

## Speech Topic - The importance of veganism:

An animal's life is as important and irreplaceable to them, as our lives are to us. But as children we are taught to view cows, pigs, chickens, sheep and fish as inferior beings whose reason for existence is to provide us with meat, milk, eggs, fur, leather - the list is never-ending. We need to stop thinking of them as just resources, and start viewing them for who they truly are, sentient beings whose lives deserve to be respected and valued.<sup>1</sup> I and many others believe that veganism is the answer to many of the world's problems. Veganism is the elimination of meat and animal products and is often confused with vegetarianism, 'if you're not eating the meat, how are you harming the animal?' By consuming eggs, milk and wearing their products, you are still contributing to the cruelty. Eggs are the hens periods, meaning you are eating what could have been a chicken. The milk from whatever animal are made for their children, to nourish and provide food for them. By going vegan you restore the natural order of things.

Veganism is so much more than just a diet fad or lifestyle. The food that is on yours and the rest of the world's plates or that leather jacket that's hanging in your cupboard, is contributing to many of the world's issues.

The social and environmental impacts of raising animals for food is one of the largest contributors to environmental issues. The leading cause of rainforest destruction, species extinction, water consumption, world hunger. World hunger is huge problem, 795 million people in the world are not getting the proper nutrition they require. Many believe that animal products are great sources of food, it takes 6,813 liters of water and 7.5kg of grain to produce 500 grams of beef. The grain and water that is used in this process could be feeding and nourishing these people.<sup>2</sup> Because so much meat and animal products are being produced, land has to be cleared to make way for all of these animals, which ultimately in the process destroys forests and their wildlife. By going vegan you wouldn't contribute to the mass destruction of the environment and the human race.

Many people are uneducated or unaware of the pain that animals go through everyday. They are tortured, raped, abused, and killed. They are treated as property or as an object rather than the what they really are, which is beings that have feelings and feel the pain that we inflict upon them. We kill 2.7 trillion fish which is more than the number of human that have ever existed which is 107 billion, and 50 billion chickens which is more than all the people that have ever died in wars which is 1.65 billion.<sup>3</sup> How can the world be ok with eggs coming from a small cage, or milk coming from tortue, meat coming slaughter and abuse? Just because you can't see it happening, doesn't mean that it's not there. By transitioning to a vegan diet you aren't causing these animals the immense pain they are forced to go through.

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<sup>1</sup> Emily David

<sup>2</sup> Don Webb, What the Health Documentary

<sup>3</sup> Bite Sized Vegan

Health plays a big contender when people are discussing veganism, an extremely common misconception is that the consumption of animal products is essential and necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle. A large and increasing number of medical professionals are beginning to understand that a plant-based diet is not only nutritionally complete, but is substantially more nourishing and less toxic than an animal-based diet. Many of the major dangers that are associated with diet can actually be avoided or even cured by a vegan diet.<sup>4</sup>

Many people could not imagine eliminating meat or animal products from their diets. But I ask you to think about what's on your plate and what's going into your body. Because ultimately it is your choice whether or not to nourish and cherish your body and its health. The environment and the future of the generations to come will thank you. I will end this speech with an important quote, 'food is grown and harvested, not born and killed'.

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<sup>4</sup> Angel Flinn & Dan Cudahy

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