

## A FISH IS NOT A VEGETABLE

by Delisa Renideo

“I’m a vegetarian – I haven’t eaten meat in years! But I still eat fish.”

Every time I hear this, I’m puzzled about how so many people could think a fish is a vegetable! So I’ve decided to present some compelling information to prove that a fish is NOT a vegetable!

Many people are vegetarian for health reasons. Plants are naturally low in fat and high in fiber, they contain multitudes of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants,

*The potentially healthful nutrients in fish are generally packaged in a high fat, high cholesterol, toxic package.*

and contain absolutely no cholesterol. These qualities of plants make pure vegetarian diets the healthiest diets in the world!

Fish, on the other hand, are generally high in fat, with a significant percentage of it being saturated fat. They contain absolutely no fiber, and are high in cholesterol. Although they contain significant amounts of the fat soluble vitamins, they contain virtually no Vitamin C and much less of the B vitamins than plants contain.

Many types of fish also contain significant levels of toxins because our oceans and lakes are now so polluted. The higher you go up the food chain, the

more toxins you find as every time a fish eats other fish, which have eaten other fish which have eaten other fish, it concentrates all the toxins in its tissues from all the other fish eaten. So the potentially healthful nutrients in fish are generally packaged in a high fat, high cholesterol, toxic package. Not exactly what I’d call a health food!



Another significant health problem relates to the animal protein in fish. In **The China Study**, T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D. researcher from Cornell University, describes how animal protein causes cancer to grow, whereas plant protein does not. So in addition to too much fat, cholesterol, and toxins, we now need to add animal protein to the unhealthy components of fish.

So we can clearly see that from a health perspective, a fish is definitely not a vegetable!

*It requires 4 pounds of wild fish (as food) to provide 1 pound of farmed fish!*

Other people choose to be vegetarians for environmental reasons. A plant-based diet causes much less pollution and uses significantly fewer resources than a typical meat-based diet. Where do fish fit into this picture?

The world’s oceans are experiencing a crisis, partly due to over-fishing and partly due to the pollution entering the oceans from the land, (a great deal of this from animal agriculture.) Huge trawlers destroy the ocean bottoms as they scoop up everything in their paths. At least 25% of the fish caught are considered “by-catch.” This refers to fish that weren’t intended to be caught and they are totally wasted.



Farming fish causes high levels of pollution. It also requires 4 pounds of wild fish (as food) to provide (see ***A Fish is Not a Vegetable, cont’d on page 3***)

### 6th Annual Earth Day Dinner

AVS Potluck & Program  
 Saturday April 19, 2:00 - 4:00pm  
 United Protestant Church, Palmer,  
 followed by reggae music by 4  
 piece band, Bare Roots from 4 - 5:30 p.m.



Cost is \$2/person. Space is limited  
*Reservations are required*  
 Call 373-1526 today to guarantee your place!

# Why I'm a Vegan

by Peggy Robinson

Becoming a vegan is a continuing journey or process for me. In the beginning it was for health, however my awareness has expanded to see a far greater purpose. For me it's not just about eating, it's about my connection with all of life. Reading John Robbins book *Food Revolution*, seeing the video, *Diet for a New America*, based on his book (both available in our bookstore), and having the support of like-



minded people have had the greatest impact upon my vegan journey. That is why AVS is so important. We need the support and encouragement of each other.

***I just try to think about what I am doing and what impact it will have on animals, the planet and my own health.***

Whether we are learning new ways of cooking, listening to thought-provoking talks on how our choices affect not only our own health but also the health of our planet or putting into practice expanding our circle of compassion, we individually and collectively have a great opportunity to make a difference in the world.

***For me it's not just about eating, it's about my connection with all of life.***

It's not hard to look around us and see suffering. I see the suffering of people everyday in my work as a nurse, whether it is my co-workers with fatigue, headaches, mood disorders, diabetes, weight issues or it's the patients with cancer, heart disease, strokes, and obesity. We are all looking for health, but many times in all the wrong places. I have found that people are striving to feel good and live to their fullest potential with energy and meaning, but we get conflicting information on how to accomplish it. If we listen to those in the media, corporations, or the pharmaceutical industry



we often get information that is designed to obtain us as their customers and nothing to do with improving

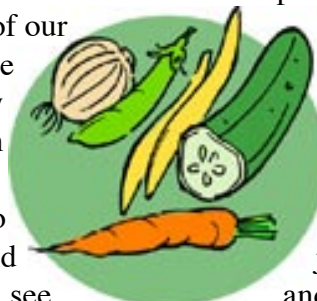
our health. Where do we go for help? AVS provides opportunities to tap into our collective knowledge. You may have a situation you have learned from and can share that knowledge or you may be seeking solutions. Together we can all learn from each other. AVS maintains a bookstore to help us expand our potential for growth and change through the power of knowing.

***We are all looking for health, but many times in all the wrong places.***

The first vegan (VEE-gun) organization was founded in 1944 by Donald Watson (1910-2005). "He defined 'veganism' as a philosophy and a way of living which



seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practical, all forms of exploitation of and cruelty to animals for food, clothing, or any other purpose." I strive to adhere to this philosophy in my daily life with the power of my choices. Believe me this is not about sacrifice! Vegan cuisine is incredibly delicious, nutritious and satisfying. I just try to think about what I am doing and what impact it will have on animals,



the planet and my own health. I am not perfect, as it is impossible to avoid all animal products in our world today. Did you know that animal-derived ingredients could be found in such things as asphalt, glue, dyes, tires, fertilizer, beauty products, etc.? When making a purchase such as a watchband, shoes, clothes, household products as well as food items I bring this awareness into my decisions. Everyday I am striving to enhance my life by making kinder choices through earth and animal friendly living.

***We individually and collectively have a great opportunity to make a difference in the world.***

## Tell Your Story!

Are you a vegan? Submit your story and a recent picture to [elaine@alaskaveg.org](mailto:elaine@alaskaveg.org).

***A Fish is Not a Vegetable,***  
*continued from the front page:*

1 pound of farmed fish! So instead of creating more food, farming fish actually depletes the oceans further. Not exactly what I'd call environmentally friendly!

Other people choose a vegetarian diet because of compassion for animals.

***Fish are living, feeling beings, so why should we exclude them from our circle of compassion?***

They don't want to cause suffering in other species to put food on their tables. They

recognize that other animals have feelings and needs and a right to live their lives, just as humans do. But some of these same people still eat fish, so what's going on here?



I think it's easier to relate to the feelings of others who appear to be more like us. Mammals, those furry or hairy critters who suckle their young just like our dogs and cats (and we) do are easier to relate to than fish, who generally lay their

***So if you become tempted to think fish fits into a vegetarian diet, please think again.***

eggs and swim away. Fish don't have fur to pet, and we don't see most of their behaviors

because they are hidden under the water. But biologically, we know their nervous systems are like our own so we know that fish can feel pain just like we do. Fish are living, feeling beings, so why should we exclude them from our circle of compassion?




A plant-based diet is the healthiest, it is the least damaging to our environment, and it causes the least suffering, so if you become tempted to think fish fits into a vegetarian diet, please think again. Remember, a fish is NOT a vegetable!

**Alaska**  
**Vegetarian Society**

**Mission Statement:**  
To create a compassionate and sustainable world by inspiring and supporting reverence for all life and the adoption of a plant-based diet.

**Who to Call** 

Elaine Albertson: AVS Newsletter Editor.....746-4668  
 Peggy Robinson: Board Treasurer & Membership....373-1901  
 Toni Truesdell: PR Coordinator.....745-4404  
 Delisa Renideo: Rays of Hope Director.....373-1526  
 Charlie Renideo: Website & Book Sales.....373-1526

**Animal Quotes** 

*“If beef is your idea of ‘real food for real people’ you’d better live real close to a really good hospital.”* -- Neal Barnard, M.D.

*“We all love animals. Why do we call some “pets” and some “dinner?”* -- K.D. Lang

*“If slaughter houses had glass walls, everyone would be a vegetarian.”* -- Paul and Linda McCartney

*“Those that are still eating animals know that they are out of step with the future.”* -- Howard Lyman

*“I’ve found that a person does not need protein from meat to be a successful athlete.”*  
-- Carl Lewis, (winner of 10 Olympic medals, 9 gold)

*“Animals are not human property, nor utilities, nor resources, nor commodities, but precious beings in God’s sight.”*  
-- Rev. Andrew Linzey

*“Do vegetarians eat animal crackers?”*  
-- Author unknown

## Upcoming Events



### Thursday, April 3

Rays of Hope board of directors' monthly meeting, 5:30pm. If you are interested in knowing more about AVS' parent organization, call Delisa at 373-1526 to find out more about the meeting.

### Friday, April 18

Deadline for articles and information to be included in the May AVS newsletter. Email [elaine@alaskaveg.org](mailto:elaine@alaskaveg.org) or call Elaine at 746-4668.

### Saturday, April 19

Earth Day potluck dinner, 2:00 - 4:00pm followed by reggae music from 4 - 5:30 at the United Protestant Church in Palmer. This annual event offers an educational program and opportunities to meet new people. For more information call 373-1526. Reservations are required. There will NOT be a regular AVS potluck on the last Saturday of April.

## Cancer Project Cooking Classes

The next series of Cancer Project classes will begin in May, both in Anchorage and the Valley. Space is limited, and classes often fill up fast, so call Delisa at 373-1526 if you are interested or know someone who would benefit from taking them.

## Recipe of the Month

The original non-vegan version of this corn casserole has been a favorite at potlucks for years. Elaine did some experimenting until she got this vegan adaptation just the way she wanted. Her friends have told her it's every bit as tasty as the one they remembered.

Some of them thought they wouldn't be having it again because of the eggs and dairy in the original.

When Elaine began trying to adapt it, she was horrified to discover that the cornbread mix called for in the recipe has lard in it. In her meat-eating days she had used the same brand of mix and remembered that it produced a light, slightly sweet cornbread.

So, first she experimented with vegan cornbread recipes, also eliminating all margarine, and once she got the light, sweet cornbread figured out, she was able to add it to other ingredients to re-create the casserole she had been trying to make. She also left out all the margarine from the casserole portion.

Try it, we think you will like it!



## Corn Casserole

from the kitchen of Elaine Albertson

### Cornbread mixture:

1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour  
1/2 cup yellow cornmeal  
2 tsp. Rumford baking powder  
2 Tbsp. granulated sweetener  
1 Tbsp. Ener-G egg replacer  
1 Tbsp. ground flax seeds  
1/4 tsp. salt  
2/3 cup soy, nut, or rice milk

### Other ingredients:

1 can whole kernel corn, drained  
1 can cream-style corn  
1/2 cup soy sour cream

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Mix all dry ingredients at left together. Add milk and stir until smooth.

Add canned corn and soy

sour cream and stir until well blended. Pour into a 9" square glass baking pan or comparable size casserole dish. Bake for 1 hour. Enjoy!

### What is the Alaska Veg Meetup?

This is a growing online community of vegetarians/vegans created initially to serve the Anchorage community. John Peck, the organizer, is also working closely with AVS to include activities in the Valley. Check it out at [www.vegetarian.meetup.com/396/](http://www.vegetarian.meetup.com/396/)



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