

# YOUNG VEGGIE GUIDE



Everything you need to know about  
going, being and staying vegetarian.

# Introduction

**Hi! Welcome to the Vegetarian Society's guide to being a young veggie. This guide is for you if you're already a vegetarian, thinking about becoming one or just curious about vegetarianism.**



Here at the Vegetarian Society, we believe that being a veggie is a wonderful way to live. And we're not the only ones. There are millions of vegetarians in the UK alone.

Being a vegetarian is about so much more than eating salad! You can munch on mouth-watering meals whilst knowing that you are being kind to animals and our planet.

Sounds good, right?

The following pages are bursting with tips, information and recipes. There are fun facts to find and real young veggies to meet. So get reading and enjoy!



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# What is a vegetarian?



**A vegetarian is someone who does not eat animals. This means no cows, pigs, sheep, fish, prawns, birds or any other animal you can think of! Vegetarians also do not eat foods that contain ingredients made from dead animals.**

Learn more about these foods on page 15.

**CAITLIN GOLDING, 11**

My advice for new veggies is not to listen to people's comments! Don't stick to the same old foods, be exotic and try to spice it up a bit.



**ELLIOT HUMPHREYS, 13**

I was born a vegetarian and my favourite meal is chick pea curry. My advice to new veggies is check food labels and always look for the Vegetarian Society logo.



## So what DO they eat?

Vegetarians eat all kinds of tasty food and lots of it is just like the food that meat-eaters enjoy. They might eat or drink milk, cheese, butter, eggs or ice cream. They can eat crisps, chocolate, pizza, pasta, fruit and vegetables. There are vegetarian sausages, burgers, soups and pies that are totally meat-free.

## What's a vegan?

A vegan is someone who doesn't eat or drink any part of an animal or anything that comes from an animal. This includes meat, milk, butter, cheese, yoghurt, eggs and honey.

Some vegetarians and vegans also choose not to wear clothes made from wool, leather, fur or silk because animals have to suffer or die to make them.

A big bowl of muesli has the same amount of protein as two grilled pork sausages.



### JOHN CUMMING, 8

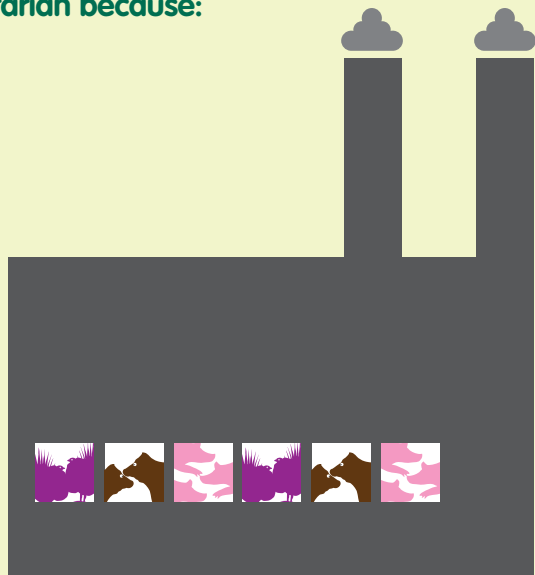
My favourite meal is stir-fry. We use different vegetables, fruits, nuts and tofu. The one I like best has onions, mushroom, tofu, carrots, mango and pineapple in it.

### LUCY FELLOWS, 12

My dad's special Saturday night veggie meal is my favourite – Mexican nachos and kidney bean wraps with salad.

# Why are people vegetarians?

People go veggie for different reasons. Some people are brought up to be vegetarians by their family. Some people don't eat meat because of their religion. Others choose to be vegetarian because:



## They care about animals

**Many people believe it is wrong to kill animals for food. Others think the way farm animals are kept and killed is unkind.**

- Lots of animals spend their lives in huge buildings called factory farms. They might get no time outside and be forced to fight with lots of other animals to reach food and water. Animals on factory farms usually have very little space to move around and often become ill.

- Fish might not seem as cute and cuddly as kittens or rabbits but they can feel pain just the same. Too much fishing means that some kinds of fish have almost become extinct.

- Dolphins, turtles, birds and other creatures are often killed by accident when they get caught by fishing nets and hooks.





Cheers Chuck



## They care about their health

**Lots of people become vegetarians because they want to feel great and have lots of energy.**

- You can get everything you need for a growing, active body by eating a balanced vegetarian diet. All sorts of fit and healthy people are vegetarians.
- Studies have shown that vegetarians are less likely to suffer from certain diseases such as heart disease and some types of cancer.



**EANNA ROSALIND BEDSAR, 11**

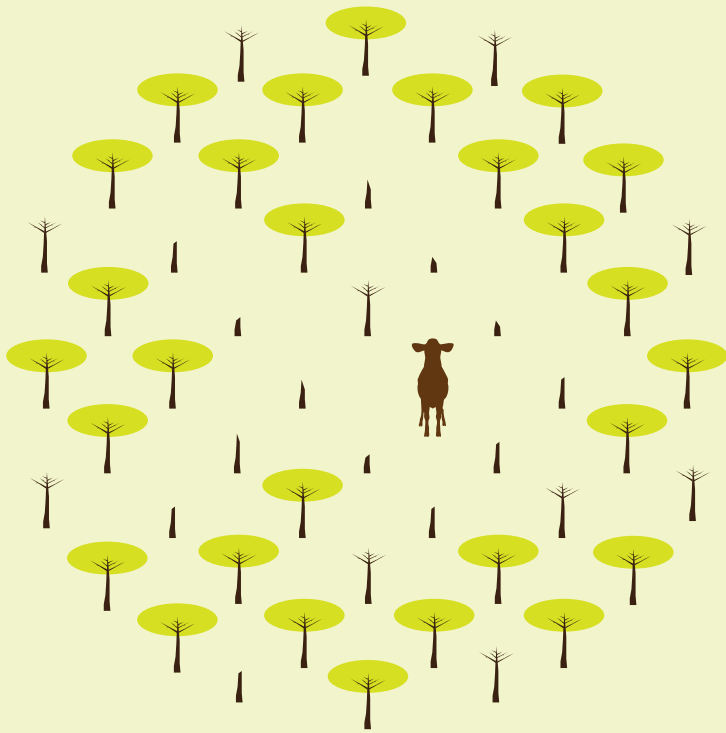
I became a veggie because I don't like animals being killed for food. How would we like it if a chicken killed us for dinner?!



**AIDAN JEAVONS, 8**

I think the best thing about being a veggie is that I'm saving animals while eating yummy food!





**MICHAEL CUMMING, 11**

It is great knowing that animals haven't been killed just so that I can eat them. I eat loads of other types of food, and it is fun looking for new recipes.

## They care about the planet

**Billions of animals are farmed for food all over the world. This is bad for our planet and the people living on it.**

- Every day, large areas of rainforest are cut down to make space for growing food for farm animals. Space is also needed for beef cattle to graze. Rainforests are very important as they affect the air we breathe and even the weather. They are also home to many animals, plants and people.

- People die every day from not having enough food. Lots of crops are fed to farm animals that are then killed for meat. If those crops were fed straight to people rather than to animals first, far more people would be fed.

Thanks!

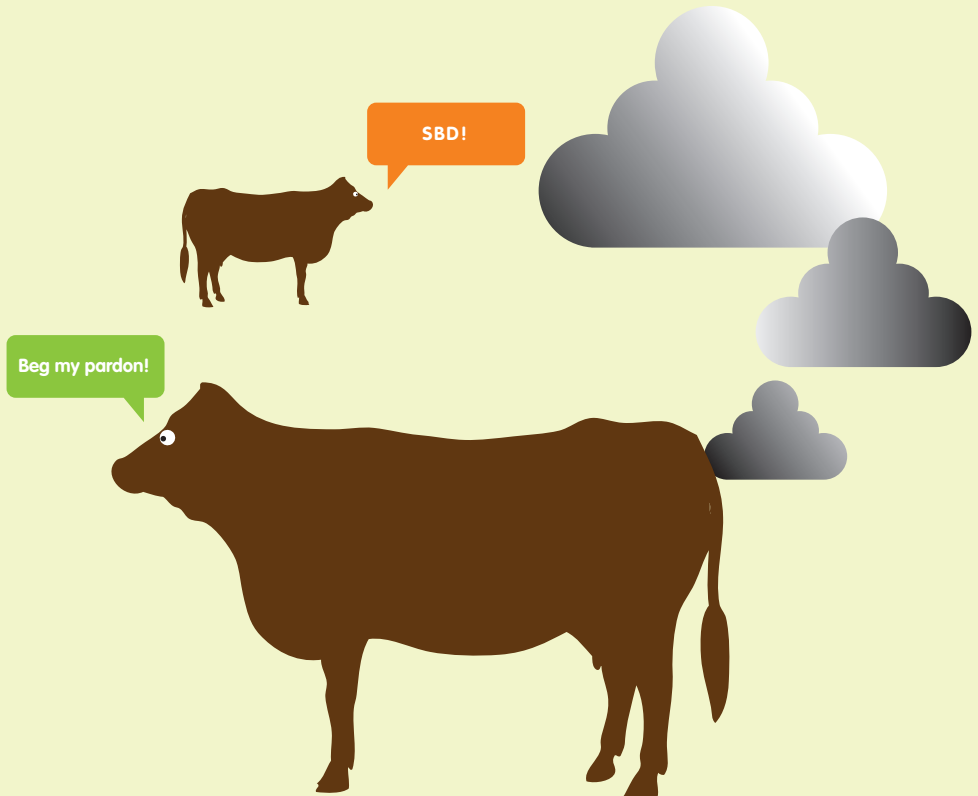




- Farming animals causes more greenhouse gases to be released into the air than all the trains, planes and cars in the world! Too many greenhouse gases are one of the causes of climate change. This means that weather patterns on our planet are changing. It is a big problem because it could lead to lots more floods, droughts and extinct plants and animals.

- Many fish are kept on fish farms which can pollute our seas, lakes and rivers when waste and harmful chemicals leak out.

- The huge nets used to catch fish scrape the sea bed and damage underwater habitats.

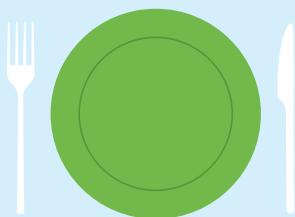
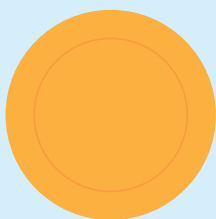
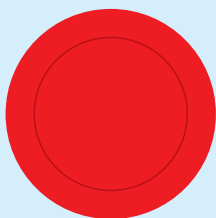


# Going veggie, step-by-step

**Being a vegetarian is easier than ever as there is so much tasty veggie food out there. Here are our steps to veggie success!**

## **1. Become a vegetarian at your own pace.**

Some people go veggie in one step, giving up all meat at once. Others eat veggie foods a few days a week and then slowly build up to being a full time veggie. Even if you have a few 'lapses' and end up eating meat, don't give up! You're on your way to a kind and healthy lifestyle so be proud and carry on.



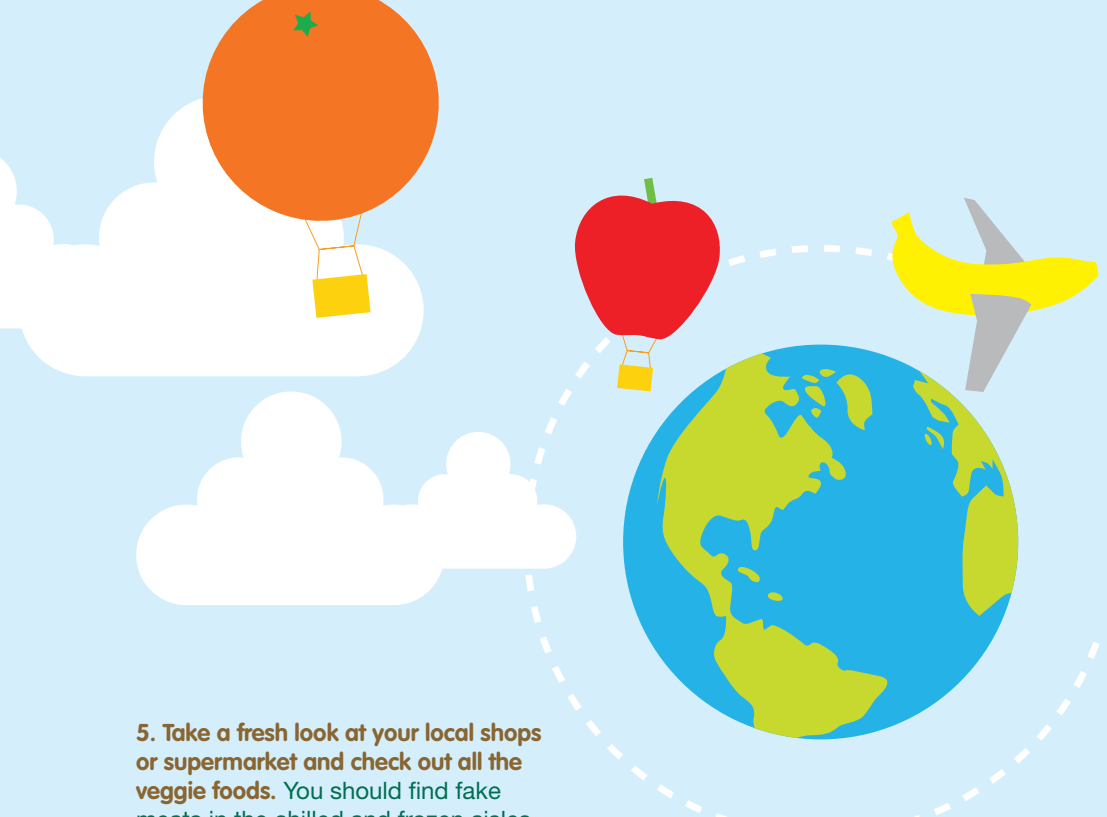
**2. Learn about food.** We all need to know about the types and amounts of foods we need to eat to have healthy bodies. All the goodness that can be found in meat exists in vegetarian foods. You just need to know where to look! Go to page 12 to find out all about healthy veggie eating.

**3. Think of all the veggie foods you and your family already eat. Next, think of all the meals you eat that can easily be veggie-fied by swapping the meat for 'fake meats'.** As well as veggie sausages, burgers and hot dogs, there are veggie foods made to look and taste like chicken, mince and even bacon rashers! You'll also find veggie fake meat slices that are similar to ham and turkey slices. These can be good in sandwiches.

## **4. Find some yummy veggie recipes and enjoy cooking them with your family.**

Being able to cook healthy, tasty food is an important skill for life and lots of fun. For great recipes, contact the Vegetarian Society. We'd love to send you a free copy of our recipe book, Veggie Kids' Kitchen.





**5. Take a fresh look at your local shops or supermarket and check out all the veggie foods.** You should find fake meats in the chilled and frozen aisles. Then there's tofu (a soft food made from soya beans), lentils, beans and a big range of fruit and vegetables to get your mouth watering.

**6. Be an international food explorer!**

Many vegetarian foods have been popular in other countries for years. Lots of Thai and Indian curries are vegetarian and so are some Mexican dishes such as rice with beans. Then there's Japanese veggie sushi (made with seaweed, rice and vegetables). Tofu has been eaten in Asia for around 2000 years. It can be used in many recipes as it takes on the flavour of other ingredients. Why not try some Middle Eastern dishes such as hummous (a dip made from chickpeas) and falafel (spicy balls and patties made from chickpeas, beans and herbs).

**7. Don't be put off by any silly comments or teasing.** This usually comes from people who don't know much about vegetarianism. If you are bullied about being veggie (or anything else), tell a caring adult.

**8. Don't go it alone. The Vegetarian Society is here to help!** Our contact details are on the back of this guide. We can answer your questions, give you advice, send you recipes and posters and help you find a pen pal. We'd love to hear from you. If you become a member, you'll get even more great benefits.



Nearly a quarter of all people in the world eat a mainly vegetarian diet.

# Eating right, the veggie way

Everybody needs to eat a balanced diet to be healthy. This means eating the right amounts of foods from the five food groups. This plate shows the food groups and how many servings we should eat from each group every day.

## Fruit and Vegetables (for general health)

Eat 5 or more portions every day.

Fresh is best but tinned, frozen and dried count too. Potatoes don't go in this group because they are starchy.



## Protein-rich foods (for growth)

Eat 2 or 3 portions every day.

Vegetarians get their protein from beans, lentils, nuts, free-range eggs, seeds, tofu and fake meat. A small amount of protein is found in many other foods from the other groups.

A portion is a sensible serving such as a slice of bread, a glass of milk, two big spoonfuls of baked beans or a whole apple.



### Starchy foods (for activity)

Eat 5 portions every day.

Bread, pasta, rice, potatoes and cereal belong in this group. Wholemeal and wholegrain foods are healthiest.

### Dairy and alternatives (for growth and healthy bones)

Eat 2 or 3 portions every day.

Milk, cheese, butter and yoghurt are dairy foods. Always choose cheese and yoghurt that is suitable for vegetarians. Some people use soya, rice or oat milks instead of cow's milk. These are called milk alternatives. If you choose milk alternatives, get the kind with added vitamins and calcium.

### Foods high in sugar and fat (for activity)

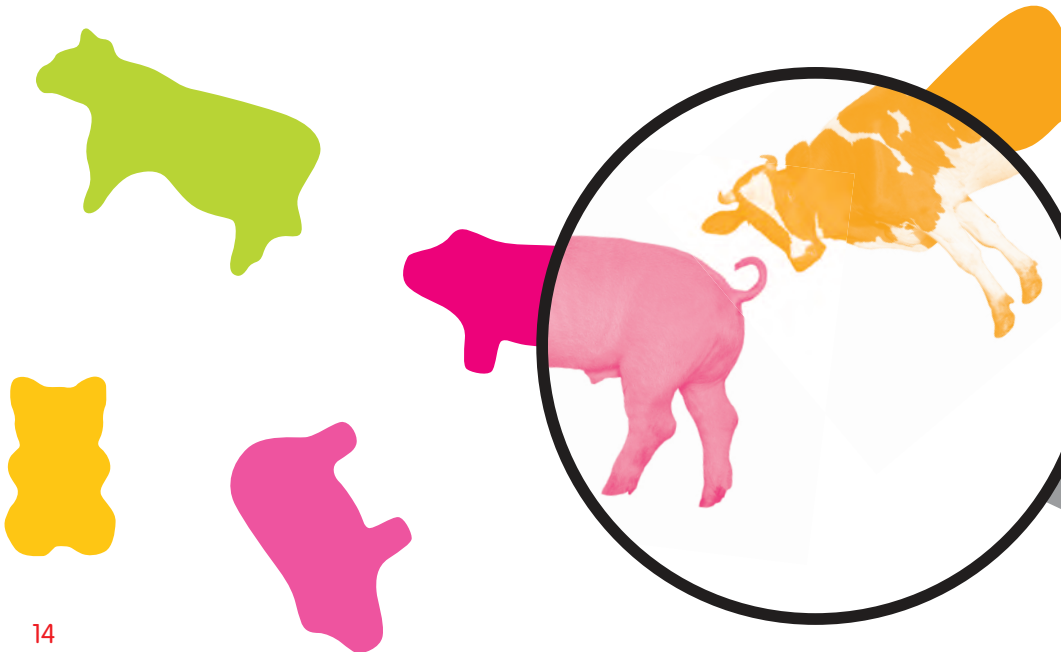
Eat 0 to 3 portions every day.

We need to eat some fat to be healthy but not too much. Foods like avocados and vegetable cooking oils contain healthier fats. Foods like sweets, cakes and biscuits should only be eaten occasionally as they can contain more unhealthy fats and lots of sugar. Too much sugar is bad for your teeth and your health.

# Watch out, sneaky meat about!

**So now you know that vegetarians don't eat the meat of any animal. But did you know that vegetarians also don't eat any foods with ingredients that an animal had to be killed for? Ingredients made from the tummy of a calf, the skin of a pig and even from squashed creepy crawlies can all be put in food! Yuk!**

Some cheeses, jellies, sweets and foods that are dyed red might have animal ingredients in them. But don't worry! There are plenty that you can eat. Just check the packet to make sure it says the food is suitable for vegetarians. This is a good idea for everyone as it is important to know what you are putting into your body.







## Here are some of the hidden nasties to watch out for:

**Animal Fat** - Fat taken from the body of the animal. It can be found in foods such as cakes, biscuits or puddings.

**Gelatine** - A gel made from parts of an animal such as bones and skin. It is found in some jelly-style sweets, jelly desserts and even some yoghurts.

**Animal Rennet** - This is taken from the stomachs of calves and is used to make certain cheeses. Lots of cheeses are made with non-animal rennet though so you can still enjoy cheese. Always check the packaging!

**Cochineal** - This is sometimes called E120 on food packets. It is a red food dye made from squashed insects!

## To eat or not to eat...

Some food packaging will have a special symbol that shows it is suitable for vegetarians. Often, supermarkets put their own symbol on their veggie foods.

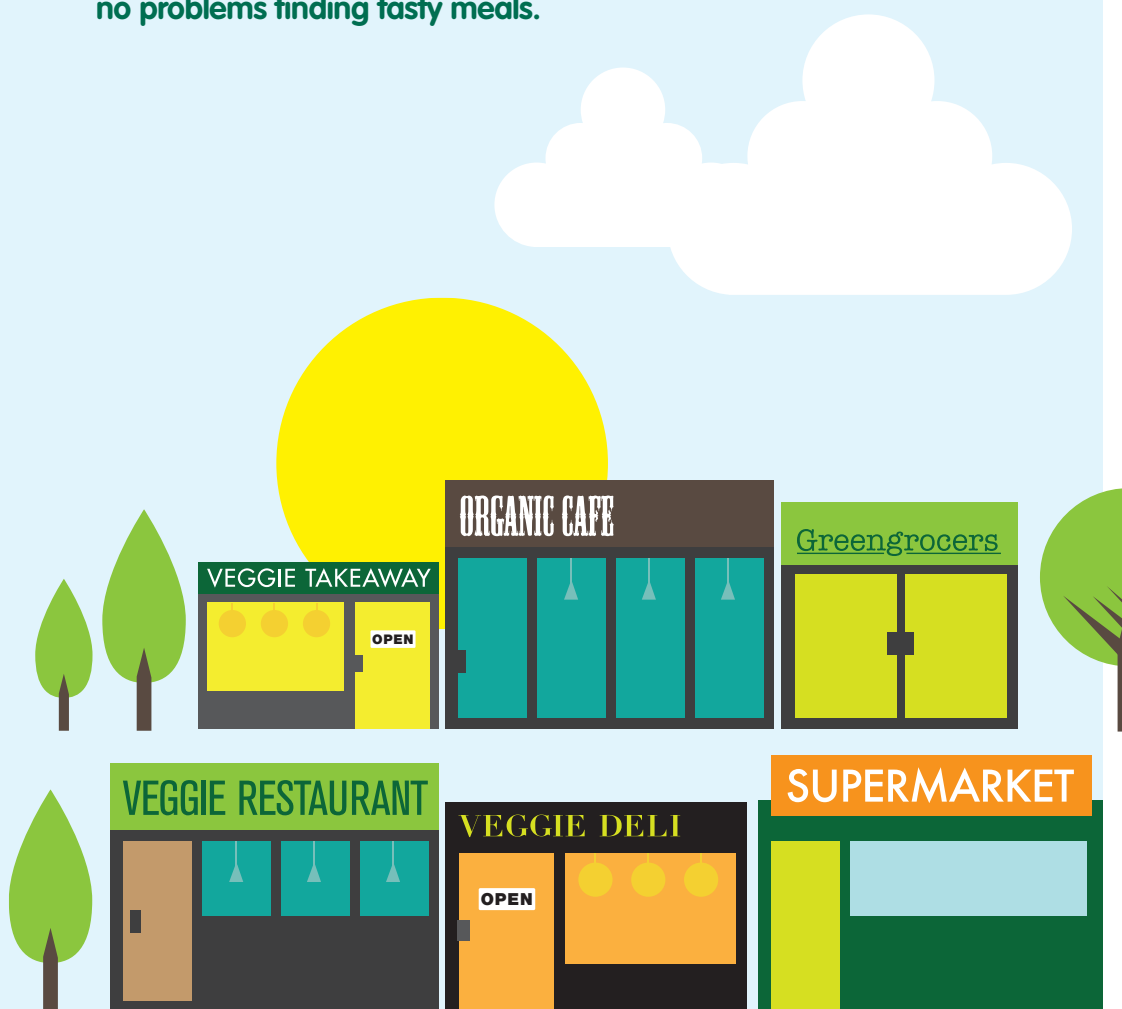
Look out for the Vegetarian Society's very own 'Vegetarian Society Approved' symbol on food packets. It shows you that the food is 100% vegetarian so you can tuck right in!

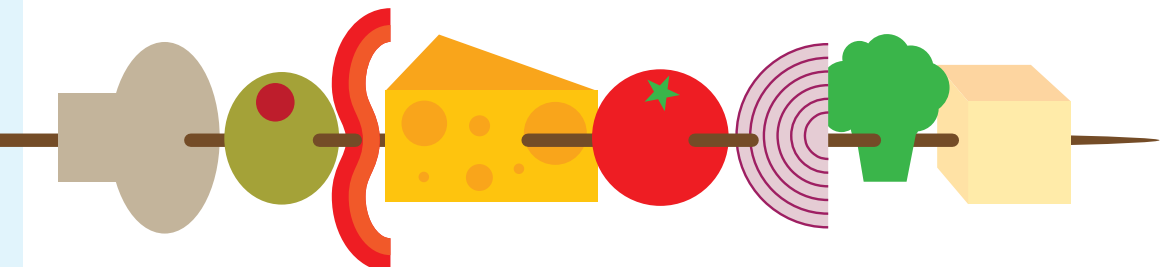


The Vegetarian Society only approves foods made with free-range eggs which were laid by hens that can spend time outdoors.

# Eating away from home

Eating when you are away from home has never been easier. Vegetarian food in schools and restaurants keeps getting better and better so you should have no problems finding tasty meals.





## At school

If your school serves measly veggie meals or even none at all, contact us! We can send free posters, recipes and information to your school.

It might be a good idea to take in a note from home that explains that you are now a veggie so that the cook will know to make enough food for you. You might also have to explain which foods you won't eat as some people are not sure what vegetarian food really is.

If you take a packed lunch to school, see our recipe section for lots of scrumptious sandwich and snack ideas. It is so easy to make a healthy, tasty packed lunch if you get up a bit earlier or make it the night before.



## At your friends' houses and parties

Ask your parents or carer to call your friend's home and explain that you are a vegetarian.

Take along some of your own veggie food to eat and share. This is a great way to show others how tasty veggie food can be.

## Barbeques

Veggie burgers, hotdogs and sausages can usually be cooked on the barbeque.

You can make your own veggie shish kebabs by pushing vegetables, halloumi cheese or tofu onto wooden skewers.

## Cafes and restaurants

In the UK, most cafes and restaurants offer at least one vegetarian dish. Sandwiches, pizzas, pasta and noodle dishes are often veggie or can easily be made veggie.

Even fast food restaurants usually offer a veggie option such as a veggie burger.

In lots of towns and cities, there are vegetarian restaurants where no meat is served at all.

## On holiday

Lots of cafes and restaurants abroad offer veggie food, especially if they are in places that are popular with tourists.

Even if you find it tricky to buy a veggie meal in a café, you could always visit a local market or supermarket to stock up on tasty veggie food.

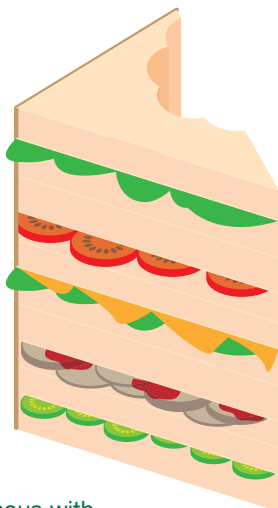
It's a good idea to take some snack foods like cereal bars and nuts, just in case!

# Recipes

## Scrumptious Sandwich Fillings

Grated cheese with sliced tomato and pesto

Fake meat slices with lettuce, tomato and mayo



Hummous with grated carrot and spinach

Cream cheese, avocado and sliced tomato

Hard-boiled, sliced free-range egg and cress with mayo

Peanut butter and jam

Peanut butter and yeast extract

Smoked tofu and salad

Sliced veggie sausages with tomato sauce

Veggie paté with salad

## Perfect Pizza Toppings

Vegetables taste great on pizza. How about spinach, sweetcorn, courgette, peppers, asparagus, broccoli or mushrooms?

Try different sauces such as green pesto, sun-dried tomato paste, salsa or garlic cream cheese

Chop up fake meats such as veggie sausage, pepperoni or bacon

Experiment with different veggie cheeses such as feta, mozzarella or goat's cheese. There are also dairy-free cheese alternatives



## Super Snacks

Fresh fruit.


Dried fruit (apricot, mango, banana, apple)

Vegetable sticks (celery, carrot, peppers) with hummous or veggie paté

Cereal bars

Mixed nuts, seeds and dried fruits

Yoghurt topped with cereal and berries



One orange gives you the same amount of vitamin C as 12 and a half packets of crisps



## Easy Cheesy Muffins

**Makes:** 6 muffins

**Prep time:** 5 minutes

**Cooking time:** 25 minutes

**Equipment:** large 6 hole muffin tin, sieve, large bowl, spoon, whisk or fork

### Ingredients

300g self raising flour

2 tsp medium curry powder

100ml olive oil

200g cherry tomatoes,  
finely chopped

100g mature Cheddar vegetarian  
cheese, finely grated

250ml full fat milk or soya milk

2 medium free-range eggs,  
lightly beaten

### Method

Heat oven to Gas Mark 5 / 190°C / 375°F.

Sieve the flour and curry powder into a large bowl.  
Add the remaining ingredients and stir well.

Lightly grease the muffin tin with oil and divide the mixture into each hole.  
Bake for 20-25 minutes.

Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes then remove and place on a cooling rack.







## Mexi Baked Tortilla

**Serves:** 4

**Prep time:** 15 minutes

**Cooking time:** 15 minutes

**Equipment:** large bowl, fork or potato masher, large spoon, sharp knife, chopping board, baking tray, cheese grater, foil

### Ingredients

2 tins red kidney beans, drained

Squeeze lime juice (to taste)

5-6 teaspoons tomato salsa

4 spring onions, chopped

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped (optional)

Quarter block vegetarian  
Cheddar cheese, grated

4 large tortilla wraps

1 pot sour cream or guacamole




## Method

Heat oven to Gas Mark 6 / 200°C / 390°F.

In a large bowl roughly mash the beans, lime juice and salsa. Then add the spring onion and garlic.

Use two wraps to make each Mexi Baked Tortilla. Spread half the mixture onto one wrap, keeping a border around the edge, then sprinkle the cheese over and cover with the second wrap. Repeat using remaining wraps and mixture.

Place side by side on a baking tray and cover loosely with foil. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove foil and bake for a further 5 minutes. Serve with sour cream or guacamole.



Peas, beans and lentils are called pulses. They are the seeds of plants and a good source of protein.

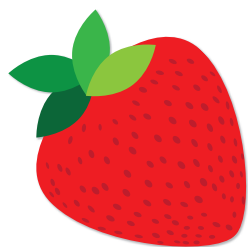


## Strawberry Knickerbocker Cheesecake

**Serves:** 4

**Prep time:** 15 minutes

**Equipment:** plastic bag, rolling pin, large bowl, spoon, 4 serving glasses (ice cream sundae glasses are perfect)



### Ingredients

100g biscuits  
(we used chocolate digestives)

250g cream cheese

250g Greek yoghurt

1 tbsp of icing sugar, sieved

1 tsp vanilla extract

100g fresh strawberries, sliced



### Method

Put the biscuits into a plastic bag and bash them into small pieces using a rolling pin. Put to one side.

Combine the cream cheese, yoghurt, icing sugar and vanilla essence and stir until creamy and smooth.

Put a layer of biscuit, a layer of the yoghurt mixture and then a layer of strawberries into each dessert glass. Continue adding layers until the glass is filled. The top layer should be strawberries. The desserts can be served immediately or chilled in the fridge until ready to eat.

### Top Tips!

For an even sweeter treat, top the desserts with a drizzle of maple syrup.

You could add your favourite vegetarian sweets or chocolate.

Strawberries can be replaced with other fruit such as raspberries, blueberries or bananas. Frozen fruits can be used in place of fresh.

Try swirling some jam, chocolate sauce or caramel sauce in to the yoghurt mixture instead of using sugar.

# Tips and advice



**Being a vegetarian is a great way to live but not everybody will understand your choice. People might ask you tricky questions about being veggie or you might have some of your own!**

**On these pages you will find tips for dealing with some common problems. There are lots more tips on [www.youngveggie.org](http://www.youngveggie.org) and you can always contact us for more advice.**



**How should I tell my family that I want to be a vegetarian?**

Show them that you are serious about going veggie by being clear about your reasons for it.

Find out as much as you can about vegetarian healthy eating so that you can reassure your family that you can get all the goodness you need from veggie food.

Show your parents or carer this leaflet or ask them to contact the Vegetarian Society for more information.



**I'm a vegetarian but none of my friends are. How can I stop feeling left out?**

It's natural to feel that you want to fit in with your friends but it is also great to be an individual. Think how boring the world would be if we were all the same!

Good friends will respect your choice to be a vegetarian, especially if you take the time to explain it to them (without making them feel like they are being told off for eating meat).

You might be the only one out of your friends who is veggie, but there are millions of other vegetarians in the world so you are not alone! Why not find some veggie friends by asking for a pen pal list from the Vegetarian Society?

**I'm a vegetarian because my family are vegetarians. I'm not sure I want to be one anymore. What should I do?**

Don't feel guilty. It is good to ask questions and to want to think for yourself.

Talk to your family about your feelings and listen carefully to what they say.

Remind yourself of all the good reasons for being a vegetarian and think of the hundreds of animals that won't be killed for you.

Why not try some new recipes to remind yourself of how tasty veggie food is?



**I'm a new vegetarian but I really miss eating meat. What can I do?**

It can take time to get used to not eating meat but you should find that you miss it less the longer you go without it.

Try using fake meats to make all your old favourite meals. You can have meat-free spaghetti bolognese, lasagne, burgers and stews. Yum!

Find new and tasty veggie recipes to try. You'll soon forget about wanting meat!

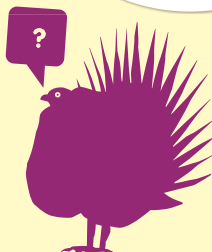
Be proud to be veggie!

**I'm a vegetarian but most of my friends and family eat meat. I find this really upsetting as I can't understand why they eat animals. What should I do?**

Most people eat meat because they were brought up that way. They probably don't like the idea of animals being killed but they might not give much thought to how their food was made.

You won't make people become vegetarians by telling them off for eating meat. It is better to set a good example by making tasty veggie food and offering them some.

You could order some free recipe booklets and information leaflets from the Vegetarian Society to show to friends and family.



# Information for parents and carers

A balanced vegetarian diet provides all the essential vitamins and minerals needed for a healthy body. The following tables provide an overview of good sources of vegetarian nutrients.

## Good Foods for Vitamins

<b>A</b>	Carrots, spinach, peppers, dried apricots, tomatoes
<b>B group</b>	Wholemeal bread, yeast extract, green leafy vegetables
<b>B12*</b>	Eggs, milk, fortified products such as soya milk or breakfast cereals
<b>C</b>	Citrus fruits, broccoli, spinach, peppers, tomatoes
<b>D</b>	Dairy products, sunlight on the skin
<b>E</b>	Vegetable oils, nuts, seeds, avocado
<b>K</b>	Spinach, cabbage, cauliflower

\* B12 is not found in a plant-based diet. Therefore it is important that vegan children eat fortified products or have a vitamin supplement.

## Good Foods for Minerals

<b>Iron*</b>	Peas, beans, lentils, spinach, wholemeal bread, dried fruit, molasses
<b>Calcium</b>	Dairy products, tofu, leafy green vegetables, sesame seeds, almonds, fortified soya milk
<b>Zinc</b>	Sesame and pumpkin seeds, green vegetables, cheese, lentils, wholegrain cereals

\* Vitamin C aids the absorption of iron from plant foods and so it is beneficial to consume sources of both of these nutrients in the same meal.

## Good Foods for Other Essentials

<b>Protein</b>	Peas, beans, lentils, cheese, nuts, seeds, free-range eggs, rice, pasta
<b>Carbohydrates</b>	Wholemeal bread, brown rice, oats, beans, peas, lentils, potatoes, pasta, breakfast cereals, fruits
<b>Essential fatty acids</b>	Vegetable oils
<b>Fibre</b>	Fruit and vegetables, oats, beans, pulses

For further information, contact the Vegetarian Society. Our contact details are on the back cover.



# The Vegetarian Society

The Vegetarian Society is a charity. We give advice and information to anyone who is interested in veggie living. If you would like any of our free posters, stickers, recipes or booklets, just get in touch! Our contact details are on the back of this guide.



The Vegetarian Society began in 1847!



## The Twiggly Club

The Twiggly Club is for young people aged 10 and under. It's named after Twiggly the beaver, star of the BBC's Autumnwatch program. When you join we'll send you a membership card, activity booklet, key ring, stickers and newsletters!



## Team Veggie

If you're aged 11-17, you can become a member of Team Veggie. You'll receive a membership card, poster, key ring, cookery booklet, stickers, magazines and e-newsletters.



[www.youngveggie.org](http://www.youngveggie.org)

Log on to the Young Veggie website for recipes, fun, artwork, quizzes, games, advice and more!



Can I become a member?

You bet!  
There are two different youth clubs.

Send us an email  
[education@vegsoc.org](mailto:education@vegsoc.org)  
or telephone 0161 925 2000  
or write to Youth Education  
The Vegetarian Society  
Parkdale, Dunham Road,  
Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 4QG



**BLANCHE, 9**

I love trying new foods.  
My favourite is veggie  
pizza with jacket potato  
and peas.

Patrons: Rose Elliot MBE, Jerome Flynn,  
Mary McCartney, Sir Paul McCartney,  
Stella McCartney, Wendy Turner Webster

Design: Barraclough Associates

Original food photography: Stothert Lloyd

Food Stylist: Rob Morris

Photographs of vegetarian children: Lee Avison,  
Stephen Bingham, Joel Chester Fildes, Corin Jeavons

With thanks to all of the vegetarian children and  
their parents who helped in the development of  
this booklet.