

Why should I join the Vegetarian Community of Iowa?

VCI invites you to join our organization to help support a healthy, environmentally friendly, and compassionate way of living. We offer our members:

- Educational programs designed to inform the community about issues of importance
- Monthly social dinners at local vegetarian-friendly restaurants
- Vegetarian potlucks
- A subscription to our quarterly newsletter that includes recipes, articles, and upcoming events
- Organized field trips
- The chance to enjoy the company of like-minded individuals.

How do I learn more about becoming a member?

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*To become vegetarian is
to step into the stream
which leads to nirvana.
~Buddha*

*Promoting the joy, compassion,
and life-enhancing possibilities of
a plant-based lifestyle.*



What makes a person vegetarian?

According to Vegsoc.org, a vegetarian is “someone living on a diet of grains, pulses, nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruits with or without the use of dairy products and eggs (preferably free-range).”

Ovo-lacto vegetarians, the most common type, include both eggs and dairy in their diet.

Lacto-vegetarians eat dairy, but not eggs.

Pescetarians may eat fish, but no meat.

Vegans do not eat any animal products, including dairy and eggs.

What DO vegetarians eat?

VCI members hear this question alot! Join us for a potluck or dine-out social to see all of the delicious options available to people who choose not to eat meat! Fortunately, there are many substitutes for meat, dairy, and eggs available to make meals nutritious and easy to prepare.

Why do people choose to become vegetarian?

Members of VCI have many reasons for choosing a plant-based lifestyle. Among the most common reasons are health, concern for the environment, and compassion for all living beings.

Health

“I don't understand why asking people to eat a well-balanced vegetarian diet is considered drastic, while it is medically conservative to cut people open and put them on cholesterol-lowering drugs for the rest of their lives.”

~Dean Ornish, MD

- According to 5aday.gov, eating plenty of fruits and vegetables can help to reduce the risk of heart disease, type II diabetes, high blood pressure, and certain kinds of cancers.
- It is the position of the American Dietetic Association and Dietitians of Canada that appropriately planned vegetarian diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases (www.eatright.org).
- Lower levels of saturated fat and cholesterol and higher levels of carbohydrates, fiber, magnesium, potassium, folate, and antioxidants such as vitamins C and E are among the many nutritional benefits of a vegetarian diet. (www.eatright.org)

Compassion for all living beings

“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

~Gandhi

- According to usda.gov, the average American will eat 1100 animals in his or her lifetime.
- Castration, branding that causes 3rd degree burns and cutting off horns of calves is often done without pain relief (Christianveg.org)
- “Meat production depends on feeding nearly 40 percent of the world's grains to animals, creating competition for grain between affluent meat eaters and the world's poor (Christianveg.org)”
- Slaughterhouse stun operators routinely fail to render cattle unconscious, dismembering and skinning alert animals (kinshipcircle.org)

Environmental concerns

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

- “Of all the agricultural land in the U.S., 80 percent is used to raise animals for food and to grow the grain to feed them—that's almost half the total land mass of the lower 48 states (peta.org)”
- “The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has linked animal agriculture to a number of other environmental problems, including: contamination of aquatic ecosystems, soil, and drinking water by manure, pesticides, and fertilizers; acid rain from ammonia emissions; greenhouse gas production; and depletion of aquifers for irrigation (vegan.org)”

Just for fun...famous vegetarians

Alicia Silverstone*, Albert Einstein, Benjamin Franklin, Dr. Spock*, Bob Dylan, Chelsea Clinton, David Duchovny, Dr. Ruth, Hank Aaron, Jerry Seinfeld, Joaquin Phoenix*, Joe Namath, John Lennon, Kim Basinger, Lenny Kravitz, Tolstoy, da Vinci, Louisa May Alcott, Martina Navratilova*, Michael J. Fox, Gandhi*, Richard Gere, Shania Twain*, Steve Jobs, Van Gogh, Woody Harrelson*

* indicates vegan

Visit www.famousveggie.com to learn if your favorite celebrity is vegetarian.