

Because your food choices can change the world

Food Chain Issue 6

Congratulations!

It's been six months since you received your first issue! Congrats to those of you who have made it through without any major slip ups, and even if you have, we hope that the next six issues will continue to help you find reasons to go and stay veg!

This issue highlights another feathered friend—the turkey. Many of you may only be familiar with turkeys when Thanksgiving comes around, however, these birds are incredibly beautiful and curious creatures! We are sure that you will have a better understanding after you read about Mila and Priscilla, who represent the millions of turkeys killed for food each year.

As usual, we've included some great food suggestions that revolve around the Thanksgiving theme and in order to help you better understand how your diet can play a major role in preventing type 2 diabetes, you'll find pertinent information in an article written by a medical doctor discussing the type 2 diabetes epidemic and the consequences of this debilitating disease.

Part of Food Empowerment Project's mission is to also ensure that people who pick our fruits and vegetables are treated with dignity and respect. As we promote a vegan diet, it is important and necessary for us to speak about the farm workers. We hope that you will take their plight to heart as well!

We know for some of you, the decision to go veg may have been an easy one—something you had thought a lot about in the past and recently decided to do. We



also realize that some of you may have wanted to do it but were worried whether or not you could keep it up or how you would deal with those close to you, especially when you hear remarks such as: "You can only be strong if you eat meat." We help dispel that myth in this issue, and we are sure that the next six issues of Food Chain will continue to make it easier

for you to stay veg. Just remember that it will only get easier on the road to going and staying veg!

The Truth About Turkeys



Photo of turkeys in a factory farm courtesy of Viva!USA

When our founding fathers were deciding on the United States' National Symbol, Benjamin Franklin felt strongly that the turkey, rather than the eagle, should be selected, describing this curious and industrious animal as "a bird of courage."

In the wild, these emotional, intelligent and beautifully plumed birds can live up to 12 years. They forage for foods such as seeds, acorns, berries, and insects and often rest or dust-bathe after feeding before roosting in low branches at night.

Exploitation

In industrial animal factories, turkeys raised for "meat" live in stark contrast to that of their wild counterparts. They have been genetically altered to grow as large and as fast as possible, while their feathers have been bred white because the skin pigmentation of dark-feathered turkeys was not as appealing to consumers.

Of the 300 million turkeys sent to slaughter every year, most are raised in one of the ten top turkey-producing states and are of one variety: "the broad-breasted white (BBW)." While wild turkeys can run up to 25 miles per hour and fly short distances at up to 55 miles per hour, turkeys raised for "meat" weigh three times as much and grow breasts so large they cannot fly or even reproduce naturally.

Today, all commercially-raised turkeys are conceived through artificial insemination. Because of their unnaturally

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high growth rates, turkeys used for breeding are routinely given only half of what they would normally be fed in an attempt to control their weight and reduce health and reproductive problems, which are not uncommon in turkeys raised for “meat.” They grow so fast and are extremely top-heavy, which can cause organ failure and debilitating foot and leg problems. “Between 1965 and 2000, the weight of [an] average turkey raised commercially in the U.S. increased by 57 percent, from an average of 18 pounds to an average of 28.2 pounds.”¹

Hatchery

Turkeys raised in industrial animal factories are first hatched in large incubators, so they never feel the warmth of a nest or even see their mothers. To keep the birds from injuring each other in overcrowded conditions, newly hatched chicks, called poults, have the tips of their toes cut off and their highly sensitive beaks sheared off with a hot blade or high-voltage electric current, without the use of any anesthetics. Male chicks also have their snoods (a long, fleshy appendage that hangs down over the top of a turkey’s beak) removed in a similar manner. These painful mutilations are crude, cheap ways to allow the mass production of these birds. The chicks are then shipped in boxes, via ground or air transport, to windowless brooding and “grow out” sheds.

“Grow Out” Sheds

Confined with up to 10,000 birds per shed at a stocking density of just one or two square feet per bird, the poults are fed a corn-and-soybean meal mash, with low-level growth antibiotics and additives to control for parasitic disease. Artificial lights extend daylight hours to keep the birds eating. Because these industrial factories have automated



Photo of turkey saved from a slaughterhouse courtesy of Viva!USA

systems of feeding and watering, there is little to no oversight tending to injuries or illness. These barren, overcrowded sheds, without any form of natural stimulation, deprive turkeys of the opportunity to exhibit their complex social, foraging, and exploratory behaviors. As a result, commercially-raised turkeys can develop abnormal behaviors, including feather-pecking and cannibalism, which the industry tries to pre-vent by performing the painful mutilations of de-beaking, desnooding, and toe removal after the chicks are born.

¹ <http://www.adoptaturkey.org/aat/issues/>

² http://www.hsus.org/farm/resources/research/welfare/welfare_turkeys.html

Shed floors, typically covered with litter made of wood shavings, are not cleaned over the birds’ lifetime and may not be cleared before the next flock arrives. Forced to stand and lie in soiled litter, many turkeys develop painful breast blisters and foot ulcers. Air quality is also severely diminished with the accumulation of dust, pathogens, and noxious gases, including ammonia and methane, and often leads to eye and respiratory problems.

Reaching “market weight” at just three to four months of age, these young turkeys are then rounded up—usually grabbed by one or both legs—and shoved tightly into crates on trucks. This stressful process often results in bruised and broken wings, hips, and legs. During transport to the slaughterhouse, which can legally last up to 28 hours, turkeys are exposed to harsh weather conditions and make their final trip without food or water. It is not uncommon for turkeys to die during transport, and according to estimated “dead-on-arrival” statistics for 2007, close to one million turkeys in the U.S. died by the time they reached the slaughterhouse.²

Slaughterhouse

Upon arrival, the turkeys are unloaded from the transport crates. Their legs are shackled so they hang upside down in order to pass over an electrified water bath, which is supposed to render them unconscious when their heads are submerged in the water. With their wings often hanging lower than their heads, these birds can experience electric shocks before they are stunned. On top of this, not all birds are adequately rendered unconscious prior to having their necks slit and then being submerged in the scald vat, which means they are alive when they enter the hot water and ultimately drown.

Because turkeys and other birds slaughtered for food are not covered under the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, not rendering these animals unconscious prior to being killed is not illegal. Some poultry slaughtering facilities have removed the electrified water baths and are using gas systems to render the birds unconscious, which is considered to be a less painful procedure, but the end result remains the same with the death of millions of turkeys.

Reminder

The goal of industrial animal factories is to mass produce animals in order to make a profit. Just like all animals raised for food, turkeys are treated as mere commodities—genetically manipulated, mutilated and given little to no consideration regarding their welfare. The easiest way to put an end to these cruelties endured by all animals raised for food is to choose not to eat them. And remember, following a vegan diet not only helps the animals, but can make a difference for all of humankind.

Mila and Priscilla: A Tale of Two Turkeys

Many people assume that domestic turkeys lack the native intelligence of their wild relatives. This assumption can easily be challenged by sharing the memory of Mila and Priscilla, two turkey hens who lived with us for several years in Darnestown, Maryland outside Washington DC.

Victims of a truck accident, Mila and Priscilla would have been dead by the time we adopted them had they not been rescued. Though roughly the same age, their personalities were very different. Mila was a gentle and pacific turkey with a watchful face. Priscilla was a moody bird with emotional burdens.

In the spring and summer, Priscilla would disappear into the woods around our house, and we would have to go look for her. Eventually we'd spy her white form nestled in thick vegetation, where she laid many clutches of eggs that, since there was no male turkey to fertilize them, never hatched. Priscilla kept trying to be a mother, and perhaps because she could not, she was irritable much of the time.

When Priscilla got into one of her angry moods, you could see her getting ready to charge us, which wasn't pleasant. With her head pulsing colors, she glared at us with combat in her whole demeanor. What stopped her was Mila. Perking up her head at the signals, Mila would enter directly into the path between Priscilla and us, and block Priscilla's charge. She would tread back and forth in front of Priscilla, uttering soft pleading yelps as if beseeching her to stop. Priscilla would gradually calm down.

Scientists now know that birds are intelligent, emotionally charged beings. The Austrian naturalist Konrad Lorenz helped establish this fact. Working in the first half of the 20th century, he rejected the idea that birds are nothing but reflex machines to be studied in laboratories and subjected to rigged experiments. He studied geese and other birds in outdoor settings that allowed their abilities to be expressed. His approach to studying animal behavior is known as ethology.

Lorenz taught that imprinting—the tendency of young ground-nesting birds like turkeys and chickens to follow their mothers as soon as they hatch—is crucial to their survival as well as evidence of their capacity for complex memory formation and retention. He also showed how specific gestures have evolved within certain animals including turkeys to stop a fight.

In his classic book *King Solomon's Ring* (1952), Lorenz describes what happens when two male turkeys have been fighting and one of them wants to quit. The one who has had enough makes a "specific submissive gesture which serves to forestall the intent of the attack." He lies down with his neck stretched out on the ground.



Photo of Priscilla courtesy of United Poultry Concerns

Daunted, "the victor behaves exactly as a wolf or dog in the same situation, that is to say, he evidently wants to peck and kick at the prostrated enemy, but simply cannot: he would if he could but he can't! So, still in threatening attitude, he walks round and round his prostrated rival, making tentative passes at him, but leaving him untouched."

In the case of Mila and Priscilla, the belligerent hen submitted to the peacemaker's inhibiting signals. Information was communicated in what must have been for them a familiar, yet novel, situation involving two birds genetically programmed for "meat-type" characteristics that have supposedly been linked to a reduction in brain weight or size—crude measures of intelligence in an era dominated by the power packed in extremely small elements from atoms to computer chips.

When they died, we dug deep holes in the woods behind our house, burying first our sweet Mila, followed a few weeks later by her crusty companion, Priscilla. That is where they had loved to roam, forage, and sit quietly when they were alive, secure in their knowledge that we were close by.

Courtesy of United Poultry Concerns

Produce Workers

The High Cost of Putting Food on Our Plates

Cheap produce is deceptive. While the final prices for fruits and vegetables might be low, there are hidden costs, many of which lie squarely on the shoulders of agricultural workers. Each year in the United States, over three million people are employed in the agricultural sector. These workers are actively exploited and often treated like indentured servants by employers and labor contractors, who lure them to the U.S. with promises of money and fair working conditions. What they get in return for their grueling work is not what they signed up for: wages that place them below the poverty level, unsafe housing, potentially fatal illnesses, and an extremely low quality of life. Since their plight is hidden from the public, their exploitation often goes unnoticed.



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Three-quarters of the field workers are from Mexico and many come to the United States without documentation.¹ Labor contractors entice these workers to migrate with promises of a steady job and a higher quality of life. However, these contractors charge an extraordinarily high recruitment fee that often puts workers into debt before they even begin their job. Additionally, labor contractors rarely follow through on their promises—the job that workers end up doing is very different than what they had expected. Wages are generally lower and the duration of jobs generally shorter. Contractors and farm owners avoid legal responsibility by blaming one another for these discrepancies and if workers were to speak up for themselves, they would face threats of wage deductions, blacklisting, abuse, and deportation.²

Once in the fields, produce workers find themselves engaged in exhausting manual labor eight to fourteen hours per day. When their shift is finally over, most field workers return to run-down housing structures that are both unsanitary and unsafe. Here, they struggle desperately to keep their families healthy, but tragically, the same food these

workers labor to produce is often the very same food they cannot afford.

In addition to arduous workdays, agricultural employment is made even more difficult by the dangers inherent to the job. Laborers face prolonged exposure to heat, as peak harvest periods can coincide with extreme weather. Often, workers are not provided with adequate drinking water or shade to stave off heat-related illness during these times of year. Besides heat exposure, field workers also face exposure to toxic agricultural chemicals. Long-term contact with these hazardous substances can result in a wide-range of illnesses including cancer, neurological problems, and reproductive complications.^{3 4 5 6 7} Each year, around ten to twenty thousand agricultural laborers in the United States are diagnosed with poisoning by agricultural chemicals.⁸ Other diseases and disorders that can arise from produce work include respiratory diseases, hearing loss, skin disorders, cancers, and heart-related illnesses.⁹ It is no wonder that agriculture is consistently ranked as one of the most dangerous industries in the country.¹⁰

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¹ "Findings from the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) 2001-2002; A Demographic and Employment Profile of United States Farm Workers." U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). http://www.doleta.gov/agworker/report9/naws_rpt9.pdf (6/13/10)

² "Help Wanted: Hiring, Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery in the Global Economy." A Verite Research and Advocacy Initiative. 2010. http://www.verite.org/wellmade/_pdfs/Help_Wanted_2010.pdf (6/18/10)

³ Alavanja MC, Hoppin HA, Kamel F. "Health Effects of Chronic Pesticide Exposure: Cancer and Neurotoxicity." 2004. *Ann Rev Pub Hlth* 25: 155-197. <http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.25.101802.123020> (6/13/10)

⁴ Garcia, AM. "Pesticide Exposure and Women's Health." 2003. *Am J Ind Med* 44: 585-594. <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/abstract/106564991/ABSTRACT>

⁵ Scherio A, Chen H, Weisskopf, MG, O'Reilly E, McCullough ML, Calle EE, Schwarzschild MA and Thun MJ. "Pesticide Exposure and Risk of Parkinson's Disease." 2006. *Ann Neurol* 60: 197-203. <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/112660877/abstract> (6/14/10)

⁶ Hayden KM, Norton MC, Darcey D, Ostbye T, Zandi PP, Breitner JC, Welsh-Bohmer KA; Cache County Study Investigators. "Occupational Exposure to Pesticides Increases the Risk of Incident AD: the Cache County study." 2010. *Neurology* 74(19): 1524-1530. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20458069> (6/14/10)

⁷ "Environmental Hazards and Health Effects." Centers for Disease Control (CDC). <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/pesticides/activities.htm> (6/13/10)

⁸ "Youth in Agriculture." U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/agriculture/workers.html> (5/3/10)

⁹ "NIOSH Safety and Health Topic: Agriculture." National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). 2009. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/agriculture> (4/4/10)

¹⁰ "Fact Sheet #40: Federal Youth Employment Laws in Farm Jobs." U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs40.htm> (4/18/10)

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The social aspects of working in agricultural industries complicate life further as workers suffer great indecencies just to earn a meager amount of money to support themselves and their families. Over one-third of families have a combined income below the poverty level and only around eight to twelve percent of workers receive employer-provided health insurance.¹¹ As if that wasn't bad enough, females struggle with institutionalized sex discrimination and frequent acts of sexual harassment. Farms have few policies to deter such behavior and many women are too physically and emotionally exhausted to fight back, believing there is nothing they can do.

Children as young as 12 years of age can also be found working in the fields, and child labor advocates say it is quite common to find even younger children in the fields.¹² Though they are four times as likely to be injured on the job than they would be in any other industry, these children carry a huge weight on their shoulders to help their families earn money because their parents are not being paid a living wage.¹³

Though fruits and vegetables may be good for our health, the production of produce is often not good for the health of those in the fields. The agricultural industry, as it stands now, cannot continue to mistreat and neglect workers. We need to make sure that those who labor in the fields are treated with respect and are paid a living wage.

As consumers, the power is in our hands with every purchase we make. Whenever possible, choosing to purchase produce from ethical farms that do not allow child labor and offer a safe and healthy working environment encourages responsibility in agriculture, and buying organic fruits and vegetables can also make a difference. Even though purchasing organic produce does not ensure better working or living conditions for the workers, it can help to reduce the number of workers being exposed to agricultural chemicals.

The Food Empowerment Project encourages a vegan lifestyle based on compassion and respect for all forms of life. It is vital that our compassion and respect extend not only to the animals who are so horribly mistreated, but also to the workers who provide us with the fruits and vegetables that sustain us. As consumers, we can promote social justice and equality by supporting farms that value and respect their workers.

¹¹ http://www.doleta.gov/agworker/report9/naws_rpt9.pdf (6/13/10)

¹² http://www.doleta.gov/agworker/report9/naws_rpt9.pdf (6/13/10)

¹³ BLS [2000]. "Report on the Youth Labor Force." Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, pp. 58-67
<http://www.bls.gov/opub/rylf/pdf/rylf2000.pdf> (6/14/10)

Buddha-nut Garlic Bisque

Courtesy of Fab Arrastia

Whether you're getting ready for the holidays or just want a nice warm, velvety soup of butternut squash blended with roasted garlic, you'll find this recipe easy and satisfying.



Ingredients:

- 1 medium butternut squash (1-1/2 to 2 lbs.), peeled and cubed (discard seed and pulp)
- 8-12 garlic cloves, peeled
- 3 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- 4 cups of vegetable broth (or more if necessary)
- 1 medium white potato, peeled and diced
- 1 cup Daikon root, peeled and diced (optional)
- sea salt & fresh ground pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a bowl, mix squash, garlic and olive oil.
3. Place in a shallow baking pan and roast in oven for 30 minutes (or until squash is tender).
4. In a large soup pot, add broth, potato, and Daikon and bring to a boil.
5. Add cooked butternut squash and garlic.
6. Simmer soup for 20 minutes.
7. Remove from heat and let cool for 10 minutes.
8. Puree soup in the pot with an immersion blender or use a food processor or a regular blender (though you may have to blend in batches).
9. Add more broth if necessary to reach desired consistency.
10. Add sea salt and pepper to taste.

Q People say you can only be strong if you eat “meat.” How do I respond?

A What do bodybuilders, ultra-marathon runners, Ironman triathletes, National Football League players and Major League Baseball players all have in common? Certainly they must be fit and strong and in good shape to be able to perform. There are actually many examples of athletes like these who have gone veg, which makes it clear that you do not need to eat meat to be strong. Yes, such people exist and it is not surprising that when most people go veg, they typically say that they feel more energetic. But the question remains, how can you help others understand that plant protein is just as good as, or even better than, the protein found in “meat”?

Name Drop and Brush up on Veg History

Scott Jurek, a vegan, ran 165 miles in a single day. Carl Lewis won nine gold medals after switching to a vegan diet. John Salley, former NBA Basketball player and vegan, won a total of four NBA Championships, two of them accomplished after becoming a vegan. Professional skateboarder, Ed Templeton, went vegan in his late teens.

As far back as the late 1800s there are vegetarian athletes to be found; American cyclist Will Brown broke the record for the 2000 mile bike race and Margarita Gast established a women’s record for 1,000 miles on a vegetarian diet.¹ There is even reason to believe that Roman Gladiators performed on a largely vegetarian diet due to the high levels of strontium found in their bones, a buildup more typical of the veg diet.²

Yet, there exists a common misconception that a veg diet will not provide the nutrition necessary for elite performance. This mistaken belief began in the mid-1800s when Dr. Justus von Liebig, a physiological chemist, championed the idea that energy for muscular movement came from protein. The leap was made and the idea persists that “vegetarians were considered incapable of prolonged exercise” because athletes and laborers at the time were big meat eaters.³ The 2009 American Dietetic Association position paper refutes this in plain language:

Vegetarian diets can also meet the needs of competitive athletes. Protein needs may be elevated...but vegetarian diets that meet energy needs and provide good sources of protein (soyfoods, legumes), can

provide adequate protein without the use of special foods or supplements.

A greater awareness of what nutrients constitute a balanced diet has revealed that a vegetarian diet can not only sustain high performance athletes, but can lower the risk for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, lower blood pressure, lower hypertension, and overall lower cancer rates.

Dispel the Incomplete Protein Myth

Protein is an essential nutrient and is required to build muscle. According to the RDA, only slightly over one in every ten calories needs to come from protein (about 0.08 grams of protein per kilogram that we weigh). For performance athletes the demand is higher (1.5-1.8 grams of protein per kilogram). The confusion that vegetarians can’t get adequate protein comes from the fact that protein itself is made up of amino acids. Our bodies require 20 amino acids, 9 of which we get from our diet. (For more information about protein, see issue #1.) A limited number of fruits and vegetables are low in one or more of the amino acids, making them “incomplete” proteins. The veg diet can easily compensate for foods that are “incomplete” by eating a greater variety of nuts, legumes, grains, fruits and vegetables without raising the intake level of saturated fats.

Find Sources You Trust

The American Dietetic Association published their position paper in 2009 that opens with the following:

It is the position of the American Dietetic Association that appropriately planned vegetarian diets, including total vegetarian or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well-planned vegetarian diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the life cycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and for athletes.

While “strong” can mean body-building, endurance training or the mastery of martial arts, it can also simply mean having enough stamina to get through your day. Be informed and do what you can to ward off disease and maintain the courage of your convictions.

¹ More strength, more endurance. David C. Nieman. Vibrant Life. May-June 1992 v8 n3 p34(3).

² The best athletes in ancient Rome were vegetarian! Umile Giuseppe Longo, Filippo Spiezia, Nicola Maffulli, Vincenzo Denaro. Journal of Sports Science and Medicine. Dec 2008 v7 i4 p565(1).

³ More strength, more endurance. David C. Nieman. Vibrant Life. May-June 1992 v8 n3 p34(3).

Q Can you prevent Type 2 Diabetes with your diet?

A Today, the average person in the U.S. is overweight, and about 1 in 3 is medically obese. That is what is fueling our country's epidemic of type 2 diabetes. We used to refer to it as "adult-onset" diabetes, but since so many children are now getting it, they just call it "type 2." Over the last ten years, diabetes rates have skyrocketed 90% in the United States and according to a 2010 report by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, one in 10 adults in the U.S. has diabetes. Because diabetes has been shown to be the number one reason for adult blindness, kidney failure and limb amputation, the future is bleak for those with the disease as they head down the road towards dialysis, loss of vision, gangrene, and multiple amputations.

The recent discovery that diabetes can be prevented by diet and lifestyle was recognized in 2009 as one of the greatest discoveries in nutrition in the last few decades. In early 2010, a study that was the first to include thousands of vegans, was published in the journal of the American Diabetes Association (ADA). Vegans in the U.S. were found to be the only dietary group researched that were, on average, the ideal body weight—40 pounds slimmer than the typical meat eater in the country.

This is consistent with what an interventional study found last year. Overweight meat eaters averaging 221 pounds were put on an essentially vegan diet and lost about 25 pounds a year, ending up at an average weight of 168 pounds at the end of the study two years later. Switching to a plant-based diet resulted in an average of 53 pounds of sustained weight loss.

The ADA journal study concluded that: *...vegetarian diets may in part counteract the environmental forces leading to obesity and increased rates of type 2 diabetes, though only the vegan diets were associated with a BMI [body mass index] in the optimal range. Inclusion of meat, meat products and fish in the diet, even on a less than weekly basis, seems to limit some of the protection associated with a vegan...diet. These findings may be explained by adverse effects of meat and fish...*

Even those eating just a few servings of meat per month significantly raised their risk of disease.

So we now know how to prevent diabetes, but how do we treat it? There are numerous drugs for diabetics that lower blood sugar levels, but sometimes at the expense of increased risk of heart failure, heart attacks, and bone fractures due to their side effects. There clearly has to be a better way to treat diabetes.

Just like with heart disease, the same diet that prevents the disease in the first place can reverse the disease once you have it. One study found that half of diabetics placed on even a near-vegetarian diet no longer needed to take insulin after just 16 days, and those who still had to take insulin were able to cut their dose in half—and that's after approximately 2 weeks of use!

This year the official ADA diabetic diet was placed in a head-to-head challenge against a vegan diet. The ADA diet slowed the progression of disease, such that the subjects' diabetes was only a little worse at the end of the study period, while on the vegan diet, their diabetes actually got better—significantly better! Just think of how many lives a vegan diet could save—how many lives, eyes, kidneys, feet, and families.

Courtesy of Michael Greger, MD, www.DrGreger.org

Web Highlight

Founded in 1962 by Cesar Chavez and Delores Huerta, the United Farm Workers (UFW) is currently active in 10 states. Their vision is “to provide farm workers and other working people with the inspiration and tools to share in society’s bounty” as they advocate for better working conditions and improved wages.

You can find the UFW organizing in major agricultural industries across the nation resulting in many key UFW union contract victories, such as with the largest strawberry, rose, winery and mushroom firms in both California and the nation. In 2007, the UFW was successful in getting its first contract signed with California’s third-largest vegetable company, the Salinas, California-based D’Arrigo Bros. Under this agreement, 1,800 farm workers in the Salinas and Imperial valleys are now covered.

For more information about this organization, go to: www.ufw.org

Although the Food Empowerment Project refers to the work of other organizations, we do not necessarily endorse the entire content of their websites or missions.



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Food Suggestions

When the holidays come around, there are a variety of vegan foods available, making it easy to celebrate with family and friends.

Alternatives, such as Turtle Island’s Tofurky® roast stuffed with wild rice and whole wheat bread crumbs, is a delicious way to give thanks, and you can even get Tofurky® Giblet & Mushroom Gravy, too! Turtle Island also has a variety of vegan fare including deli slices, sausages, and pizzas.

Field Roast Grain Meat Co. offers a Celebration Roast, made just for the holidays. Using Field Roast grain meat, they add stuffing that includes fresh cut butternut squash, mushrooms and granny smith apples seasoned with a blend of rosemary, thyme, and sage. You can also include their porcini mushroom gravy with your meal. Field Roast Grain Meat Co. also makes a variety of vegan products, including cutlets, sausages, meat loaf, and deli slices.

For the creative cook, there are vegan holiday recipes for just about anything that whets your appetite, such as veggie harvest casseroles, vegan shepherd’s pie, herb encrusted seitan, and much, much more.

Whatever the occasion, choosing to eat a vegan diet is not only good for your health and better for the environment, but also gives the animals something to be thankful for!

