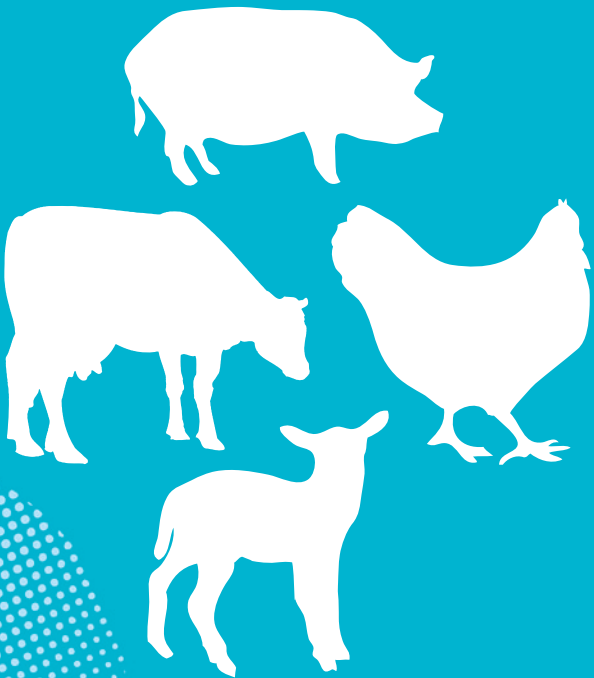


going veggie...

for the animals



Why going vegetarian for animals  
is a positive choice



more than **2.5 million**  
farm animals are killed in the UK  
every day just to satisfy the  
population's taste for meat

# going veggie...

for the animals

A vegetarian diet is more sustainable and can be much better for your own health, but for many people, going vegetarian is all about the animals.

Millions of people around the world believe it is wrong for animals to suffer and die, just so they can be turned into food. The UK is said to be a nation of animal lovers, but more than two and a half million farm animals are killed here every day just to satisfy the population's taste for meat.

Cats, dogs and other pets share our lives and our homes, while cattle, pigs, sheep and other farm animals are seen as disposable commodities.

**Is that something you feel comfortable with?**

## cattle



although killed  
at 1-2 years  
old, beef cattle  
naturally live  
around 25 years

There are nearly ten million cattle in the UK. Cows naturally live for around 25 years, but those destined to become beef are slaughtered between one and two years old. Veal calves live only a few months. Dairy cows become too worn out to produce as much milk as the market demands when they are around five years old, and as a result they are killed.

At the slaughterhouse, cows, bulls and calves are all stunned by a bolt to the brain then bled to death by having their throats slit.

## pigs



70% of the 10  
million pigs  
killed in the UK  
are intensively  
reared

Pigs are often compared with dogs as they live to a similar age of around 10-15 years, they are both easy to train and love being outdoors. Sadly, of the ten million pigs slaughtered in the UK each year, around 70% are reared under very intensive conditions, being closely confined indoors for their entire lives.



most pigs are  
slaughtered at  
between 4 & 7  
months old

Although sow stalls have been banned, breeding sows can still be kept in metal farrowing crates for three to four weeks each time they give birth. The crates are barely larger than their own bodies, so the sows can hardly move, let alone follow their natural instincts to nest and nurture their piglets. Most pigs are slaughtered between four and seven months old. Some are gassed, but most are electrically stunned before being hung up by the hind legs and bled to death by a cut to the throat.

# chickens



20-50,000  
broiler chickens  
live together  
for 6 to 7 weeks  
in windowless  
sheds

In a natural environment, chickens would live for seven years and would choose to perch, run, walk and stretch their wings. The vast majority of those destined for the table (broiler chickens) live for six to seven weeks in windowless sheds shared with 20-50,000 other birds.



855 million  
broiler  
chickens were  
slaughtered  
in 2011

The population of the UK now eats double the amount of poultry as it did 20 years ago. In order to produce meat quickly, growth rates have increased 300% in the past 50 years. This causes all sorts of health problems. 100,000 birds die each year in UK broiler sheds as a result of heart failure, disease and other problems caused by the way in which they are reared.

Almost 855 million broiler chickens were killed in the UK in 2011, on automated slaughter lines. The birds are shackled and stunned through electrically charged water before having their throats slit. Research shows that some birds are still conscious when they are killed.

In order to produce meat quickly, growth rates have increased 300% in the past 50 years. 100,000 birds die each year as a result of health problems related to the way they are treated.



12.5 million  
lambs were  
slaughtered  
in 2011

## sheep

Like pigs, sheep have a natural lifespan of around 15 years, but most of the 12.5 million lambs killed in the UK in 2011 were less than one year old. They are slaughtered in a similar way to pigs but more care is taken with their skins and fleece as a significant proportion of British wool comes from the slaughterhouse.



46% of fish are  
now raised on  
fish farms

## fish

Fish don't tend to attract as much sympathy, but they have a nervous system and feel pain like all other animals. Whether caught wild in the oceans or among the 46% of fish now raised intensively on fish farms, fish do suffer. Fish farming is growing very fast around the world and is set to overtake beef, pork and poultry production in the next decade. Fishing also harms other wildlife, including whales, dolphins, birds and turtles.



# why vegetarian?

With all sorts of ‘ethical’ meat on sale, ‘flexitarianism’ is all the rage. Why should you bother going veggie?

For many, it’s about commitment – making a clear and conscious statement that you will no longer support the appalling way that the vast majority of farm animals are treated.

For others it’s just wrong to kill, and even organic, hand-reared ‘happy meat’ comes from an animal that was unnecessarily killed long before the end of its natural life.

Some vegetarians go further and vegans avoid all animal products, including eggs, milk, dairy products, honey and wool. Wherever you want to draw the line, the Vegetarian Society has information and resources to support you at [www.vegsoc.org](http://www.vegsoc.org)



# going veggie...

## more information

Whatever your views, find out more about animal welfare at **[www.vegsoc.org/animals](http://www.vegsoc.org/animals)**, and check out **[www.butcherscat.com](http://www.butcherscat.com)** to consider the differences between farmed animals and domestic pets.

Get all the support you need to change your diet for the better at **[www.vegsoc.org/goingveggie](http://www.vegsoc.org/goingveggie)** or by ordering a copy of 'Going Veggie', the Vegetarian Society's guide to going, and staying, vegetarian.

If this booklet has made you think, please help us reach more people like you by joining the Vegetarian Society or making a donation at **[www.vegsoc.org/supportus](http://www.vegsoc.org/supportus)**

**[www.vegsoc.org](http://www.vegsoc.org)**

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References for the information in this booklet are available at **[www.vegsoc.org/references](http://www.vegsoc.org/references)**

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