

## How to Save the World: Become a Vegan!

[James Mayer](#) explores the myths about veganism and how veganism can in fact, save the world

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Image: Shawna Scott

In early October of 2017, I was startled to see the response to a poll on Good Morning Britain which read 'Would you go vegan to save the world?'. The percentage response was 44 per cent yes and 56 percent no. It was at this moment that a wave of confusion and frustration swept over me, that the majority of the British public would vote no. To add to my disappointment, journalist Piers Morgan noted that he has "never met a healthy-looking vegan", and personally commented on the vegan journalist, George Monbiot's "pale" skin tone. This spurred me to write this article, as I believe if 56 per cent of people would rather the world be destroyed so that they can continue to consume animal products, then something is drastically wrong with the perception of veganism. Clearly information in relation to veganism has been severely misconstrued. It seems there is this inner fear that omnivores have towards a plant-based lifestyle which needs to be addressed and hopefully resolved. I hope this article influences omnivores to

alter their perspectives; not only on eating meat, but to alter the perception towards vegans in general. Therefore, I have narrowed my reasoning down to just three reasons why adopting a vegan diet may be beneficial to yourself, animals and the world.

### 1. It is healthier!

According to researchers from the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in Washington DC, “following a vegetarian [or vegan] diet is twice as effective than a carnivorous one when it comes to losing weight”. One of the main reasons for this is that vegans consume far less of the saturated fats found in meat and dairy products. Therefore, vegans suffer far less often from high cholesterol levels and subsequent heart attacks. I was kindly given a vegan cookbook as a going-back-to-university present last September and have relied on the affordable and nutritious meals to get me through my busy schedule. The cookbook is called *Keep it Vegan* by Áine Carlin, an omnivore-gone-vegan. She explains in her introduction that her transition to a plant-based diet has led to her hair now having a “natural shine”, her skin to “clear” and her nails becoming “bullet-strong”. Furthermore, the Clear Skin Forever website states that “there is abundance of a hormone called IGF-1 in milk, which is really good for [calves], but not for you”. IGF-1 is a growth hormone which makes calves grow larger and stronger, although unfortunately for you, it also tends to make acne grow too. Since making the transition to veganism, I have definitely witnessed a reduction in the amount of acne I get. Therefore, a vegan diet helps your body inside and outside.

However, despite knowing the health benefits, I was worried about how I would replace my dearly-loved dairy products. Yet I found that I actually prefer coconut milk as an alternative to cow’s milk; it is naturally sweet and easier to digest. Furthermore, vegan butter and vegan ice-cream taste virtually the same as their dairy counterparts in my opinion. I would even go as far as to say, better! And the best part is that they are healthier!

### 2. The meat industry is cruel

Now, onto a trickier subject to discuss: animal welfare. The animal equality website notes that over “56 billion farmed animals are killed every year by humans” and that these “figures do not even include fish and other sea creatures whose deaths are so great they are only measured in tonnes”. Not only this, but the way in which most animals are slaughtered is violent and cruel. Cows come under the top 10 most intelligent animals in the world according to Mother Nature Network. “Cows are also capable of feeling strong emotions such as pain, fear and even anxiety”. The animals’ equality website suggests a solution to this issue: veganism; reporting that if one person adopts a vegan diet, we could “save up to 95 animals a year, and thousands during our lifetimes”. Animal production would decline if more of us adopted a vegetarian or vegan diet. Fewer animals would be bred in order to be reared for meat, thus fewer would be slaughtered in inhumane ways.

### 3. Yes, you could just save the world!

Veganism could combat world hunger. An ecologist from Cornell Chronical advised scientists that the U.S. could “feed 800 million people with grain that livestock eat”. This food could be instead given to citizens in third world countries who need it. Furthermore, the statistics are unbelievable when it comes to water consumption. According to VegNews, “it takes 100 to 200 times more water to produce a pound of beef than it does to grow a pound of plant foods”. Furthermore, air pollution from livestock has become a national crisis that most of the nation are unaware of. The documentary *Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret*, mentions how cows secrete 150 billion gallons of Methane per day “which is 130 times more waste than the entire human population”. A UN report warned that “rearing cattle produces more greenhouse gases than driving cars”. In fact, it produces more than the entire transportation sector: cars, trains, boats and planes combined! I know you must be thinking that your contribution will be meaningless, so what is the point in becoming vegan to save the planet anyway? Well, becoming vegan can sometimes set off a chain reaction. Others can become intrigued by your diet and life choices, and some feel that they would like to try this, even if only once a week or so. A few of my friends have

become vegan (or at least tried a few recipes) because of their fascination with my diet. If you want to find out more about veganism; I highly recommend two documentaries that can be found on Netflix: What the Health? and Cowspiracy.



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