

The rise of veganism, good or bad?

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“Veganism is a way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as is possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose.” – The Vegan Society

vegan
 /ˈviːɡ(ə)n/ ⓘ
 noun
 1. a person who does not eat or use animal products.
 “I’m a strict vegan”

Ok, what are your initial thoughts on veganism?

A 2016 poll found Britain’s vegan population had increased from 150,000 to 542,000 in 10 years and showbiz magazines and websites are full of lists of fully vegan celebrities including Ellie Goulding, Ariana Grande, Woody Harrelson, JME, Ellen DeGeneres and Liam Hemsworth. With more and more vegan events and restaurants popping up all over the UK, it seems a very popular and ‘trendy’ thing to be.

What are the benefits meant to be?

According to the Vegan Society there are four main benefits to becoming a vegan:



- 1. For the Animals:** Avoiding animal products is one of the most obvious ways you can take a stand against animal cruelty and animal exploitation everywhere.
- 2. For your Health:** Some research has linked vegan diets with lower blood pressure and cholesterol and lower rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some types of cancer.
- 3. For the Environment:** One of the most effective things an individual can do to lower their carbon footprint is to avoid all animal products.
- 4. For People:** Avoiding animal products is not just one of the simplest ways an individual can reduce the strain on food as well as other resources, it's the simplest way to take a stand against inefficient meat production systems all over the world.

WHY VEGANISM MAY NOT BE AS ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY AS YOU MIGHT THINK:

“Avocados and quinoa are examples of foods whose prices have been pushed up so much by Western demand that they’ve become unaffordable to those who depend on them in their country of origin.”

The Independent explains how being Vegan isn’t always good for the environment and the importance of sourcing food locally and seasonally.



The Guardian also states that we should, at the very least, question the ethics of driving up demand for crops that require high inputs of fertiliser & pesticides while demonising sustainable forms of livestock farming that can restore soils and biodiversity.



Veganism in the news..

Some people are clearly against veganism..

In Oct, 2018 William Sitwell, an editor of Waitrose Magazine who is also a Masterchef critic, provoked anger after calling those on plant-based diets “hypocritical” in an email to a free-lance journalist. The editor wrote as a response to a pitch about vegan recipes for the magazine: **“Thanks for this. How about a series on killing vegans, one by one. Ways to trap them?”** He continued, in the email published by BuzzFeed: **“How to interrogate them properly? Expose their hypocrisy? Force-feed them meat? Make them eat steak and drink red wine?”**



Sitwell, has since apologised for his outburst.

But are all vegans victims?

Attacks on small businesses by vegan activists are on the rise, according to the Countryside Alliance. **Marlow Butchers, in, Ashford, Kent, was targeted in May 2018 by vegan activists who daubed red paint on the doors and windows of the shop.**

Since then, the business has been subjected to repeated online abuse. Wayne Marlow, who runs the business with his father and brother, told Kent Online: **“On the internet it has been very threatening. It has got ridiculous - activists from as far away as Australia are getting involved. The internet is the worst thing as not only are they threatening to physically destroy our business, but they are also trying to ruin our reputation online, too, by leaving negative reviews and comments.”**

Tim Bonner, Chief Executive of the Countryside Alliance said that social media companies did not take the threats seriously enough: **“None of the social media platforms view the abuse of those involved in meat production as they would other minorities. This is understandable but there has to be an equality of response when people like this butcher or others are being targeted.”**

