

CHEW ON THIS

GO VEGETARIAN

Because heart disease begins in childhood.

Meat has no fiber but is laden with fat and cholesterol, which is why the late Dr. Benjamin Spock, in the final edition of his book *Baby & Child Care*, recommended against feeding children any kind of meat.

Because a vegan diet reverses heart disease.

On the American Heart Association (AHA) diet, which includes meat, patients' arteries continue to clog, while Dr. Dean Ornish's vegan diet unclogs arteries. In one study, AHA dieters experienced a 28 percent average worsening of clogged arteries, while dieters on Ornish's program experienced an 8 percent improvement in their arteries.

Because eating meat and dairy products makes you fat.

As a nation, we're getting fatter, and the Atkins diet has only made matters worse because it only works in the short term. Only 2 percent of pure vegetarians are obese, which is about one-ninth the figure for meat-eating Americans.

Because you shouldn't have to lie to your kids about the food you eat.

Children would be horrified to learn about the cruelty and violence involved in turning chickens, pigs, and other animals into nuggets and other "foods."

Because in every package of chicken, there's a little poop.

A USDA study found that 98 percent of broiler chicken carcasses had detectable levels of *E. coli*, indicating fecal contamination.

Because meat is filthy and bloody.

There are more than 50 million cases of meat-related foodborne illness every year in the United States, thousands of which lead to death. Animals accumulate dangerous chemicals in their flesh and fat (which meat-eaters consume), including dioxins, antibiotics, pesticides, herbicides, and even the most toxic form of arsenic.

Because it isn't fair.

Killing other animals is an act of exploitation and violence, and we do it only because we have the power to.

Because no living creature wants to see her family slaughtered.

Cows love their calves, sows love their piglets, and chickens love their chicks. Farmed animals love their families and mourn their loss.

Because eating meat and dairy products causes impotence.

Going vegetarian is a natural alternative to Viagra because before meat's artery-clogging action gives you a heart attack, it affects other vital organs. In one study, one-fourth of those in "the oldest age group" of men aged 40 to 79 reported frequent occurrence of erectile dysfunction, while in another study, half of men over 40 reported that they experienced erectile dysfunction at least some of the time.

Because you wouldn't eat your dog.

Most people are horrified that some cultures eat dogs or whales, but these animals suffer no more than animals commonly consumed in the U.S. The difference is only cultural, not moral.

Because mad cow disease is in the U.S.

Any animal with a brain could contract a version of mad cow disease, yet millions of pigs and chickens are still being fed the remains of diseased animals—in violation of World Health Organization recommendations and the laws of Japan and Europe.

Because it's violence that you can stop.

We may feel powerless to stop war or other forms of violence, but we can choose not to support slaughterhouses by rejecting flesh foods.

Because no one should have to kill for a living.

Slaughterhouse workers have among the highest rates of injury and illness in the country, and working in a slaughterhouse would dull anyone's sense of compassion.

Because it takes a small person to beat a defenseless animal ... and an even smaller person to eat one.

If you're eating meat, you are paying others to commit acts so cruel that if committed against dogs or cats, they would warrant felony cruelty charges in most U.S. states.

Because no animal deserves to die for your taste buds.

A human being's desire for a momentary taste of flesh is not as important as another animal's desire not to be tortured and violently killed.

Because the grain used to feed animals could be used to feed hungry people.

Eighty percent of U.S. agricultural land is used to raise chickens, pigs, and other farmed animals; seventy percent of grains are used to feed them. If the massive quantities of grain, soy, and corn now fed to factory-farmed animals were freed up, there would be plenty of food for the world's starving people.

Because more than half of all water used in the U.S. is used to raise animals for food.

A totally vegetarian diet requires 300 gallons of water per day, while a meat-eating diet requires more than 4,000 gallons of water per day. Time magazine reports, "Around the world, as more water is diverted to raising [cattle], pigs, and chickens, instead of producing crops for direct consumption, millions of wells are going dry."

Because you can't eat meat and call yourself an environmentalist.

Funneling crops and water through animals rather than using those resources directly is our country's top way of wasting water and polluting. Factory farms demand more water than all other users combined and produce 130 times as much waste as the entire human population of the United States. Farming animals also requires more than one-third of all greenhouse-gas-emitting fossil fuels used in the U.S. and has destroyed three-fourths of our topsoil, a permanent environmental catastrophe that can't be corrected.

Because they're defenseless.

Nobel laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer called speciesism the "most extreme" form of racism because animals are the least able to defend themselves and the easiest to victimize.

Because when animals feel pain, they scream, too.

If you burn them, they feel it. If you give them electric shocks, they feel it. Animals feel pain in the same way and to the same degree that we humans do.

Because they don't want to die.

Animals value their lives as much as humans do.

Because they feel fear.

Their hair stands on end, they urinate on themselves, and they shake, just as we do when frightened out of our minds with the prospect of being hurt or killed.

Because no matter how you slice it, it's still flesh.

Other animals are made of flesh, bone, and blood, just as we are, so "meat" is just a euphemism for a decomposing corpse used as food.

Because commerce is no excuse for murder.

The chicken, pork, and other animal mass-murdering industries are huge, but it's time for them to go the way of the slave trade (which also had strong economic incentives).

Because even prisons aren't this crowded.

Animals on factory farms are crammed into so little space that many of them are unable to do anything natural to them for their entire lives.

Because this is not what wings are for.

Chickens, pigs, and other farmed animals never get to breathe fresh air, feel the sun on their backs, build a nest, nuzzle their young, or do anything at all that they were born to do.

Because everyone wants to be free.

We know that it's true of birds let out of a cage and of dogs taken to the park, and it's equally true of farmed animals: They desire freedom, just as humans do.

Because eating fish doesn't make you a vegetarian.

Fish have the same ability to respond to pain that birds and mammals have and are also interesting individuals in their own right. According to a review of the science published in Fish and Fisheries, fish are "highly intelligent"—they have long-term memories and learn from one another, use tools, form social hierarchies, and "can even be favourably compared to non-human primates." Explains marine biologist Dr. Sylvia Earle, fish are "so good-natured, so curious. You know, fish are sensitive, they have personalities, they hurt when they're wounded."

Because might doesn't make right.

In our moral development as a species, we've reached the point where it's time to recognize that other species deserve consideration, just as we finally recognized that slavery was wrong, that women deserved the vote, and that children should not be abused as a method of child rearing.

BECAUSE YOU KNOW THIS IS WRONG

Common sense tells us, and we know in our hearts, that our fellow animals have the same kind of feelings and desires that we do and that we should not kill and hurt others in order to eat them.

For more information and for a free vegetarian starter kit, visit GoVeg.com or call 1-888-VEG-FOOD.

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