responsibility are deceiving themselves. In my opinion, such people are accomplices, whether they like it or not, in transgressions

of Torah. Just because sins may be hidden from view – and even hidden by “hechshers” – does not make it right nor allowable ... it just makes for a way to rationalize behaviour, namely satisfying a lust for flesh.

If there is nothing to hide, then I suggest that every Jew who wishes to be (or claims to be) Torah-observant and wishes to eat kosher meat visit a factory farm and/or spend time at a kosher slaughterhouse. I am confident that many new voices for vegetarianism would arise.

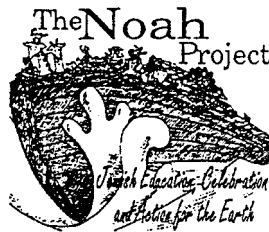
Some have viewed my letter as harsh. I think the reason is that it is easier to shoot the messenger than listen to the message. There is only one conclusion for me and that is to refrain from eating meat. If one wishes to eat kosher meat and be Torah observant, that person must raise the animal – showing it respect, treating it with compassion during its life – or know someone directly who has done that. Otherwise, it is a convenient way around Torah laws just to buy the end product and close one’s eyes to the reality of transgressions committed along the way.

Nachmanides (in his commentary on Leviticus 19:1) points out that it is possible to keep the strict letter of the Torah while desecrating its spirit. He calls such a person a “naval birshut haTorah” (a degenerate observer of the law). Rabbi David Rosen, former Chief Rabbi of Ireland, adds that the means of Torah are not enough, we must strive for its teleology, the spirit of its goals. That is how we truly fulfil Torah.

I anxiously await your thoughts.

L’hitraot, Mark.”

***Mark Nagurka, Ph.D. (MIT) is an Associate Professor of Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His lifelong passion is love of Jews, Judaism, and Israel. He resides in Glendale, Wisconsin with his wife, Anita.***



The greatest disservice we can do to ourselves and to our community is to lose hope. Only yesterday I held an empty tin can in my hand and was about to throw it in the bin. “What’s the point of carefully washing it out, storing it and then, schlepping it to the recycling centre”, I thought to myself “it won’t make any difference to the future of the planet”. I must have felt a little guilty about this because then came the excuses. “It’s only one tin” and ...well you can fill in the gaps yourself, the truth is that I couldn’t be bothered and I was feeling demoralised.

Demoralisation about our ability to change things is catching. Like a

virus, we can give it to each other. And sometimes our words simply do not have the effect we would like them to have. “Did you know” asked a friend, “that jelly like stuff inside a baby’s disposable nappy is toxic and will not degrade for generations and we are poisoning the earth by dumping them in landfill sites and then there are all the trees being destroyed to provide the paper they use and” “But they’re more convenient and reduce nappy rash” I replied. But I’m thinking. “That means I should be washing cloth nappies, I don’t want to do that and anyway, what’s one nappy?”. I resolved not to mention nappies to her again and hide the disposables.

The rabbis were very concerned about the power of speech. They had a category called *loshen harah* (evil speech) and taught about its dangers. Once the words leave your mouth, you have no control over where they go or what they do. So the best thing to do is shut up. Actions, though, are a different matter. The rabbis are keen on action. Positive action has the power to inspire others. It can also, in concert with others, change the world.

The tradition quotes Shammal as follows: “say little and do much and receive every one with a cheerful face” (Avot 1:15). A contemporary rendering of this might be “don’t think of excuses, just get on with it”.

We all have the power over our immediate sphere of influence. If we work as homemakers, we can recycle and if we are members of a shul, we can set up recycling and energy conservation schemes in our synagogues. And some of us might have more influence than we realise. Business and industry can take a lead, and those of us who use a lot of energy have a greater responsibility to use it carefully.

There is a text, just a few pages on from the one I quoted above, that has bothered me as an environmentalist. Rabbi Jacob said, “He who is walking by the way and studying and breaks off his study and says, ‘How fine is that tree, how fine is that fallow field’, him Scripture regards as if he has forfeited his life” (Avot 3:9).

At first glance, it looks as though studying is more important than appreciating nature, and if one fails to appreciate the natural world then how can one be concerned to care for it. Rabbi Zalman Schachter, however, gave the following explanation. The person in question was one of those who had responsibility for repeating and memorising the oral law, which at that stage had not been committed to writing. Had this individual interrupted his studying, there was a serious risk he might have forgotten something and the chain of tradition could have been broken forever.

The natural world is very distracting. Nowadays there is an imperative to allow ourselves to be distracted by nature and to wonder at its beauty and mystery. The environment that sustains us, the bounty we bless daily, requires our attention and our action to preserve it. We share Rabbi Jacob’s concern for the future.

And no doubt you are wondering about the tin. I am proud to tell you I washed it and it joined the others in the recycling box. As for the nappies well let me just say the potty training is going well and I think it won’t be long before I am relieved of that particular dilemma.

**Stuart Linke**

# CHANUKAH AND VEGETARIANISM

by Richard H Schwartz

Many connections can be made between vegetarianism and the Jewish festival of Chanukah:

1. According to the Book of Maccabees, some Maccabees lived on plant foods to “avoid being polluted (by non-kosher meat) like the rest” when they hid in the mountains (where kosher meat was not available) to avoid capture.
2. The foods associated with Chanukah, latkes (potato pancakes) and sufguniyot (fried donuts) are vegetarian foods, and the oils that are used in their preparation are in commemoration of the oil used in the lighting of the menorah in the re-dedication of the Temple.
3. Chanukah represents the triumph of non-conformity. The Maccabees fought for their inner beliefs, rather than conforming to external pressure. They were willing to say: This I believe, this I stand for, this I am willing to struggle for. Today, vegetarians represent non-conformity. At a time when most people in the wealthier countries think of animal products as the main part of their meals, when McDonald’s and similar fast food establishments are expanding, vegetarians are resisting and insisting that there is a better, healthier, more humane diet.
4. Chanukah represents the victory of the few, who practised God’s teaching rather than the values of the surrounding society, over the many. Today vegetarians are a very small minority in most countries, but they believe that, consistent with God’s original diet (Genesis 1:29), and religious mandates to preserve our health, treat animals with compassion, protect the environment, preserve natural resources, and share with hungry people, vegetarianism is the diet most consistent with Jewish values.
5. Chanukah commemorates the miracle of the oil that was enough for only one day, but miraculously lasted for eight days. A switch to vegetarianism on the part of the world’s people could result in an even greater miracle: the end of the scandal of world hunger which results in the death of 15 to 20 million people annually, while over a third of the world’s grain is fed to animals destined for slaughter.
6. It is interesting that the ratio of eight days that the oil burned compared to the one day of burning capacity that the oil had, is the same ratio (8 to 1) that is often given of the pounds of grain that are necessary to produce a pound of edible beef in a feedlot. The miracle of the oil brings the use of fuel and other resources into focus, and vegetarian diets make resources go much further, since far less water, fuel, land, pesticides, fertiliser and other agricultural resources are required for plant-based diets than for animal-centred diets.
7. Chanukah also commemorates the re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem after it was defiled by the Syrian-Greeks. The Hebrew

root of the word Chanukah means dedication. Today, a shift to vegetarianism can be a major factor in the re-dedication and renewal of Judaism, because it would show that Jewish values are relevant to every day Jewish life and to addressing current problems, such as hunger, pollution, resource scarcity and soaring health care expenditures.

8. Candles are lit during each night of chanukah, symbolising a turning from darkness to light, from despair to hope. According to the prophet Isaiah, the role of Jews is to be a “light unto the nations” (Isaiah 42:6). Today, Jewish vegetarians are arguing that the way to a better world is not by exercising our power over animals, but by applying the spirit of God, “whose tender mercies are over all of His creatures” (Psalm 145:9).
9. Chanukah commemorates the deliverance of the Jews from the Syrian Greeks. So, today, vegetarianism can be a step toward deliverance from modern problems such as hunger, pollution and resource scarcities.
10. On the Sabbath during Chanukah, the prophetic portion indicates that difficulties can best be overcome “‘not by might and not by power, but by my spirit’, says the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6). Today, Jewish vegetarians are arguing that the way to a better world is not by exercising our power over animals, but by applying the spirit of God, “whose tender mercies are over all of His creatures” (Psalm 145:9).
11. The Hebrew root of the word Chanukah also means education, Jewish vegetarians believe that if Jews were educated about the horrible realities of factory farming and the powerful Jewish mandates about taking care of our health, showing compassion to animals, protecting the environment, conserving resources and helping hungry people, they would seriously consider switching to vegetarian diets.
12. At the morning services during each day of Chanukah, there is a recitation of Hallel, the psalms of praise from Psalm 113 to 118. During the Sabbath of Chanukah and every other Sabbath during the year, the morning service has a prayer that begins, “The soul of all living creatures shall praise God’s name”. Yet, it is hard for animals to join in the praise of God when annually in the United States over 9 billion animals are killed for their flesh after severe suffering on factory farms.

## **Emergency Building Fund**

The Society’s Headquarters in London are in urgent need of repair and renovation. It has been estimated that we will need in the region of £50,000. Therefore we will need your help. An Emergency Building Fund has been set up for donations. **Please help. Any donations, large or small will be much appreciated.**

# NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE

by Rabbi Noach Valley

I toured Israel last July with an unusually beautiful travelling companion, a young woman named Leah. Joy (Simha), a Persian-Jewish overseer at a Kabbalistic art gallery that we visited in the mystical city of Tzefat, commented that Leah's beauty was like an overpowering light which forced her to divert her gaze and made it impossible to keep her eyes focused on Leah for more than a few moments. Joy noticed in Leah an inner as well as an outer beauty, powerfully spiritual, rather than merely skin-deep.

Despite our long-standing relationship, I was struck for the first time with the revelation that Leah was "an angel of mercy" carrying out the will of *rebono shel olam*, the Master of the Universe. Quite often during this trip, her first time in Israel, Leah agonised about the plight of helpless animals and became involved in feeding, cuddling, massaging and giving pleasure and *ahavat hinam* (unlimited love) to a seemingly limitless number of needy, love-hungry, stray kittens. If Leah had her way, she would have taken all of them home to America with her, filling the aeroplane with dozens of adorable little kittens. I have seen human beings whose appearance and personality have been tarnished by their unspeakable actions, but I have never seen an ugly kitten. To me they are all adorable.

Leah said to me, "Life is not about us. Life is not about abundance or material things. Life is about animals who need our help." With tears falling from her exquisite face she said, "I apologise for overreacting (to the plight of the kittens)." I replied, "No Leah for sure you didn't overreact. You reacted properly, the correct *Jewish* way for you or any other Jew, or for that matter any other human being to react!"

Until this trip I always thought of Leah as spiritual, but not as religious. Now I see her as awesomely spiritual as well as profoundly religious. I understand the word *religious*, in its true sense, to pertain to having deep feelings about an idea, a cause, or something or someone that God has created. I experienced this aspect of Leah's *neshama* (soul) right after she had read the following *berakhah* (mystical expression of gratitude to God) from the daily morning prayers, "Praised are You Adonai our God, who rules the universe, providing for all my needs." Leah commented on the *berakhah* by saying, "I now realise how lucky a person I am. I never realised it fully until my experience with those who are really in need, the kittens in Israel or anywhere else in the world. Unlike the kittens, I have all that I need or could ever hope for. At least I have shoes which permit me to go wherever I please."

How appropriate! Leah was not aware that she was reflecting the view of the Talmud which related the *berakhah* in question to the putting on of shoes, a basic element in our lives that we take for granted. In my father's day, owning a pair of shoes was not taken for granted. I remember my father once reminiscing about the popular image of the Depression-Era dice-player chanting, "(My) Baby needs new shoes," as a "prayer for success" just before rolling the dice.

We need to put on our shoes in order to go into the world, experience

the fullness of God's blessings, realise that whatever we enjoy in life comes from our Creator rather than as a result of our own efforts, and that all of our needs and wants are taken care of. When we come to understand that it is our divinely-commanded duty to take care of animals, lessen their pain and suffering, increase their pleasure and comfort by showing them love and helping to provide for all of *their* needs, then we can fully appreciate that the Holy Mighty One has already provided for all of *our* needs. Then we can sing out *dayenu* (we have enough/all that we need) over and over again, all-year long, as a joyful mantra, as it were, and not reserve this expression solely for the song we sing at our Pesach seder. Singing out or simply saying *dayenu* over and over again and letting its significance "sink in" may help us succeed in many areas of life.

The Mishnah teaches us that the truly wealthy person is one that is content with his/her lot in life, happy and fulfilled with whatever God has provided. (Pirkay Avot 4:1) Buddy Hackett, the famous comedian, once said that "When I started becoming successful, I needed more contracts, bigger deals. To really succeed, you have to feel happy just to be in the business." (The *Jewish Week* newspaper, 2/2/284) Rabbi Yehiel Mikhal of Zlotchov was quoted as saying, "My life was blessed in that I never needed anything until I had it."

In addition to being beautiful Leah is, indeed, truly "wealthy," "successful" and "blessed!"

The *berakhah* immediately following the one quoted before from the daily morning service reads as follows, "Praised are You Adonai our God, who rules the universe, guiding the steps of human beings." With a little imagination we can visualise the metaphor of shoes as a provision from God helping to prevent us from slipping, stumbling or falling on the path of life. Proper guidance for civilization's progress and humankind's forward march, as well as guidance for our personal challenges and advancement, comes from the Source of all existence. As we march forward with God guiding our steps, we may yet achieve a Utopian age of universal love and brotherhood, peace and perfection, and an end to starvation and poverty, chaos and disease. When human beings will relate to animals as Leah did to kittens in Israel, then perhaps they will learn to extend dignity, compassion and loving-service to other human beings and help prevent our universe from being destroyed in a bacterial or thermonuclear holocaust. Then "the lion will lie down with the lamb" and the messianic age will finally be at hand!

Visiting Israel is totally inspirational, truly spiritual and spirited, as well as an enjoyable experience! I recommend it to everyone. It is a source of much nachas and pleasure.

By the way, Leah is my young-adult daughter, my first-born. She and my prolific author-son, Eli, are my greatest heaven-sent blessings. God has, indeed, provided for all of *my* needs. May the One Above also provide for all of *your* needs and give you satisfaction and contentment. Amen.



## Gardener's Corner

### Winter 1999

Reflecting on the last year of the Millennium we saw a much more settled time with less extremes of weather both in the UK and abroad. In fact a perfect year for gardeners. Sufficient sunshine, which we lacked in the previous year and enough rain to green up the lawns just when they began to look "browned off".

As I write this the leaves are falling and scattering in the autumn breeze. The hedgerows are now laden with berries and the birds are taking every opportunity to lay down fat for the coming winter. The grey squirrel is tireless in collecting acorns which he buries throughout his territory, some to be uncovered in the dark days to come while inadvertently propagating oak trees for future generations of his descendants and the myriad species they will sustain. In August we experienced a rare total eclipse in the South West, in our garden it was 97%. As the heavens darkened with the moon gradually covering the sun, nature gently went to sleep – birds roosted and sang their evensong. The honey bees dropped down to the hives deceived by the false dusk. We gathered close to our pond and watched the awesome sight reflected in the water. Even so we could not have looked at the fine crescent had it not been for the thin cloud which acted as a perfect filter to shield our eyes and let us witness this rare and beautiful phenomenon.

Usually we grow our onions from sets – this year we decided to grow them from seed. The results were well worth the extra effort. They were started in the greenhouse in March and planted out at the end of May. The bulbs swelled with every rainfall and ripened in September, round and plump. Now they hang in ropes in the store house.

It was a record year for our bees yielding up a generous crop of early honey – then a swarm which settled high in a cypress. It was just in reach with the aid of a ladder. Hived in the evening they soon got to work in their new home drawing out the waxen cells for the queen to lay her eggs. Both hives collected summer honey and after treating them against the ravages of Varoa – the awful mite which has decimated bee colonies around the world – the late honey crop was returned to the bees as winter feed.

The debate about GM crops reached vehement levels on both sides. GM pollen was found in beehives gathered at a distance of three miles from the crop. Yet government scientists require a 50 yard margin between GM and non GM crops. The fallacy of their argument is so evident that one wonders how they will possibly prevent cross pollination and the resultant escape into



the environment of new variants which could cause harm in time to come.

It is some time since we had a hard winter with prolonged frosts and lasting snow – many believe that the profusion of hips and haws, nuts and berries, presages a spell of deep winter weather, others more mundanely think it is just the result of a fine summer – we shall see.



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## Quote

People talk to me sometimes about peace conventions and ask me to join societies for putting down war. I always say, you are beginning at the wrong end and putting the cart before the horse. If you want people to leave off fighting like beasts of prey, you must first get them to leave off living like beasts of prey. You cannot reform institutions without first reforming men.

Anna Kingsford. M.D.



## Vegetarianism: An Orthodox Jewish Perspective

by Rabbi David Rosen

It behoves an Orthodox Rabbi, in particular, to argue a case for or against a particular practice on the basis of Jewish law, halacha. Indeed, I believe that there are compelling halachic reasons as well as meta-halachic reasons for advocating vegetarianism.

Any halachic argument cannot deny that Judaism does allow for the consumption of meat.

Yet of course it does so under very controlled conditions and criteria. These refer not only to the way in which the animal is slaughtered, but also concern for the treatment of the animal up until that moment. However, even if there have been times and places when these standards may have been met, the current treatment of animals in the livestock trade definitely renders the consumption of meat as halachically unacceptable as the product of illegitimate means.

Moreover, the stringent ethical demands made not only of the shochet but also of anyone wishing to consume meat especially after the destruction of the Temple, led the Talmud itself and notable medieval authorities to encourage abstinence from meat eating (see Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 49b and 108a; Rabbi Elijah de Vidas, Reshit Chochma 4, 129; Rabbi Yehuda Ashkenazi (Be'er Heitev) quotes Isaac Luria (the “Ari”) in Shulchan Aruch Orah Haim, sect. 134).

Indeed, a central precept regarding the relationship between humans and animals in halacha, is the prohibition of causing cruelty to animals – Tsa’ar ba’alei chayim. As mentioned, practices in the livestock trade today constitute a flagrant violation of this prohibition. I refer not only to the most obvious and outrageous of these, such as the production of veal and goose liver, but also to common practices in the livestock trade such as hormonal treatment and massive drug dosing.

Furthermore, the retention of these hormones and drugs which are pumped into livestock pose a threat to human health together with the concentration of toxins at the end of the food chain contained in animal flesh. As it is halachically prohibited to harm oneself and as healthy nutritious vegetarian alternatives are easily available, meat consumption has become halachically unjustifiable.

However, as important as it is to address the halachic issues, the religious Jew must always be conscious of the goal of halachic conduct, the teleology of Torah (see Nachmanides on Leviticus ch. 19, v.1).

As Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook pointed out, not only are the ideal societal images in the Tanach the Garden of Eden and the Messianic age – vegetarian societies; but the very language with which meat eating is permitted is concessionary – “if your soul *lusts to eat meat*” (Deuteronomy ch. 12 v.20) – not ideal.

The explicit purpose of the Biblical dietary laws is holiness (Leviticus Ch. 11 v. 44) and our sages declared in relation to these, that “the mitzvot were

only given in order to purify (ennoble) people.” Maimonides and Abarbanel, quoting the midrash on Leviticus chapter 17 v. 7, saw the sacrifices as laid down in the Torah, as a concession to the forms of religious practice at the time and as designed to wean the children of Israel away from paganism. As the mitzvot are intended to ennoble us, and as the ideal images of the Torah are vegetarian, it is natural to similarly see the laws of kashrut (as does Rabbi Kook) as actually designed to wean us away from meat-eating towards the vegetarian ideal.

Today not only are we able to enjoy a healthy balanced vegetarian diet as perhaps never before; and not only are there in fact the above mentioned compelling halachic reasons for **not** eating meat; but above all, if we strive for that which Judaism aspires to – namely the ennoblement of the spirit, then a vegetarian diet becomes a moral imperative – the authentic Jewish ethical dietary way of life for our times and for all time.

In his Mishneh Torah (Code of Jewish Law), in the section “Foundations of the Torah” (Chapter 2 Mishnah 2) Maimonides explains how the all-encompassing Biblical precept to love G-d, may be observed. Through studying and meditating upon the beauty and wonder of Creation, he states, we draw closer to the very Source of all.

In other words, the love of G-d is expressed through our love and respect of Creation. While undoubtedly for Judaism, there is a hierarchy in the Creation in which the human being is at the summit, nevertheless, evidently the more sensitive and respectful we are towards G-d’s Creation, in particular G-d’s creatures, the more respectful and reverential we actually are towards G-d.

Indeed, Judaism as a way of life, seeks to inculcate in us a consciousness of the Divine Presence in the World and respect for life accordingly. The more we care for life, the closer we are in fact to G-d. Accordingly, an ethical vegetarian way of life expresses the most noble and sublime values and aspirations of Judaism itself, bringing us closer to its ideal vision for society as a whole.

### **New Year Message, 1998**

At the heart of Jewish affirmation and purpose are the concepts of the love and reverence of G-d. The practical expression thereof is discussed by Maimonides in his Mishneh Torah, in the second chapter of Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah in the following words: “...how is the way to (fulfil the commandment) to love (G-d) and revere Him? When a person considers His works and His wonderful and great creations and will be in awe of His wisdom which is beyond estimation and limitation, he immediately (comes) to know the L-rd.”

Thus it is precisely through His creation and Creatures, that we can come to live, to truly know G-d.

But the love, reverence, and knowledge of the Creator are meant to lead us further. This is made clear by Maimonides in his Sefer HaMitzvot. He commences his enumeration of the commandments with the foundational precepts of Jewish faith, before dealing with all the other mitzvot. After the aforementioned principles of belief, love and reverence of G-d, he lists the commandments to serve G-d; to follow and associate with those who serve Him; to swear in His Name; and then the commandment to be G-d-like and imitate His ways. The ultimate implication

of this leads to the concluding commandment in this section of first principles – to sanctify G-d's name.

However, how are we to fulfil the commandment to imitate G-d, to walk in His ways, on a regular daily basis?

Maimonides explains with a quotation from our sages, “Just as the Holy One Blessed be He is merciful – so you be merciful; the Holy One Blessed be He is called gracious – so you be gracious; the Holy One Blessed be His Name is righteous – so you be righteous; the Holy One Blessed be His loving kindness, so your way be loving kindness (Sifre on Deuteronomy 11, 22)...(the commandment requires us) to imitate the good deeds and honorable attributes by which the Exalted One is described through metaphor.”

A further reference in this regard is to be found in Maimonides' Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Mlachim 10, 12 in relation to Jewish-Gentile relations. Maimonides quotes the Sages this time to the effect that one must be charitable to gentile poor, etc. “because of ‘ways of peace’, for it is said ‘G-d is good to all, and His mercies are upon all His creatures’ (Psalm 145)” and it is said “Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are peace (Proverbs 3).”

Furthermore in Hilchot Avadim 9,8, Maimonides emphasises the obligation to treat servants with kindness and compassion, and to behave with such qualities also to animal life. “The Sages of old,” comments Maimonides, “would give their animals and servants to eat before their own meals” ... True Jews, he continues, are “merciful towards all. And so concerning the attributes of the Holy One Blessed be He that we are commanded to emulate, it says ‘and His mercies are upon all His Creatures’; and everyone who is merciful, is treated with mercy, as it is said ‘and He will grant you mercy and have compassion on you and multiply you.’”

Accordingly we may understand and paraphrase the quintessential message of Jewish Faith as follows:

True love of G-d means awareness of His presence  
in His Creation. True consciousness of His presence  
in His Creation means care and compassion for His  
Creatures. The greater our sensitivity towards His Creatures the  
more we emulate His Attributes, ennoble our world and sanctify  
His Name – the very metier of our existence.

Aside from the fact that both the original Garden of Eden and the Messianic vision of the future reflect the vegetarian ideal in Judaism, it is of course such a dietary lifestyle that is most consonant with the goal and purpose of Torah to maximise our awareness, appreciation and sensitivity to the Divine Presence in the world. It is therefore only natural for us to affirm as did Rav Kuk, the first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi in Israel, that a Redeemed World must perforce be a vegetarian world.

### **The Torah and Flesh Eating: Shechitah and Anti Semitism December, 1989**

Many halachic sources make it clear that the statement advocating meat eating as an expression of religious celebration is not mandatory but permissive, and that indeed if one finds such to be physically and or morally repulsive it would be very wrong to do so. (See specifically Kerem Shlomo Yoreh Deah, 1; Yakhel Shlomo, Orach Chayim 529 (2); Reshit Chochman 129b; see also other sources brought in vol. 6 (ref. “basar”) of Sdei Chemed advocating total abstinence from meat eating.)

Perhaps the most powerful argument in favour of vegetarianism for G-d-fearing Jews today more than ever before, is Rabbi Berkovitz's most forceful point in his rallying call against anti-shechitah legislation – namely the prohibition against “Chillul Hashem,” the desecration of G-d's name.

Surely it is precisely such a desecration when observant Jews eat animals produced and treated under conditions of cruelty that flagrantly flout Jewish teaching and prohibitions concerning “Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayim.” Is it anything less than a “Chillul Hashem” to declare veal for example, which is produced through wanton human cruelty to a calf, to be Kasher, simply because at points “Y” and “Z” the animal was slaughtered and prepared in accordance with halachic dictates, after the commandments affecting human responsibility towards animal life have been desecrated from points “A” to “X”?

Most people, of course, are simply ignorant or intentionally ignorant of the manifold transgressions involved in meat eating. Today's concept of Kashrut is more permeated with crass indulgence and economic exploitation than the ennoblement of the human spirit which our sages declare to be its purpose.

Today as never before, the cruelty in livestock trade renders meat eating and true Kashrut incompatible (aside from the fact that the consumption of hormones and antibiotics injected and retained in the flesh and the concentration of toxins at the end of the food chain that then pass into the body is hardly in keeping with the commandment to care for one's physical health!).

If meat eating were a mitzvah – an obligation – it would today in most cases be at best a “mitzvah haba'ah b'averah” or rather “b'averot” – i.e. rendered illegitimate by illegitimate means.

How much more illegitimate then is meat eating today when it is not a mandatory obligation anyway.

However, I do agree with Rabbi Berkovitz that to allow a ban of Shechita would be a “chillul hashem” if other means of slaughtering animals are allowed.

Such hypocrisy is often a thinly-veiled guise for far less than “civilised” sentiments directed against Jews and our Heritage, and Jewish vegetarians must also fight such hypocrisy. But at the same time we must clearly advocate dietary practices that are truly in consonance with the sublimest values of the Torah, and today more than ever before these are overwhelmingly incompatible with carnivorous indulgence.

### **On the Temple Sacrifices, June, 1990**

It is surely nothing less than crass hypocrisy for those who indulge their carnivorous lusts and thereby also help maintain the barbarities in the livestock trade, etc. (much of which did not exist in Temple times) to turn up their noses at the Temple service where sacrifices were at least offered up to G-d in the form of spiritual devotion of the time and culture, before being partaken of as food.

However, the Orthodox Jewish vegetarian will often point to the Midrash in Vayikra Rabbah and further to Maimonides who declare animal offerings to have been born out of a concession to the forms of spiritual devotion at the time and context, but to have been replaced primarily by prayer as a higher level of devotion.

Moreover, the Temple service, as it is laid down, can be maintained without animal sacrifice. Indeed, Rabbi Kuk's vision of vegetarian society in the Messianic Age draws support from the Rabbinic comment that “in the future all sacrifices

will be abolished except for the meal offering.”

I must acknowledge that such efforts to view vegetarianism within a *halachic* framework in the context of Messianic expectation cannot avoid the obligation of the paschal lamb (*Korban Pesach*).

As far as that is concerned, the legitimate response of the Orthodox Jewish vegetarian is that “I will wait to hear and do what the Messiah wills me to!” (Undoubtedly we will have our own expectation in that regard!)

In consonance with the above, I do not believe that we need understand the liturgical passages...as expressing our hope for the restoration of animal sacrifice. These texts are above all and essentially a recognition on our part of the devotion and dedication to G-d that our ancestors showed in their own way. Accordingly we express our hope that we may show the same spirit of devotion and dedication to Him, in our own way.

Indeed, the language of the liturgy easily facilitates such an interpretation. I quote from the Sabbath Musaph Amidah:

“And we shall perform and offer up before You in love, an additional Sabbath offering according to the command of Your will, just as (or “just like”) you wrote down for us to do in your Torah (communicated) via Moses by the (direct) utterance of Your glory, as it is stated: and on the Sabbath day you shall offer up, etc., etc.”

The phrase “just as” or “just like” can mean “the same” or “similar” – in quality and devotion, for example, but not necessarily in the same form!

If we understand the text in this way, then the recitation of the sacrificial specifications is, as I have mentioned, but to record the devotion of the past, to inspire us to devotion to G-d in different forms and ways in the present and future.

This is the way I understand the text and the way I pray when reciting such texts.

Please note that Judaism demands of us to pray with “kavanah,” sincere intention, and thus requires our own personal undertakings of the statutory texts that we are obliged to recite.

If we do not do this, then inevitably we are guilty of praying by rote/automatically, which our Sages condemn and warn us against strongly.

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## LIFE CYCLE

by David Segal

Awake this morning.  
Spring has come back full circle  
To refresh the earth.  
We must till this earth over  
And sow seeds for survival.

Summer heat beats down  
To ripen our plantations,  
Bearing fruit and grain.  
This nourishment ripens now  
To see us through thick and thin.

Autumn ends reaping  
And stockpiling is busy  
To cater for need.  
Stores and shops distribute round.  
Even animals take part.

We must now retire  
To hibernate, in a sense,  
For Winter is cold.  
Time for earth and plant to rest.  
Time for mankind to reflect.

# L'CHAIM, TORONTO!

by Tom Salsberg with Justine Fields

After more than a year of planning and a few false starts prior, an exciting, vibrant and organised new group of pluralistic Jewish vegetarians has formed in Toronto. Many in the group expect it to fulfil a need expressed by some Jewish members of the Toronto Vegetarian Association to be more able to get together with fellow Jews for veggie pot lucks. Others want more lunch'n'learn sessions and other easily and not-so-easily organised events with fellow Jews, as well as linkages between this group and other Jewish, vegetarian, and Jewish-Vegetarian groups locally and around the world.

Two events have been held on the third Sunday of the months of July and August so far at le Commensal, a very pleasant Toronto version of the French-Canadian chain of vegetarian pay-as-you-go buffet restaurants that exist in Montreal, Quebec City and elsewhere. Both were attended by about ten people each time, but not always the same individuals. At the second meeting, Donna Kaplan, the jovial founding president of the now rather dormant Jewish Vegetarian Society of Toronto, showed up and, true to the excited networking spirit of L'Chaim, brought a friend. A third event also took place there as well on the third Sunday in September, and other Lunch'n'Learn sessions will continue there on the third Sunday of every month hopefully from now until forever. An events committee has been struck, a steering committee expanded from two members to a full slate of five, and talk exists of starting up a sub-group within the group for single Jewish vegetarians.

One of the newly installed Steering Committee members, wellness consultant Justine Fields, wrote the following after attending the special inaugural meeting of L'Chaim:

"I attended the first meeting of the newly formed Jewish Vegetarian group, L'Chaim, on July 18th 1999. I was attracted to the group for a couple of reasons. First of all, I was attracted to the name. Secondly, I was eager to meet a group of like-minded individuals.

L'Chaim, which means 'to life' in Hebrew, is exactly what vegetarianism is all about! Not only in giving lives to animals that would normally be slaughtered for human consumption, but also by making the conscious choice to live a healthier life ourselves by not eating those animals.

As for the like-minded individuals, boy was I surprised! Although we all chose to label ourselves Jewish and vegetarian, we could not have been a more diverse group of people! The ages ranged from mid 20's to 50's, there were varying levels of religiousness and a relatively equal proportion of men and women.

After lunch at 'le Commensal', we reviewed a basic set of rules and regulations created by the founders of the organisation, Tom Salsberg and Jennifer Kozinets. After much discussion, it was approved and all attendees became members. We followed this by a discussion of future events and who was interested in planning them. When the meeting ended, a few of us hung around and simply chatted about work, relationships, life, you name it! All in all, it was a successful meeting. So, if I may, I'd like to propose a toast of good luck



to the new organisation: 'L'Chaim!'"

Justine's enthusiasm for the new group is echoed amongst the members in general, including the other members of the Steering Committee, web macher Moses Shadier, Treasurer (and avid photographer) Howard Koch and of course founders Tom Salsberg and Jennifer Kozinets, who will be serving as President and Secretary respectively for the first year of the organisation's existence at least until the first Annual General Meeting, scheduled to take place sometime in the Spring of 2000.

For more information about L'Chaim, or to get involved, please get yourself (and a friend as well, maybe?) to the regular L'Chaim Lunch'n'Learn sessions at le Commensal, 655 Bay Street (entrance on Elm) in Toronto, or E-mail Jennifer <jennifer-kozinets@atkearney.com> or telephone Tom 416 661 1116.



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# MEDITERRANEAN VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL, MALTA

1st – 4th OCTOBER 1999

by **Vanessa Clarke**

The Mediterranean vegetarian festival in Malta at the beginning of October 1999 was such a success that plans are already afoot for a similar event in southern Europe at the beginning of April 2000 at the seaside resort of Piran just a few miles south of Trieste.

The Maltese event, which ran from World Vegetarian Day through World Farm Animals Day, Gandhi's birthday and the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, certainly provided something for everyone. Participants from more than a dozen countries and three continents converged upon the smallest nation state on earth for what turned out to be the happiest and most united veggie gathering I have ever attended – thanks to the warmth and kindness of our Maltese hosts as well as the glorious weather and seaside location.

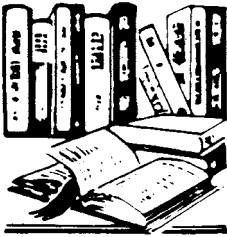
The inaugural ceremony set the tone for the whole festival, with Francisco Martin and Marcel Hebbelinck both in sparkling form. Other participants included Sigrid De Leo, Claude Pasquini and Jashu Shah, and even a member of the VUNA board, so it was something of a mini world congress and great to see everyone in holiday mood and getting along so well together. A particular treat was the afternoon that Francisco and I spent with Sigrid and Claude and the Hebbelincks at the home of former speaker of the Maltese Parliament and Minister of the Environment Dr Daniel Micallef, who turned out to have a 3,000-year-old tomb in his garden and another under his study [accessed through a none too solid trapdoor in the middle of the floor].

More orthodox excursions included temples twice that age on both Malta and Gozo, the beautiful cities of Medina and Valletta and other beauty spots. We also visited the Island Dog Sanctuary and met representatives of the SPCA and the European Anti-Hunting Federation [an important aim for many delegates was to help our Maltese friends put a stop to the barbaric slaughter of migratory birds – the Maltese equivalent of the horrors of fox hunting in the UK and bullfighting in Spain]. A particularly welcome innovation was the decision not to confine people indoors all day but to have talks all morning and then go out in the afternoon, with an all-day excursion at the end of the festival rather than in the middle. And French veggie chef Jean-Claude Juston's food was such a success that the hotel manager now wishes to incorporate vegan dishes in the standard menu – a development barely conceivable even just a few months ago.

The quality of the speakers plus the support of Dr Micallef, whenever his busy schedule permitted, brought considerable media interest and the VegSoc have been given a weekly television slot for the next 13 weeks as a result. So quite a lot was achieved in building on the hard work of the local society and bringing the veggie message to a culture traditionally hostile to it.

As for the organisers, it was refreshing indeed to work with such honest and honourable people, dedicated to a common cause and without the slightest trace of self-interest of any kind. They even gave up sleeping so as to be able

to collect people from the airport at midnight, four in the morning or any other time – a wonderfully welcome and welcoming gesture which will long be remembered. Special thanks from all of us to John Darmanin, Katherine and George Azzopardi, Margaret Grech and all their friends, and of course the inimitable Jean-Claude Juston. All in all, quite an act to follow – but there is every prospect that the similarly young and enthusiastic society in Slovenia will come up with an equally memorable event in the spring to coincide with their own national vegetarian festival.



# Book Reviews

## *Living Without Cruelty Diary 2000*

### *The Millennium...A Diary with a Difference*

When so much hype and so many empty words are being written about the turning century, *The Living Without Cruelty Diary 2000* offers a refreshing alternative – people with something important to say discussing issues that really matter.

The 25 contributors express their hopes and fears for the new millennium on urgent subjects such as genetically modified crops, how to feed a rapidly growing human population, human and animal rights, third world debt, environmental protection and the arms grade.

More than just a diary, it is an inspiring account of how some of the most courageous campaigners of our age assess the potential for a more enlightened and less violent future.

*The Living Without Cruelty Diary 2000* is edited by Mark Gold and published by Jon Carpenter Publishing, 2, The Spendlove Centre, Charlbury, Oxfordshire OX7 3PQ. Price £5.00 post free. They can be ordered on credit card order line: 01689 870437.

## *The Flavour of California*

by Marlena Spieler

*'The Flavour of California'* is a collection of delicious recipes using the fresh and colourful ingredients that comprise the sun-drenched cuisine of the West Coast and make California a vegetarian paradise. Healthy and tempting

dishes inspired by the diverse backgrounds of California's inhabitants – including Native American, Mexican, Spanish, Asian, Mediterranean and European – reflect both the cuisine and the lifestyle that are Californian.

A Californian-style vegetarian diet, like the so-called 'Mediterranean' diet comprises lots of salads, fruit, grains and olive oil and not only tastes delicious, but is a way of eating for health that nutritionists everywhere are recommending.

This delightful, hardbacked book, with colourful photographs, is full of exciting and creative recipes, which would stir the imagination of even the 'novice' cook, and would be an asset in any kitchen, for yourself or as a special gift.

This is one of the many books written by Marlena Spieler, and to quote Marlena "I hope you find this collection of vegetarian dishes as much of a pleasure to prepare and enjoy, as I have had in creating and compiling them".

Published by Thorson, a Division of HarperCollins Publishers. Price £14.99 plus P&P £3.00. Available from JVS.

## *Vegetarian Classics*

**Consultant Editor: Valerie Ferguson**

This delightful little hardbacked book, illustrated with easy to follow recipes for every occasion, from starters and snacks to main courses and side dishes, would tempt even the most inventive cook.

So why not enjoy healthy and delicious dishes packed with exciting flavours from around the world, such as Spiced Couscous, Vegetable Fajitas and Saffron Risotto.

The book also includes nutritional advice and useful tips on creating a vegetarian larder.

Published by Lorenz Books, price £2.99 plus P&P £1.00.

## *The Italian Vegetarian*

**by Gabriella Rossi**

Italian cooking is loved throughout the world for its inspired use of fresh ingredients to create simple, delicious meals full of zest and flavour. Many classic dishes are perfect for both everyday and special occasions.

The recipes featured are from all over the country, from Tuscan Bean Soup to a Venetian Leek, Lemon and Mushroom Risotto.

Every recipe is illustrated with easy-to-follow step-by-step photographs and beautiful pictures of the finished dish.

The book also contains a section on Basic Recipes and Techniques which is most useful when preparing food.

Published by Hermes House, an imprint of Anness Publishing, London. Price £9.95, Hardback plus P&P £3.00.

# GM ROUND-UP

by Julie Rosenfield

Regular readers of *The Jewish Vegetarian* will be familiar with the current threat to the health and well-being of the people, animals and planet which is being posed by genetically-modified (GM) food. The new technology means that genes can be transplanted from animals into fruit and vegetables. Fish genes, for example, have been transferred from arctic flounders into tomatoes to make them withstand frost. Other areas of concern include: the fact that crops can be sprayed with powerful bug and weed killers without suffering harmful effects; the crops could cross-breed with wild plants to create new superweeds; and the GM technique involves the use of antibiotics which could make it more difficult for people to fight disease.

In many countries around the world, consumers are fighting back against the big businesses which threaten to go against nature by changing the way our food is being produced. Here we present a selection of items showing recent developments in this situation which is of concern to us all.

## BUYER BEWARE!

For consumers, the whole area of shopping to avoid GM foods is a complex one and is not helped by confusing labelling practices. The current situation in Europe is that the labelling of products containing GM foods is governed by the EU Council Regulation 1139/98 of 26 May 1998. This regulation requires the specific labelling of any foods made with soya or maize which contain GM material in the product as finally delivered to the consumer. This includes ingredients such as soya flour or maize starch found in products such as bread, cakes, biscuits and many other everyday foods.

This sounds easy enough. However, the issue becomes further complicated by the fact that the Regulation does not apply to derivatives of GM soya and maize such as lecithin made from soya as well as starch, glucose and dextrose from maize. GM tomatoes and oils are not covered by the legislation and neither are a number of GM enzymes used in food processing. Therefore, these substances are considered exempt and may be used in a product without it being labelled. It is very difficult for the shopper to know whether a product is really GM-free or whether it contains small amounts – possibly less than 1% of the offending item. One national newspaper, *The London Times*, quipped: “Vegetarians would hardly be happy if told that their nut cutlets contained less than 1 per cent meat, but that is likely to be the deal on offer.”

## ACTION!

What action, if any, can we take to halt the increase of GM foods? There are a number of campaigns in place worldwide. Here are just two examples:

One important campaign has been organised by the Genetic Engineering Alliance. They have launched a Five Year Freeze Campaign which is being supported by a coalition of organisations and individuals concerned about genetic engineering and patenting in food and farming. They are calling for a five year moratorium on the commercial growing of GM crops, GM foods and patenting of genetic resources and are currently being supported by over 60

organisations. They recently gained the support of 80 Members of Parliament in the UK and in July organised a weekend of picnics for the public to attend to show their support. For further details of their campaign, please contact Genetic Engineering Alliance, 94 White Lion Street, London N1 9PF, England. Tel: 0171 837 0642, fax 0171 837 1141, e-mail: [gealliance@dial.pipex.com](mailto:gealliance@dial.pipex.com), website: <http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/gealliance/>.

Another important organisation is the Alliance for Bio-Integrity in the USA. This is a coalition of scientists, health professionals, religious leaders, consumers and public interest groups. They have initiated a lawsuit against the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to gain mandatory testing and labelling of all genetically-engineered foods. The suit alleges that the current FDA policy which allows foods to be marketed without testing and labelling violates the FDA's mandate to protect public health and give consumers the information they need about the food they eat. It also says that the policy violates religious freedom with individuals being obliged to avoid GM food on the grounds of religious principle. If the campaign is successful, it will result in a court-imposed moratorium on the marketing of all GM foods. Long-term testing and compulsory labelling would then have to take place. For more information, please contact the Alliance for Bio-Integrity, 310 D Street NE, Washington DC 20002, USA, Tel: (202) 547-9359, fax (202) 547 9429, e-mail: [info@bio-integrity.org](mailto:info@bio-integrity.org), web: [www.bio-integrity.org](http://www.bio-integrity.org).

## **SPEAKING OUT!**

To date, many people have spoken out against GM foods. One of the most recent to do so was Sir Paul McCartney. "We are now putting things into our food chain that it might be impossible to get rid of. We are tampering with nature. And nature is usually pretty cool." Following reports that the vegetarian foods in the range set up by his late wife Linda may have contained traces of GM soya, he announced that the products were to be re-launched using wheat-based ingredients. "As far back as 1995, Linda was saying, 'I'd rather have food grown by Mother Nature than by the chemical industry' and we are sticking to that benchmark," Sir Paul said. "We tried to find a soya supply that could guarantee that their products wouldn't be contaminated with GM but couldn't."

## **BAN IT!**

Many people feel so strongly about the use of GM foods that their use is being banned in many places. These include the following:

- Prince Charles has banned new tenants from growing genetically-modified foods on his Duchy of Cornwall lands. This move was announced at the same time as similar bans imposed on new tenants of Somerset County Council and the National Trust in the UK.
- At the time of writing, 23 of 33 Councils in London have banned GM foods from school meals as well as 14 County Councils in England.
- Despite the support of certain Members of Parliament for GM foods, they will not be able to eat foods containing GM ingredients at work as The House of Commons cafeteria has banned them!

## **CONSUMER POWER!**

The GM issue is one which will not go away and indeed affects us all. Many people feel that GM foods are a threat both to their health and the environment and are unlikely to be persuaded otherwise. With many new varieties of foods being lined up for the GM treatment, it is important that we act while we still can. We can do this in many ways:

- Boycott all products containing GM ingredients.
- Write to your supermarket stating that you will not purchase any items with GM foods.
- Lend your support to any of the organisations pressing for a halt to the technology.
- Write a letter to your Government representative telling of your concern about these foods.

### FURTHER READING

If you would like to know more about the whole GM issue, there are a number of publications available on the market dealing with this topic. These include:

**GM-Free – Keeping Your Life and Environment Free of Genetically-Modified Food.**

A trial issue of this 24-page magazine is available for a cost of £3 (inc Postage and Packing) from: KHI Publications, Beacon House, Woodley Park, Skelmersdale, Lancs WN8 6UR, England. Tel: 01695 50504.

**GM Free – A Shopper’s Guide to Genetically-Modified Food** by Sue Dibb and Dr Tim Lobstein. Published in paperback by Virgin Publishing, £4.99.

**How to Avoid GM Food** by Joanna Blythman. Published in paperback by Fourth Estate Publishing, £4.99

**Against the Grain** by Dr Marc Lappe and Britt Bailey. Published by Earthscan. £15.99.



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Vitamin D is important in winter. It is provided by all 5 of our alternatives to milk i.e. 3 soya and 2 pea protein based milks. Sold exclusively in health stores. Also exported. Informative literature – sae please – Plamil Foods, Folkestone, Kent CT19 6PQ.

# CONSUMER CORNER



## ORGANIC EMPHASIS FROM granoVita

In response to public demand, granoVita UK has continued its effort to bring an increasing range of new and exciting organic products into the marketplace. These are the latest additions, all bearing the

“granoVita Organic Guaranteed” logo.

Mayola – Egg and Dairy Free Mayonnaise 300g jar is free from added sugar, preservatives, colouring and artificial flavouring.

Vitamix – Meat-free Burger Mix and Meat-free Sausage Mix, both are GMO free and over 90% fat free.

Grannie’s Traditional Brown Sauce – free from additives, preservatives and GMOs. This is the most recent addition to the granoVita range.

Two Tomato Full – jars contain Tomato Sauce for Pasta, free from artificial ingredients and GMOs, plus Tomato Ketchup, free from additives, preservatives and GMOs.

All the above are organic as previously mentioned.

Whilst on granoVita we would mention that headline news was made recently when granoVita GmbH purchased the 100-year-old Eden Juice organisation from the Swiss group Novartis.

In the near future, Eden products will be available as part of granoVita’s growing portfolio – another step in the granoVita programme to promote a diverse range of healthy produce.



## RICE OIL

### *A Health Secret of the East*

The oil extracted from the bran of rice, for centuries a health secret of the East, is now becoming more generally available in the UK through health food shops.

A pure, light and delicate tasting oil, Rice Oil is high in unsaturates, and low in saturates. Unlike Sunflower Oil and Corn Oil, it is extremely rich in natural Vitamin E which protects it from decomposition and oxidation, so it is particularly good for frying, and a healthy alternative to other vegetable oils.

Rich Oil is gluten free (rice is not generally regarded as allergenic) and is made from non-GM produce. It is high in



Vitamin E and antioxidant level than other liquid vegetable oils, which has shown to reduce blood platelet attachment.

Available in good health food shops, in 350ml bottles and sells at around £2.99.

## **NEW FROM THE VEGAN SOCIETY – NOUGAT**

Macadamia Bliss vegan nougat with pistachio nuts is the first totally animal free nougat – no honey, eggs or animal fats – a gourmet taste, a melt in your mouth texture and a pure white colour. It is also free of any derivatives such as processing aids, release agents, artificial colours, flavours and preservatives and is GM free.

Available from the Vegan Society (Tel: 01424 427393).

## **HONESTY OVER THE INTERNET**

Choosing a range of beauty products which not only fits your lifestyle but really works has never been easier thanks to new internet site redmonk.com – which was recently launched. The site gives you instant access to a range of beautiful products, chosen to suit the site's ethos of providing 'gifts with a twist'.

The fruit range really smells good enough to eat with flavours including Lemon and Vanilla shampoo, Coconut and Avocado conditioner and Strawberry and Papaya bath gel.

Simply log onto redmonk.com where you will also discover a world of wonderful gifts including old fashioned bicycles, luxurious silk and lace underwear and handmade wooden cards from the Lake District.

Every product from Honesty is suitable for both vegetarians and vegans and is delivered in environmentally friendly packaging.

## **MAIDWELL GOES VEGETARIAN**

Smooth and tasty Maidwell, a medium mature cheddar style cheese which is neither too mild nor too mature, is now 100 percent vegetarian.

Baars UK maker of Maidwell has switched to a vegetarian rennet which is not produced using GM ingredients, making it the perfect cheddar choice for vegetarians.

In addition to its delicious fresh taste, Maidwell comes in a handy resealable pack which keeps it fresher in the fridge for longer. Available in 200g and 400g packs.

## **JAN DE VRIES BOTANICAL NERVE FORMULA**

Are you short fused? Does the slightest thing upset you and send you into a frenzy? Do you feel you want to scream at everything and everybody? Then you are no different from thousands of others facing the hassle of modern day living. There is now something you can do about it – the Jan de Vries

Botanical Range has the answer in its Botanical Nerve Formula Tablet.

Jan de Vries the internationally known Naturopath and Homeopath, Writer (of 28 books on Natural Treatments) has teamed up with the Power Health of York to bring onto the market a Botanical Nerve Formula tablet which contains a number of tried and trusted ingredients, i.e. Inositol, Gamma Amino Butyric Acid (GABA), Nicotinamide, Vitamin B12, Folic Acid, Magnesium Citrate.

A 15-day supply comes in a handy carrying pack at £5.99 whilst the **family size** 45-day tub costs £11.99. Available from chemists and health stores everywhere.



## Here & There

The National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS) and the Animal Defenders (AD) have published a calendar for the new millennium with each month displaying a glossy A4 animal picture and important NAVA and AD dates.

The calendar celebrates the animal kingdom and includes photographs of the wide range of animals we care about, including elephants, cats, a rescued laboratory hamster and previously unpublished photos of chimpanzee Trudy at play with AD field officers before her rescue from Mary Chipperfield Promotions Ltd.

It is a perfect gift for anyone who cares about animals and at only £7.50 per copy, the calendar will help raise much needed funds to continue the work of the NAVS and ADs.

The calendar is just one of the selection of gifts ideas featured in the NAVS and AD Christmas catalogue out now. Copies can be obtained by phoning 020 8846 9777.

### ROSE ELLIOT AWARDED AN MBE

Rose Elliot was awarded an MBE for services to vegetarian cookery in the recent Birthday Honours List.

She has led the way in revolutionising vegetarian cooking and has played a key role in transforming the image, taste and popularity of vegetarian food. With around 3 million sales, Rose is one of the best-selling cookery writers in the English-speaking world. Her first book, *Simply Delicious* was published in 1967 and she has written over 50 books to date.

Rose is a member of MENSAs and her other interests include yoga and astrology. She is a professionally qualified astrologer and runs an astrological consultancy with her husband. She is a founder-member of VIVA! (Vegetarian International Voice for Animals) and also supports Compassion in World Farming, The Vegetarian Society and OXFAM for whom she has written three best-selling books to raise funds.

# Travel Topics

## *Discovering Plas Madoc North Wales*

Anita and Derrick Cohen

We had noticed in the latest *JVS* booklet that a vegetarian establishment had opened in Llandudno, North Wales, and Anita having an aunt living in Rhyl which was not very far meant that we would have the opportunity to visit her as we had not seen her since our wedding 31 years ago.

So we duly made our bookings for October and undertook to face the long train journey from our home in Bournemouth.

Never having been to Wales before, we were a bit apprehensive at what we would find about Wales, also whether our home for a week would be to our liking. Well we were far from disappointed.

Plas-Madoc is Welsh for Madoc's place or place of Madoc. Now Madoc as Welsh history tells us, was a famous explorer and public figure, who among other things was supposed to have discovered America before Christopher Columbus (please don't tell Christopher). For legend also says that there were Welsh speaking people in America when Christopher Columbus set foot on American soil.

Well not only did we discover Madoc's Place but we unearthed a couple of precious jewels by the name of Jo and John Carpenter who were our charming hosts for the week.

They had only opened last February, but their enthusiasm and expertise knew no bounds, and their warmth was evident from the very beginning.

The food was exquisitely delicious, plentiful and with much variety, and they always use organically grown produce whenever possible. So each meal was very nutritious. Also they are very keen to become conversant with Jewish customs, in order to accommodate any wishes that Jewish people would require. We found them most helpful indeed.

The house itself is of fine character built like all of Llandudno in Victorian times, in a very good position on the lower slopes of the Great Orme, where the views of the surroundings are most spectacular. With the promenade and town centre just ten minutes away.

There are only four letting rooms, each with en-suite showers, etc., coloured TV, coffee making facilities and many other little things of magnificent thought.

The lounge and dining room are tastefully furnished in what one would call Modern Victorian style, generating an air of homeliness. It is really home from home. There are also numerous books and periodicals to read and relax with, plus plenty of games to amuse both children and grown ups. And then there is the Banana Chair. Now I am not going to tell you what that is, except to say that it definitely does not run by electricity. You will just have to find out for yourselves. But like everything you won't be disappointed.

Judging by the remarks in the visitors book the lucky few that have already sampled the Carpenter's hospitality certainly were not disappointed.

Now what about Llandudno and North Wales? Well for those of you who know Wales no introduction is necessary. But for those who don't, let me tell you that you "ain't seen nothing like this before", North Wales and Llandudno in particular have a unique beauty of their own. The town still retains the setting of its own originality, everything is so Victorian and the streets and shops still remind you of those bygone days. You feel as if you are in a time warp, everything is so quiet and relaxing. But there is plenty to do, with theatres, cinemas and other attractions. The wide promenade around the sweeping bays with the mountains behind are a real breathtaking sight. Then there is the Great Orme which is a must for everyone. Whether reached by foot, mini-coach or by rail-train. The views from the top are magnificent, and there is much to do around the peak. There is also a small Jewish Community in Llandudno, and they hold services every Friday evening at No 38 Church Walk, quite close to Plas-Madoc, and will make you very welcome.

North Wales has many places of interest, particularly castles of historic interest. A must is a visit to Caernavon which is the seat of the Prince of Wales. The Cathedral City of Chester is nearby, also many beauty spots and Snowdonia is within easy reach. The scenery is magnificent and travelling is very easy, the road network quite adequate. We came away very happy and relaxed, we had made a wonderful discovery, our long tiresome journey very worthwhile.

We shall certainly make that journey again.



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## **DELUXE SOYAGE**

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Available in five tantalising flavours:

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Soyage contains no added sugar, artificial colourings or preservatives, but it's packed full of flavour and **REAL FRUIT**.

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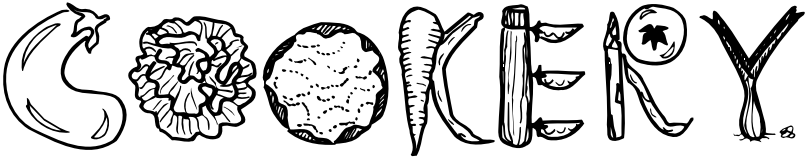
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Soya drink, egg free mayonnaise, vegetarian margarines, organic breakfast cereals plus much more.

*granoVita – in tune with nature*



## QUORN FILLETS WITH ROAST PEPPER SLICES

### **INGREDIENTS:**

4 peppers in different colours, 3 tbsp olive oil, 4 Quorn fillets, 1 onion, thinly sliced, 2 cloves garlic, crushed, 50g (1¾) sun-dried tomatoes in oil, thinly sliced, 2 tbsp fresh basil, salt and pepper, 100ml (3¼ fl oz) white wine. Basil sprigs to garnish. Serves 4.

### **METHOD:**

Cut the peppers in half and place cut side down on baking tray. Roast in a hot oven, 200°C (400°F) Gas Mark 6 for 20-25 minutes, until the skin blackens and blisters. Place in a plastic bag and leave for a few minutes. The skin should then be easy to remove. Core, de-seed and slice. Heat oil and sauté Quorn fillets over a moderate heat until golden. Remove and set aside. Add onion slices to the pan and fry over a gentle heat, stirring frequently, for about 5 minutes, until softened but not coloured. Add pepper strips, garlic, sun-dried tomatoes, basil, salt and pepper to the onions, and stir in the wine.

Return Quorn fillets to the pan, cover and cook for 10 minutes. Adjust the seasoning and serve, garnished with basil leaves.

## VEGETABLE HOT POT

### **INGREDIENTS**

2 fennel bulbs, trimmed and thickly sliced, 450g/1lb potatoes, peeled and thickly sliced, 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped, 1 small onion, peeled and thinly sliced, 225g/8 oz courgettes, wiped and sliced, 4 tomatoes, sliced. 100ml./4 fl oz dry white wine, 100ml/4fl oz vegetable stock, 2-3 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp fresh chopped parsley to serve.

### **METHOD:**

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil and cook the fennel for 5 minutes, add the potato slices and cook for a further 5 minutes, drain. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas Mark 6.

Grease a 1.2litre/2pt shallow ovenproof dish. Layer the fennel, potatoes, garlic, onion, courgettes and tomatoes in the dish, seasoning with salt and freshly ground black pepper between each layer.

Mix together the wine and stock and pour over the vegetables. Drizzle with oil. Bake for 40 minutes until the top is golden brown and crisp and the vegetables tender. Sprinkle with fresh chopped parsley

and freshly ground black pepper to serve. Serves 4.

## BROAD BEAN PÂTÉ

### **INGREDIENTS:**

30g (1oz) vegan margarine, 2 shallots, peeled and chopped, 1 clove garlic, peeled and crushed, 250g (8oz) young broad beans, 150 ml (¼ pint) vegetable stock, 100ml (3½fl oz) soya cream, 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives, 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, grated rind ½ lemon, salt and black pepper.

### **METHOD:**

Heat the margarine in a small pan and cook the shallots and garlic for 3 minutes. Add the beans and stock, bring to the boil, cover and simmer for about 10 minutes until tender.

Reserve a tablespoon of the beans for garnish, put the rest in a food processor and purée until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and whizz again to mix. Season.

Serve cold or put back in the pan and re-heat gently. Skin reserved beans and use to garnish pâté.

## STUFFED AUBERGINE

### **INGREDIENTS:**

1 medium aubergine cut lengthways, 1 tspn sunflower oil, ½ onion, 80g cooked lentils, 2 tsps chopped fresh parsley, pinch grated lemon rind, small crushed clove garlic, 1 tomato, ½ avocado, peeled stoned and chopped, 90g cooked brown rice, seasoning to taste, twist of lemon and extra parsley, chopped to garnish. Green salad of lettuce, cucumber and watercress.

### **METHOD:**

Scoop aubergine flesh out to within 1 cm of the skin and chop. Blanch aubergine shell in boiling water for 2 minutes then drain well. Heat oil and fry aubergine flesh with onion until soft. Add lentils and cook for 3 minutes. Stir in avocado, garlic, tomatoes, parsley, lemon rind and rice. Season well. Stuff aubergine shell with this mixture. Cover and bake in oven at gas 6/200° for 20 minutes. Serve hot, garnished with parsley and lemon twists and a fresh green salad.

## SPICY TOMATO CHOWDER

### **INGREDIENTS:**

1 x 15ml spoon vegetable oil, 1 chopped onion, 1 clove garlic, finely chopped, 350g potatoes, peeled and finely diced. 2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes, 1 green pepper, deseeded and finely chopped, 1-2 x 5ml spoons chilli sauce, salt and freshly ground black pepper.

**METHOD:**

Heat the oil gently in a large saucepan for 2 minutes. Carefully add the onion and garlic and fry them over a medium heat for 5 minutes. Add the potatoes, chopped tomatoes, green pepper and chilli sauce, mix well with a wooden spoon. Season with salt and pepper. Put lid on and simmer for 20-25 minutes stirring occasionally or until the potatoes are tender. If the soup is too thick add a little water. Top it with grated cheese and serve with crusty bread.

### CAULIFLOWER AND RED PEPPER SAUTÉ

**INGREDIENTS:**

1 large cauliflower, trimmed and cut into small florets, 25g (1 oz) vegan margarine, 30ml (2 tbsp) sunflower oil, 100g (4oz) cashew nuts, 2 shallots, peeled and thinly sliced, 1 clove of garlic, peeled and crushed, 5ml (1tsp) mustard seeds, 1 red pepper, deseeded and very finely sliced, salt and freshly ground black pepper.

To garnish: Flat-leaf parsley.

**METHOD:**

Bring a large pan of lightly salted water to the boil and cook the cauliflower florets for 2 minutes. Drain. Heat the margarine and oil in a large pan and cook the cashew nuts over a medium heat until golden. Lift out of the pan using a slotted spoon and drain on absorbent kitchen paper. Add the shallots, garlic, mustard seeds and pepper slices to the pan and cook for 5 minutes, until vegetables have softened. Toss in the drained cauliflower florets and sauté for 10 minutes. Season with salt and black pepper and serve at once garnished with sprigs of flat-leaf parsley.

### NUT MACAROONS

**INGREDIENTS:**

2 egg whites, 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of honey,  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp maple syrup or flavouring.

**METHOD:**

Beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add honey till stiff peaks form, fold in nuts and flavouring. Drop about 2 inches apart on baking sheet. Bake at 325° approximately 20 minutes. Cool and remove from sheet.

### SUGAR FREE CANDY

**METHOD:**

Mix equal parts of raw wheat germ and poppy seed. Add maple syrup to form a thick dough. Scoop out pieces and form balls. Roll them in finely ground poppy seed. Store in the refrigerator.

## RICE SURPRISE PUDDING

### **INGREDIENTS:**

1 pt Plamil r-t-u (ready to use), 3oz patna rice, 1oz sugar (optional), 1 ripe banana mashed, 2oz sultanas soaked for 30 mins in 4 tbsps of orange juice, 1 tsp vanilla essence.

### **METHOD:**

Place Plamil, vanilla essence and rice in a large pan. Gently bring to the boil, stirring all the time. Simmer until Plamil is totally absorbed. Approximately 40 mins. Remove from heat. Add sultanas and banana. Sprinkle with sugar (if desired) and place under a grill until browned. Serve hot or cold.

## BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING

### **INGREDIENTS:**

2 large slices of wholemeal bread, spread with vegan margarine, 1 tablespoon raw can sugar, 2oz (55g) mixed dried fruit, grated rind of an orange, ½ pint (285ml) diluted Plamil, 1 bare teaspoon agar-agar, a few drops vanilla essence, nutmeg.

### **METHOD:**

Slice the bread and margarine into neat pieces to fit the oven dish to be used. Place a layer in the bottom of the dish, margarine side down.

Sprinkle bread with some of the sugar and fruit. Repeat, using the rest of the sugar, fruit and rind, leaving enough of the bread to cover the top.

Warm the Plamil and dissolve the agar-agar in it.

Add flavouring (if used) and pour over the bread in the dish. Sprinkle lightly with nutmeg and put aside for about 30 minutes.

Cook in the oven for 25 minutes at 400°F/200°C (Gas Mark 6).

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# Dear Sir

Dear Sir/Madam

As a regular reader of your magazine, I was concerned to see Cantor Zvi Slotki's article entitled 'Shehita in the Jewish Tradition' (*Jewish Vegetarian*, June 1999). Cantor Slotki appeared to be promoting the notion of 'humane' animal slaughter, despite being (I assume) a vegetarian himself. The idea that, 'Shehita is at least as humane as any other method of slaughter' is not a reassuring one – most vegetarians and vegans are fully aware of the stress and pain which animals are forced to endure when they are killed for meat.

The meat industry likes nothing better than to portray the whole bloody business of slaughter as being a virtually painless, clean-cut procedure. The reality is that animals in commercial abattoirs suffer – whichever technique is used to kill them. Being pushed around by strangers in a noisy, unfamiliar environment is stressful enough in itself.

Shehita slaughter is supposed to be performed with one swift cut. Viva! has video footage which shows a Shochet cutting a cow's throat thirteen times. The cow is trying to jerk away from the knife and is obviously in pain. Another instance shows a cow's throat being cut three times. When the filming ends after almost one minute, the animal is still standing and clearly conscious.

Professor Donald Broom, a Cambridge University specialist in farm animal behaviour explains: "There is a period of consciousness after the throat is cut which may last from 30 seconds to several minutes during which the animal must be in great pain and distress." Pre-stunning an animal before slaughter is certainly not ideal – but we can't pretend that making no attempt to pre-stun is somehow a kinder solution.

As vegetarians and vegans, I believe we need to make every effort to highlight the shameful reality of animal slaughter. Trying to portray certain killing techniques as being 'painless' is no way to encourage people towards vegetarianism. I'm sure most *Jewish Vegetarian* readers would agree that only a diet which is completely animal-free can truly be described as a humane way of eating.

Yours faithfully

**Becky Smith**

**Viva! Campaigner**

*Editor: Copies of the above letter have been circulated to a number of JVS members for discussion and we print below a selection of responses. We also invited kashrut groups to respond to the above letter but to date no response has been received. We would, however, welcome further comments from readers.*

Dear Editor

My vote on this issue is that Smith's letter is valid and does not raise any colour of anti-Semitism. On the other hand, if a response is provided that raises new insights that justify both eating animals in general and ritual slaughter in particular, that might be appropriate. A response might address the question of whether it was the intent of Jewish law to require us to kill

animals – or merely to require us to deal more humanely, at least, with those animals we insisted on killing. If we are not required to kill and eat them, then why do it?

Any response from the relevant industry may be coloured by the fact that many people derive all or part of their livelihoods and status directly or indirectly various activities related to the slaughtering e.g. breeding, raising, feeding, inspecting etc. Also involved with the economic machinery of the slaughtering are related services provided to all of the above, including construction, rental space, and equipment. All of this money, and the real people who currently depend upon it (we must have compassion for them, also) tend to create part of the inertia which supports the status quo and have a vested interest in justifying the current practices.

I am greatly concerned that the practice of killing and eating animals when it is not necessary for, and may be deleterious to, human survival, causes a deep, spiritual pain (as it dehumanises and degrades) to those who do the killing, preparation and packaging, and to those who partake of the dead animals. This “dark cloud” is similar, for me, to that which hangs over those who grow, distribute, package, and sell tobacco products.

At some point, when the schochet holds the knife to an animal’s throat and prepares to drain the life from it, one might ask “Why not eat a veggie burger or a vegetable stew for dinner/supper?” If the killing and eating of animals were necessary for our survival and good health, the killing might be morally justified. Yet, it is not only unnecessary, as Richard Schwartz and others have eloquently pointed out, in one hundred and one ways, it is harmful to our health and for our prospects for creating a sustainable economy and environment.

As it is, we consumers are letting others do our “dirty work” probably without concern for what the act of shedding innocent blood unnecessarily brings to them beyond a paycheck and the irony of earning a “living” through killing.

**Earon Davis, Wilmette, IL USA**

Dear Editor,

I am in receipt of Becky Smith’s letter on shechita. I do not know what people find disturbing about it. Is it the fact of the disgraceful and barbaric nature of murdering sentient beings, by so called religious professing Jews? Because Becky Smith’s letter is OK.

Secondly, under no circumstances, should the kashrut inspectors be allowed to respond. There is no argument. There can be no debate.

What they do, what they so-called ‘authorise’ is, as I have said many times in the British press, barbaric, primitive, and utterly obscene – if only from the point of view that they profess to be religious Jews.

With regard to the draft position paper on shechita (below), I have to say, that it is too apologetic. We must stop being apologists. The horrors are too great and too numerous and whilst diplomacy with regard to winning converts especially within the Jewish community is understandable, we lose face and value by not simply saying loudly and clearly that what ‘they’ do is totally and utterly wrong and repugnant to the enlightenment that the Torah has taught

us. This does not mean to say that we should single out Shechita, but by the same token, if it comes our way as a Vegetarian Society, we cannot give it house room or even contemplate discussion on it, as it is totally and utterly opposite to what we stand for, and the Torah, for that matter.

I want to make my position crystal clear that Becky Smith's letter should be published, and under no circumstances any letters from the kashrut certification board or elsewhere be printed. Let me make this perfectly clear, and the analogy is equally true, should we as Jews open up debates with the ex-Nazis within our communities, or should for that matter, anti-racists organisations have debates and dialogue with racist organisation? The answer of course is no. There can be no circumstances whatsoever, any dialogues at any time or under any conditions with anyone Jewish or non-Jewish when it comes to the fundamental principles for which we stand and which they reject.

**Paul Rogers-Gentile**  
**Patron, JVS**

Dear Editor,

In the name of decency I absolutely and unqualifiedly concur with Paul Rogers-Gentile, and his endorsement of Becky Smith's letter. Yes, anti-Semitism has often been marked by a ban on ritual slaughter, but there is here an over-riding concern, one that is nothing less than *pikkuach nefesh*. We must, as persons who see the sacred in the lives of our fellow creatures, put the saving of unfathomable millions ahead of concern about the historical associations of opposition to shechita by anti-Semites.

Shechita and all other slaughterhouse killings of beings are repugnant. Becky Smith is right. And Paul Rogers is also right. There is too much apology and too much accommodation to the sensibilities of those who have no sensibility toward the suffering of the fellows.

Yours sincerely

**Yoël L. Arbeitman, Princeton, NJ, USA**

Dear Editor,

I wish to respectfully but firmly dissent from the view of Paul Rogers-Gentile that we should not engage in dialogue with people involved with kashrut or other aspects of the meat industry. Having worked to promote vegetarianism for over 20 years and seen how difficult it is to make progress in this area. I understand and sympathise with his frustration. However, I believe that we should never despair or give up in our attempt to make people aware of the horrors of animal-based agriculture and the many benefits of vegetarianism. We must continue to seek creative approaches to get our message out. I would like to suggest that we use questions like the three below to try to engage others in dialogue:

In view of Judaism's strong teachings with regard to preserving human health, treating animals with compassion, protecting the environment, conserving resources and helping the hungry, and the very negative effects that the production and consumption of meat has in each of these areas, shouldn't Jews eliminate or sharply reduce their consumption of animal products?

Since Jews can only mistreat or kill animals to meet an essential human

need, and it is not necessary to consume animal products in order to maintain good health (the contrary is the case), how can we justify the slaughtering of animals for food?

Could G-d possibly prefer us to have an animal-based diet when this diet harms our health, involves the mistreatment of animals, threatens ecosystems, wastes resources, and makes war and violence more likely?

We have an extremely powerful case for vegetarianism based on Jewish teachings and the realities of the widespread production and consumption of animal products, and we should take every opportunity to engage as many people as possible in dialogues about it, while striving to avoid arguments and comparisons that will turn people off and/or give them a chance to shift the focus of the discussion.

Very truly yours,

**Richard H. Schwartz PhD**

Richard Schwartz PhD goes on to write: *Since there is great diversity in opinions among Jewish vegetarians (as some of the material in this issue illustrates), I thought it might be worthwhile to see if we can draft a statement that has “common ground” that most of us can agree on. Hence, the first draft below, which seeks to elicit comments and suggestions. Such a statement could be useful when questions related to Jewish ritual slaughter arise.*

*In considering this and other issues, let us respectfully focus on the many things that unite us, rather than the relatively few that divide us.*

## **TOWARD A POSITION PAPER ON RITUAL SLAUGHTER**

**(a very preliminary draft – comments/suggestions most welcome)**

We believe that killing animals for food is completely unnecessary; with a well-balanced plant-based diet one can get all of the necessary nutrients. Hence we oppose all animal slaughter, regardless of the method.

We believe that the production and consumption of meat and other animal products violate basic Jewish values and we are committed to educating people on the need to shift to nutritious plant-centred diets.

We oppose efforts to single out shechita (kosher slaughter or ritual slaughter) for opposition.

We believe that it should be made clear that shackling and hoisting is not an integral part of shechita, but is an approach that was introduced in the early years of the 20th century to meet a requirement of US Department of Agriculture to prevent animals from lying in the blood of other animals in order to reduce the spread of diseases from animal to animal. At the same time, we believe that shackling and hoisting cause tremendous pain to animals and should be eliminated and replaced by other methods that are far less inhumane and meet ritual requirements.

While shechita has the objective of causing a minimum of pain, we must also consider the many months of cruel treatment that animals must endure, and not just the final seconds of their lives. We must also consider that, with

the mass slaughter of so many animals under assembly line conditions, often the requirements of shechita are not met. This reinforces our belief that vegetarian diets enable us to be most consistent with Jewish teachings today.

When we consider the many horrors of “factory farming”, the many negative effects of animal-based diets, and the fact that there is no need to slaughter animals, we believe that no slaughter can be considered humane.

Jews are ethically expected to go beyond the requirements of the law (*lifnim mishurat ha-din*). While Judaism permits people to use animals to meet essential human needs, it is essential that Jews strive to be human in the highest sense (*b'makom she'ein anashim, hishtadel lihiyot ish!* – “in a place where there are no *mensch* (caring, sensitive human beings) strive to be a *mensch*”). Let us strive to reach our best potential as children in G-d's covenant.

**Richard H Schwartz**

E-mail address: Schwartz@postbo.csi.cuny.edu

Dear Editor

I am a fairly new member of the JVS and non-Jewish, though I *have* been a vegetarian/vegan for over forty years. My friend Ruth Goldberg, who had a letter in the last issue, lent me a copy of *'The Jewish Vegetarian'* about a year ago. Two things impressed me and appealed to me. The first is the spiritual ethos which underlies much of the magazine's contents. The second is the Society's international perspective. I enjoy reading all of *TJV* but find that its most valuable aspects are epitomised in the articles by Richard Schwartz in particular. I think it important that we vegetarians should understand and appreciate the full significance of our way of life to the future of the planet earth which G-d gave to us as our home, to be shared responsibly with our fellow inhabitants, His other creatures.

Though I have been a vegetarian for so long, I have to confess that only belatedly, through certain experiences which I don't have space here to recount, have I awoken to a proper sense of this global responsibility. With that realisation came a desire to do something practical about it. At first I assumed that others more able, more qualified, and more wealthy, must already have the job well in hand. Regrettably I delayed until it became evident to me that in general the 'vegetarian movement' in the countries where it is strongly established does not do as much as it could to assist those who are pioneering in more difficult places. Sadly, the meat culture is global. Governments and Non Government Organisations everywhere foster it and finance it, 'softening-up' their people to welcome MacBurger Inc. and their entourage. It is time for us to be global and to challenge this system actively in every place and at every level. The movement in Britain is sufficiently strong now to do this at home. But it needs doing in the developing world also. We tend to be too parochial in our outlook. We get excited about the phasing out of battery cages for hens in Europe for example, and rightly so, but let us not forget that there is a much bigger world out there where such systems are *expanding*. We have to change *world* consciousness. The alternative is too horrible to contemplate. Already the Chinese have overtaken the Americans in their per capita consumption of meat, though it is pigs not cows that they

largely eat. Indians and Africans are being brainwashed into believing that they must follow the same pattern. If they continue in this direction it will involve great intensification of production methods, with all the cruelty that involves, doubtless genetic engineering, more animal drugs, more pollution, more disease of animals and humans, more damage to our poor old world. Vegetarians, and *only vegetarians*, have the solution to this problem. It really is time we began to take our international responsibilities seriously, don't you think? Not only should we be 'shouting our message from the rooftops' but we should be taking *effective action* to counter the world's suicidal trends regarding food and agriculture. If any readers of this magazine would like to discuss what can be done, I'll be delighted if they will contact me at HIPPO; and I don't just mean those who want to give money because I know that many of us are fully committed financially as it is. The pen, and the voice, are mightier than the sword, or even the wallet, provided that what they communicate is the truth.

Yours sincerely

**Neville Heath Fowler,**

HIPPO, The Old Vicarage, Llangynog, Carmarthen SA33 5BS, Wales  
Tel/Fax: 01267 241547 E-mail: hippo@gofornet.co.uk

Dear Editor

I would like to respectfully dissent from the view of Esther Barnet Sterns (letter, September 1999) that there should be a change in the tone and emphasis in the articles in *The Jewish Vegetarian*. Contrary to her assertion, there are many articles that give practical advice and many with positive themes in each issue of the magazine. Please consider the wide variety of articles in the September issue. Topics included recipes, travel topics, a consumer corner with information about various products of interest to vegetarians, new year's greetings from several society leaders, society news, eight book reviews, recent vegetarian-related news and articles on a wide variety of topics, including, genetically manipulated foods, connections between Yom Kippur and vegetarianism, the Seventh Vegetarian Union Conference, high vitality treats and meals, and spiritual healing. In short, material to meet a wide variety of interest. I suggest to Ms Stern that not everyone shares her interests, that there is material in each issue of the type she prefers, and the editors have been doing a wonderful job at providing material to meet many interests and concerns.

Very truly yours,

**Richard H Schwartz, PhD. USA**

Dear Editor

In response to Ruth Goldberg's interesting letter, perhaps I may be permitted to make the following observations.

Regarding reasons for eating meat, there is one vitamin which is not present in a vegetarian diet (I think Vitamin B12). When a person has a chronic illness it is sometimes necessary to introduce the more "unusual" vitamins in order to keep their condition stable, e.g. MS, ME, etc.

Twenty years ago I was not in a position, or place, to have access to "The

Animal Free Shopper” and quality winter-footwear for a very cold climate was not available in synthetic materials.

I do believe that “speciesism” is endemic to species: animals from different species or groups do not mate with one another, humans included, and why? Because it is in this planet’s best interest to maintain a wide diversity of both plant and animal life. This is nature’s way, and since the 280 million or so years of existence on this planet(?) have already confirmed the wise plan to diversify life, by the very confirmance of this diversification, and the maintenance of it, we hopefully ensure the continuity of the many different species that enrich and grace life as we know it on this Earth.

Yes, I am indeed advocating giving priority to a human over an animal if the necessity arose; and yes, even to a human I do not know. What is the difference in humanity between a human I know, and a human whom I don’t know?

We do have to make choices in life, and sometimes a moment may arise when we have to decide whether a human life, or an animal life, should take priority. I am sure that in such a case any rabbi would agree with me that human life has to, in extremis, take precedence over animal life.

I quite agree with Ms Goldberg that there is untold suffering in the animal world, much of which is caused by Man. This is a despicable situation, and one that we must fight against by introducing humane and compassionate animal husbandry practices, if only *as a starting point*. When human groups begin to change either attitudes to each other and to animal life around them, they may by that time have developed enough motivation for leading more compassionate ways of living. We have to work at our own mind-sets and attitudes, whilst understanding that others are perhaps not yet quite as advanced or compassionate as we would like them to be.

If we could completely abolish the killing of animals, this world would be the better for it; however, in order to achieve that aim society must provide sensible and adequate alternatives, emphasising food-production (vegetables of course) that would instantly replace all the mineral and vitamin needs of millions of people who are already at starvation point. The implementation of such moves involve the deployment of vast amounts of money and transport, as well as increased employment on the land – because such crops would need to be near enough organic – which in turn leads to the necessity of finding enough people who are willing to work on the land, which *could* lead to encouraging *fewer* people to go to university, etc., etc., etc.!

Thus the ramifications of creating a totally vegetarian society are enormous, and we need to think carefully as a society, how we can implement the concept of total vegetarianism whilst maintaining a functioning and satisfied community, in every way.

I am happy to see the steady (though slow) increase in the number of people who embrace a vegetarian way of life, and it is by their (our) example and persuasive discourse (not forceful arguments) that others will be encouraged to follow suit.

Yours most sincerely,

**Sundari Heller LRAM**

The Jewish Vegetarian Magazine

I have been given a copy of your very interesting magazine. I have known of your society for many years, and, a long time ago, did visit your restaurant – now closed?

An item in this magazine, March 1999, page 24, did set me thinking: “Jewish Values vs. The World’s Values”. A comparison table, by a Richard H. Schwartz. Much of which I agree with, naturally, but there seems to be one stark anomaly, No. 10, “Kindness to animals” as a Jewish value (and not contested by me), against the world’s value, “Animals brutally treated and killed to meet human desires”. So why is the fur industry, the fur trade, importers, dealers, fur retailing, shops, in the hands of the Jews? It seems to be an exclusive Jewish industry, with obvious names on brass plates and on shop fronts. (And Jewish women also wearing furs.) I feel compelled to point this out, in view of almost the worst cruelties being perpetrated for fur, for personal adornment only, with trapping (not done by Jews, of course) and the importation of cruelly killed dogs and cats in the Far East, for cheap, “trinket” furs, imported into EU and Britain, by a Jewish firm, as exposed on TV recently.

I include campaigning against the fur trade amongst all the other cruelties done to animals.

There is, of course, another matter; one of “ritual slaughter”, an ongoing thing, whether horrible Gentile “humane slaughter” or “humane” Shechita or Halal. I just hate it all, as a vegan for over 20 years, and wish it was never necessary. But Gentiles, Jews and all others, almost, insist upon their meat, their animal flesh to eat. Sad.

Comparisons, such as this, between peoples, faiths, etc. are not helpful, not altogether desirable – it is the world, as a whole, MAN, who is cruel, violent, rapacious – and, at times, I do despair.

Thank you for the work you do.

With best wishes,

**Michael S. Sutcliffe**

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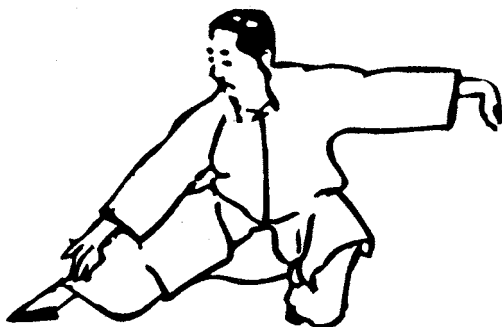
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For more details contact:

Susan Mellor, Admissions Secretary

**Tel: 01462-679301 Fax: 01462-481578**

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**Letchworth, Herts SG6 3JZ**

1 mile from A1 (M), 35 minutes from Kings Cross  
The School is an Educational Charity

## LIFE MEMBERS

Life Members are the pillars of the Society. Their support enables our work for vegetarianism to expand and plans for the future to be implemented.

**UK Life Membership  
£150**

**Israel Life Membership  
\$250**

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