



RAW EDGE PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

# veganpalooza

2012 VEGETARIAN WORLD SUMMIT  
HOSTED BY DR. WILL TUTTLE AND STEVE PRUSSACK

## VIP TRANSCRIPT SERIES

### INTERVIEW WITH HOWARD LYMAN



Howard Lyman is a 4th generation family farmer (and vegan) from Montana. After 20 years of operating a feed lot, he sold his ranch and started working for farmers in financial trouble. He was a lobbyist in Washington, and ran for Congress in 1982. Howard is the former Director of the "Beyond Beef Campaign" & the Humane Society of the United States' "Eating With Conscience" Campaign; past President of both the International Vegetarian Union, and EarthSave International; and is currently President of Voice for a Viable Future.

He is the author of the bestselling book, NO MORE BULL! The Mad Cowboy Targets America's Worst Enemy: Our Diet.

## No More Bull

STEVE PRUSSACK: Welcome to Veganpalooza 2012 Vegetarian World Summit V.I.P. bonus call. I'm your co-host Steve Prussack, and it's great to be with you all. Thank you all for supporting this event. A big hello to our special mystery guest Howard Lyman. You're all going to have an opportunity to ask Howard some questions, but first I want to introduce him in a more formal way here. You all know the Mad Cowboy, I'm sure, and seen the documentary and read his book. A fourth-generation family farmer and a vegan from Montana, after 20 years of operating a feedlot he sold his ranch and started working for farmers in financial trouble. He was a lobbyist in Washington and ran for Congress in 1982, and like I said, he's the author of the best-selling book "Mad Cowboy". Howard, welcome to Veganpalooza 2012.

HOWARD LYMAN: It's a joy to be with all of you today.

STEVE: So Howard, do you want to talk a little bit about what you've been up to these last few years in spreading the message and the work you're doing? Then from there we're going to open it up to everyone on the line to start asking some questions.

HOWARD: Well, I hope everybody realizes that we're probably in the greatest difficulty the world has ever existed with the Homo sapiens species. We're going towards a cliff at 200 miles an hour. We have a lot of idiots that think the answer to it is economic and how much money you can amass, but the fact of it is that we're destroying the planet. This is as apparent as the sun coming up in the morning. The problem is that the famous German, what would we call him, the mouthpiece for Hitler, he always said find the biggest lie you can find and tell it often enough and people will believe

it. Well, right now we have a lot of people that are thinking that the economics are the crux of the future, and the fact of it is it's the environment. Whether we're looking at global warming or we're looking at the loss of fish or trees or topsoil, no matter how you want to assess Planet Earth, you will find out that what we are doing and the way we're producing food today is not working.

Each and every one of us needs to stop and look at this. We have to assess it and start with ourselves and the first step in that recovery of Planet Earth is a plant-based diet. What I'm trying to do right now is not turn all of the vegetarians vegan. What I'm trying to do right now is to take the carnivores and get them to take a look at what they're doing and how it is affecting the planet. If we took every vegetarian in the world and turned them into a vegan, it would almost be miniscule. But if we took every carnivore that's out there today and we got them to have a vegan meal once a week, the movement would be astronomical if they did it because they believed that it was good for them. By believing something like that is good for them, do you think they're going to stop at one meal a week? Whether we're looking at the health of the planet or the health of the species, we have got to make some dramatic changes in our lifetime or there will be no future for our children and grandchildren. So what I'm trying to do right now is just get people to stop and do an inventory of Planet Earth. When they do that, they're going to immediately see that we are approaching that cliff at 200 miles an hour. That's what I'm doing.

**STEVE:** What have you seen to be, or in your own experience, what has been the most effective way to affect others and cause them to even want to try a vegan meal without the prejudice most of us get?

HOWARD: It's really simple. People don't listen to what you have to say, but they look at how you live your life. It's what you do much more so than what you say. Today for people to make the change, it is monumentally easier than it was 20 years ago. We have foods today that you can take good vegan food and feed carnivores and they'll look at it and say, "Man, that was great!" So it's living your life, living your beliefs, and waiting for them to come up and tap you on the shoulder and ask if you're one of those v-people. When that happens, then you have the door open. You have their ears open. Then you can tell them what they need to know, but only because they ask. If you go out on the street corner shouting at people and telling them they need to become a vegan, not only are you going to waste your breath, you're going to annoy a lot of people.

STEVE: Great point. Howard, we've got lots of people on the call here that I'm sure would love to have this opportunity to connect with you and just share a thought or ask a question. Everybody here on the call, if you have a question of anything we're talking about right here, we'd love to hear from you.

CALLER 1: Hi, Howard. My question is I've recently gone vegan as of 2011, and obviously friends are noticing different things like that, and I want to begin spreading the message. I'm listening to all these wonderful, wonderful speakers at this conference and just trying to resolve in my own heart my approach and not come across angry because one of the things I've noticed that when I watch these videos, they're very disturbing, it hurts me, it makes me angry at different things, and I don't, when we talk to people and they feel judged, that it might not always be that we're judging them. It might be that anger and that hurt dis-

placed to them as a consumer because they're maybe the wrong person because it's really to the industry maybe, something on a higher level that we can't get at, and we just, I think most people didn't grow up vegan, and it's a choice that we make, and we can relate to them, and we don't really want to be judging people. So what would your advice be about how to go about talking to people?

HOWARD: The first thing is I think that you have hit the most important thing, and that is that nobody wants to join an angry movement. When you point your finger at somebody, you have one finger pointed at them and you have four pointed back at yourself. So the first thing to do is to take the anger out of the issue. Do not tell somebody what they ought to do. The best thing to do is to look at them and say, "You wouldn't hardly believe it, but at one time I was the biggest damn fool in the world. My diet was killing me here until I decided that I was going to make a change, just not to change the world but just because it was good for me, and I adopted a vegan diet, and wow. What a difference it made for me. That's the reason that I did it, was for me. It worked for me, it makes me feel good about myself, it brings great joy into my life, and it has opened a myriad of wonderful things for me." As long as you end up sharing the information with somebody not because it's good for them but because it worked for you, and don't be afraid to identify yourself as a damn fool when you were eating the wrong diet.

CALLER 2: Hi, Howard. Howard, you've been instrumental in my shift to a vegan diet. I've been on the vegan way of life now for 12 years, and along the way decided to become a holistic nutritionist that I could help others move this way. My question to you is with all of your experience and all the conferences that you attend and

your influence, what do you think is the number one way to get the message out to people that there are programs, there are coaches, there are people who are ready to help them make the shift when they're ready?

HOWARD: I think the best thing that I do is I tell people what it was like when I started because back in 1990, there was not a whole lot of people standing around that had experience, education to help somebody as a coach. Back then the food selection for an aspiring vegan was a whole lot worse than what it was today. But I think the important thing is that you have gone out and filled your toolbox with some wonderfully helpful information for somebody to make a change. There's no doubt if you look at what's happening in the country today, the politicians, the lights are finally coming on, and they realize that we can shut down all of the military, we can get rid of the Department of Transportation, the secretary of state, the whole thing, and we can't save enough money to make up for the cost of the health of the nation. So we are going to have to make unbelievable changes in a very short period of time.

This is become now apparent to the policy makers that are out there. Don't kid yourself. The most important social movement in the world today is changing the diet of the Homo sapiens population. What you have learned, the tools you have in your toolbox to help somebody make that change, I just hope that you are aware of the fact that you're going to be the busiest individual in your neighborhood in the upcoming years. It is going to be unbelievable the amount of change that is going to happen. The more experience, the more training you can get, the more letters you can end up after your name, is going to put the people that you're dealing with at a much greater comfort level because we happen to live in a population that they think that an expert is some-

body 50 miles out of town with a briefcase. We don't want to break their bubble. What we want to do is help them become part of the movement. What happens is that every time you bring one more person into the fold, all of the people that that person interacts with, all of a sudden, they're seeing a whole new person, a whole different person, a person that is going to change and become healthier and become a poster person for a plant-based diet. So what you're doing is exactly what needs to be done, but do it with a smile on your face. There's any one thing that we need in the movement more than anything, it is joy. When we do that, I think we will end up saving the future of our children and grandchildren.

CALLER 3: It's very nice to speak with you, Mr. Lyman. I do have a question about grazing livestock. I'm vegan since May of 2011, so I'm still learning, learning a lot. I became vegan after watching just even trailers of the documentary "Earthlings", and it broke my heart, but it broke me open too. So I've come to veganism from an ethical standpoint, but I've also been involved in plant-based nutrition classes through T. Colin Campbell's foundation. It's just been wonderful. But anyway, I've been learning a lot. My question again is about grazing livestock. It's my understanding that we destroy rainforests in order to graze livestock. Is that correct?

HOWARD: That's correct, yes.

CALLER 3: If we do that, where do the livestock come from? I know this might be a silly question, but are they already there? Surely we don't transport livestock from here. It was just a crazy thought, and so I was just trying to figure out where do the livestock come from that are there?

HOWARD: The thing to realize is that the World Bank is probably more responsible for us burning down the rainforest and grazing the livestock so that they can end up selling meat not locally but selling it overseas. What you have is you have a group of animals that are already in the Amazon area. Every one of those female animals that are there will end up giving birth to a calf. You have a 50/50 chance that it'll either be male or female. The females will be then kept, and they will go into the basic herd, so you end up with the opportunity of about a 50% increase in the number of female animals in an area every year. That's where the basic animals come from the increase. Grazing, the males are all castrated and then run up to a slaughter weight, then killed, turned into mainly hamburger. Most from the rainforest goes to Europe. A significant amount of it comes to the U.S., but most of it goes to Europe. The World Bank is the one that is probably the most responsible for that because they are forcing the governments to open up that rainforest, burn down the canopy, using the remains from the trees as the fertilizer, and inside of three or four years the ground is so deficient that they have to go to a new area. That's how it comes about.

CALLER 4: I have been a vegetarian since, well, alleged vegetarian, since 1977 and then like the lady who spoke before, in May 2011 I became a vegan. I became a vegan because I realized I was never a vegetarian. I couldn't give up the cheese, and I was reading and I found out how cheese was made and what part of the dead animal because cheese, and I couldn't eat it anymore after that. I think, and I don't know if it was a couple of days ago, it could have been Cherie Soria, who said people's food choices are met with the fervor of their religion. I have been actually just attacked by rela-

tives because I'm asking the chef, "Is it possible to make this without that and can you do this?" They treat you like you're disabled, like, "Why can't you eat that? Why can't?" and I try to explain to them, "This is not ability or disability, this is a choice." I just would like some kind of suggestion because, like the young lady who spoke earlier, it is so difficult not to be angry, and then is so not difficult not to sound like a crusader when you speak to people. I mean, I'm standing at a graduation party, and a woman said, "Why do you need the salad without chicken? That's a whole meal." I said, "But for me," and I was trying to be polite because I'm at a graduation party, I said, "but for me, a salad doesn't have chicken in it. So I just want my idea of a salad." She said, "I heard you tell her not to put any cheese on that too. What are you trying to do?" This was a relative. I thought about it. Like Soria said, it was almost as if I was attacking Christianity. So how do we, I mean, really. You're a famous guy, and a lot taller than I am, so I think most people won't \*\*\* with you, but people just really act like you're telling them, "You're evil, I'm not," or "You're equal to a heathen."

HOWARD: The first thing to do is to disarm them when you look at it and say, "I'm a vegan, but there is a significant problem with being a vegan. I have to attend a lot more funerals than you carnivores." So when you end up with people, and you are exactly right, food choices are probably a greater cause of a fight in a family than religion, but they're a close run. But the thing to do, I believe that when you do that, you look at them and say, "I eat the way I do. It doesn't work for everybody, but by golly, it works for me." When I talk to somebody about it, I say, "At one time, I was well over 300 pounds. My blood pressure was sky high and my cholesterol was through the roof. I'd actually

sit down and have lunch and my nose would bleed. Now I'm not the sharpest knife in the drawer, but I knew that if I didn't do something, I wasn't going to live very long, and by golly, I sort of enjoyed living. But then I came from Montana, and boy, if I was to say to the folks in Montana I was going to become a v-v-vegetarian, Lord only knows what would happen. So I took the easy way out and I became a closet vegetarian. For one year I was a closet vegetarian and my weight came down, my blood pressure came down, my cholesterol came down. Like I said before, I'm no Rhodes scholar, but I knew that I was onto something for me. So I became a vegan. I became a vegan and I lost 130 pounds. My blood pressure went from sky high to normal, my cholesterol from 300 to 135. You know, the longest ongoing heart study in the world, the Framingham study, 40 years, not one person has had a heart attack that had a cholesterol reading below 150. Now I'm not sure about everybody else, but I'm telling you what, when I took that chicken out of my salad, when I took the cheese off of it, it worked for me. Now, if you want to eat that stuff, just have right at it. There's a much greater supply there because I'm not eating any of it, and so you're welcome to it. Besides that, you and I are not good enough friends that I'd come to your funeral anyway, so it makes no difference to me."

CALLER 5: Hi, Howard. I wanted to ask you about an area that I'm very concerned about. What do you think we can do to address the enormous influence and financial resources of lobbyists and Monsanto who control the food plate, the health of our food, and are putting huge amounts of money into the ag-gag laws?

HOWARD: I tell you, the first thing to realize is that we are never going to match them in money. Politicians, remember that any politician, what their number one

goal is is to get re-elected. Now the other side's going to put in a lot more money than we are, but the one thing that we have is that we have the access to the voters. So what I would recommend is get active in your own area. When the politicians have open houses or whatever, and they have these conferences, go there and sit in the front row. As soon as they are open for questions, you want to jump right up, and you want to ask them about Monsanto and 2,4,5-T and dioxin. Prepare yourself for them. What's going to happen is the politician's going to look at you and say, "Boy, that's a wonderful question, and I'm glad you came and I'm going to put my staff on that and we're going to get right back to you." Then you don't want to sit down. What you want to say is when you're there is, "Wait a minute. We elected you and not your staff to deal with this. What we really want to know is what you're going to do about it." You don't only do this at one meeting, but you do at every meeting they come, and I'm telling you what, they are going to fear you like you can't believe because all of a sudden, all of the rest of the people that are sitting in that audience know that this corporation has got their hooks into this guy, he wants to get reelected, and the way you're going to do it is you're going to have to make him realize that you're going to cost him the election and no amount of money is going to replace what you're going to do. Remember if you don't think one person can make a difference, spend a night in a tent with a mosquito. You will find one can make a difference.

CALLER 6: Hi, I was born and raised here in Atlanta. I was pre-vet med, bachelor of science, animal science, milked cows, worked feedlots to help pay for school, I've always loved animals and thoughts of pets as family, but I suppose I disassociated where my food was coming from to the point that I didn't really think of

all the activities and things and how it affected both the environment but also the animals that I was working with. I've been vegetarian for about two years, I came off a fast in February, knowing that I needed to stop all the milk, cheese eggs, all those things, and I seem to feel like there has been a chemical change in how I think about things. I am wondering if how you viewed the animals when you owned the feedlots and things, if the way you think about them changed since you became a vegetarian and does that make a difference in how we view the world, just simply by changing how we eat and what we eat?

HOWARD: There's no doubt about it that you become influenced by the area you're living in, the people that are around you, what is basically normal, and you get to believe that that's the normal. That's what should happen. You never really stop. You know what, it came to me. I owned thousands of animals and I was looking in a mirror. I was looking at myself and I had to ask myself, "Should we be eating these animals?" To be in the livestock industry, to be in the livestock business, for that to be the key to be able to feed your family and then asking that sort of a question, I almost tore the mirror off the wall. It wasn't like I could go somewhere else and I could ask somebody that I respected because everybody I knew, they were all carnivores. They thought that was the norm, that was what ought to go on.

So I had to educate myself from reading, and when I did enough reading, there was no doubt in my mind that what I was doing was wrong. The most difficult conversation in ever had in my life is when I told my wife that we were no longer going to be in the animal production business and we were going to go down the vegetarian path. She was light-years ahead of me on being a plant-

eater, but I have to tell you that I was a vegan before she was. It wasn't until she had a conversation with Dr. T. Colin Campbell and they talked about cheese, then she said to me, "Well, maybe I'll become a vegan too."

So the thing about it is it's not an easy thing. The most difficult thing, if you remember what the famous German philosopher Goethe said, he said we hide everything in plain sight. Right now, in plain sight, is what the animal industry is doing to our planet. Do you realize that the largest consumer of fish from the ocean today happens to be livestock? How many people know that? How many even think about it? How many even give any thought to the fact that we are just fishing the oceans out? Not to feed humans as much as when we're using them to feed livestock as a protein supplement. So what I recommend to people is stop, sit under a tree, and ask yourself some hard questions about what you're doing, what's going on, where's global warming come from. What's happening to the fish in the ocean? What's happening to the topsoil? Where's the water of the future going to come from from the increased population? Where are these people that are living on these little landmasses where there are millions of people, where are they going to go as the oceans rise, and there's no doubt in the world that that's going to happen? You have to have the conversation with yourself, and until you do that, until you actually force yourself to look for the truth in what's going on, you will blindly follow what society claims to be normal, and what society claims to be normal is destroying the planet.

STEVE: Howard Lyman, thank you so much for taking time out of your day and joining Veganpalooza, and carrying on this message for so many years. You've been such an

inspiration for all of us, and we just want to thank you for being here. Thank you, Howard, thank you for joining us.

HOWARD: Let me say one thing in closing. I hope that the people that have taken time out of their life to get on this call realize that you are the most important people in the world. The change that has to come has to come from people that are committed. If you look back at the life of Gandhi, for example, one person can change the world. Why not that one person being you? I applaud you for taking time out of your day. You are the burning, shining light that keeps me going. Have a great day.

STEVE: Thank you Howard. That's the Mad Cowboy, Howard Lyman. His website is [madcowboy.com](http://madcowboy.com), and an honor to have him with us on Veganpalooza, our special V.I.P. call. Thank you all for being here.