

**And one final myth: It's all about the food.**

Lately, there is a lot of attention being paid to diet: what people should and should not eat if we wish to avoid cruelty in our lives. Certainly, that is an excellent thing, given the mind-boggling cruelty inflicted upon billions of animals every year for the sake of "food."

But simply finding a more delicious vegan cupcake is not the answer to the deep-rooted problem that finds its expression in everything ranging from cock-fighting to the raising and slaughter of tens of millions of birds for the sake of one completely unnecessary "traditional" meal. This problem is the belief that the current human domination of our planet is justified.

Those of us who contest this belief know that veganism is only one part of the larger struggle for animal liberation. All animals, regardless of species, must be allowed to live their lives on their own terms. This is, after all, what we want for humans, so why don't we want that for everyone else?

**This Thanksgiving, pledge to leave the turkeys alone.**



**Veganism Is the Next Evolution  
Springfield, VT**

## **A Thanksgiving Message from M a m a T**



Thanksgiving is the time of year when many people come together, think about the things for which they are grateful, and share an excellent meal. Tragically, little thought is generally given to the centerpiece of that meal: the big dead turkey. Because of the recent awareness about factory farming, and in an effort to reduce cruelty, many people have turned to "humanely raised" turkey.

**Unfortunately, the label of "humanely raised" is completely misleading. Turn the page to read more.....**

## **Myths About Humanely-Raised Turkeys**

### **Myth #1: Free-range turkeys have a great life and “one bad day.”**

The definition of “free range” is that the animals have access to an outside area at least 51% of their day. For turkeys, this usually means filthy outdoor pens which they can occasionally visit. Most of their time is spent in dark, crowded warehouses. They are debeaked and detoed without anesthesia. As for that “one bad day” – well, killing is killing. The slaughterhouses that kill the “humanely raised” turkeys are the same ones that kill conventionally-raised turkeys. The process is terrifying, excruciatingly painful and cruel.

### **Myth #2: Turkeys are dumb so killing them doesn't matter.**

Turkeys are very intelligent creatures. They are social and playful and enjoy being around other turkeys and animals. Far from the clone-like “turkey” that many people imagine, turkeys have widely varied personalities and interests. In fact, they are as different from one another as cats and dogs are from each other – or, for that matter, as different as humans are from one another. Even if all turkeys were, in fact, stupid, though, why would that be a reason to justify killing them? Making decisions about who lives and who dies based upon “intelligence” – particularly the intelligence of other species about whom we know very little – is a slippery slope to a dangerous way of thinking.

### **Myth #3: Turkey meat is healthier than other meats.**

Turkey meat is loaded with cholesterol and fat. Research has shown that vegetarians are 50% less likely to develop heart disease, and are 40% less likely to develop cancers, than meat-eaters. Furthermore, because of selective breeding practices combined with filthy living conditions, turkeys are highly susceptible to diseases – diseases which are not treated on organic farms, and which make their way into the human bodies that consume them.

## **Myths About Vegans and Plant-Based Diets**

### **Myth #1: Vegans are angry people trying to ruin our holidays.**

People who eat plant-based diets do so out of compassion. No matter how you look at it, exploiting and/or killing other sentient living creatures just because their bodies produce “food” is not compassionate. Holidays should be about family and friends, being grateful for the good things we have, and carving out a space for contemplation and reflection. They should not be excuses for carving up dead bodies of animals who just wanted to live.

### **Myth #2: Vegans don't care about humans.**

If you consider that a plant-based diet reduces disease and death in humans, then vegans care about humans. If you consider that a plant-based diet is the single best way to reduce our contribution to climate change – which hurts humans – then vegans care about humans. If you consider that a plant-based diet leads to a greater sense of well-being in humans because of the knowledge that it is cruelty-free, then vegans care about humans. All vegans have done is extend our circle of compassion to all species, both human and non-human. Why limit the love? There's enough to go around.

### **Myth #3: Vegans with all of their soy products are destroying the rainforests.**

The truth is that 89% of all of the soy grown in the world is fed to animals who are considered to be livestock. Soy, just like corn and other grains, is fed to cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, and other animals – animals who are killed and “processed” – and then humans eat the meat that comes from their bodies. And so, the vast majority of soy is consumed by meat-eaters, not by vegans. If you truly care about the rainforests and the amount of land that is razed to create soy plantations, you would do well to eat all the tofu and tempeh you like and avoid eating cows, pigs, chickens, and other animals.