

**RADICAL ACTIVISM
OR THE FIGHT
FOR EQUALITY**



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The Initiative Stop Speciesism is a non-profit, non-governmental, citizens initiative that advocates animal equality and rights, and opposes speciesism, violence and exploitation of animals.

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WHAT ARE "ANIMAL RIGHTS"?

Let's start with the basic term „animal rights“. What kind of „rights“ are we talking about? Do non-human animals need to have the right to vote? To they need to have a right to get a driver's licence or the right to get married? Of course not, because that is not in their interest, and the baseline of „animal rights“ is - the interests of non-human animals. By „interest“, we don't mean the protection of someone's interest, but the right that comes with that interest.

Let's apply this theory to human rights; humans have an interest, a need for life. We have a voice which enables us to say when we want or do not want something or when we like or dislike something. We have the ability to move which helps us to avoid danger and to go where we want to go and where we feel comfortable and safe. We have complex emotions to express happiness, sadness, suffering, etc. Lastly, all of these actions are the result of our basic interest, and that is the interest to live. We want to live, we want to live happily and comfortably, so we avoid uncomfortable situations, we avoid pain and suffering, and most of all, we avoid death - we take care of our health and behaviour just so that we would live longer because our main interest, which is - to live.

Following this analogy, let's take a look at other (non-human) animals; they have a voice with which they scream and shout when they are unhappy or suffering, they have emotions which tell us when they are happy, sad, in pain, etc.

They have the ability to move so that they can escape from dangerous situations or go to places where they feel comfortable and safe. All of these actions suggest that other animals are also aware of their existence because they make decisions - they choose between situations in which they want to be and those in which they do not want to be; they communicate with members of their species that understand their language, and they communicate with other species that may not directly understand their language, but they do understand what they want to express; when a person (human or non-human) screams or cries because of pain, we know that this person is in a situation in which it doesn't want to be, and that it seeks help. All of these actions, like in humans, are actions and reactions of the basic interest in life - other animals too do everything they can to preserve their life and live it the best they can.

A common argument against „animal rights“ is that „non-human animals don't have a developed intelligence“.

Let's take a look at human rights again; every living human being has the right to live just by being born – a newly born baby has the same right to live as does any philosopher, any person with mental disabilities or people with really low intelligence.

So, if intelligence isn't a factor for having the basic right to live – then what is?

Simplified, we can say that **“if a creature is alive and conscious, it has an inherent value”**.

All creatures with inherent value are equal and have to have the same rights. Their inherent value does not depend on how much of a use they are to the world, nor does it disappear if they are a burden to others. Since intelligence is not a factor to gain the right to live, there is no place for that argument in the philosophy for animal rights. Other (non-human) animals are also, as we can see from previously written examples, aware of their existence and eager to preserve and to improve their life, just like humans.

The simplified theory about animal rights is;

Humans and other animals have to have rights because they are both – living and conscious – creatures.

This means that:

- They have a similar level of biological complex
- They are aware of their existence
- They know what is happening to them
- They prefer some things, and don't prefer others
- They make conscious decisions
- They live in a way to ensure the best quality of life
- They plan their life to a certain degree
- The length and quality of their life is important to them

The basics of human rights

Human Rights are not based on Genes

Studies tell us that there are greater genetic variations in ethnic groups than otherwise. Also the DNA divide between the animals (including humans of course) is arbitrary. There is nothing called "THE Human DNA" sequence serving as a measure of human rights.

Human Rights are not based on the ability to feel emotional and physical pain

People who are human vegetables have full human rights. People in coma, imbeciles, intellectually dumb, mentally retarded, infants, old people all have rights irrespective of their ability to feel pain and suffering.

Also, killing a human in sleep or in a state of unconsciousness even when the human is not in a capacity to feel pain and suffering is manslaughter.

Human Rights are not based on Abilities and Talents

Even people who cannot sing, cannot speak, cannot write (because they might have no hands or are illiterate), and who are no rocket scientists have rights.

Human Rights are not based on possessions of certain body parts

Other non-humans have eyes, intestines, heart, liver, legs etc too.

Then what are human rights based on?

The only logical footing for human rights is based on "natural" rights - the inherent value that a creature has just by being aware of the life around them.

- Humans are conscious and emotional beings, therefore, they have the right to live and to be free
- If all conscious and emotional being, regardless of their intelligence, talents, capabilities, physical characteristics, etc., have a right to live and to be free, then all non-human animals, regardless of their intelligence, talents, capabilities, physical characteristics, etc., have a right to live and to be free too

Since we know that all animals are living and emotional creatures with their own interests and their own way of life and desire for freedom, there is no difference between their inherent value and the inherent value of humans, thus, non-humans too need to have the same right to live and to be free.

What would we accomplish if non-human animals get „rights“?

We would establish facts such as:

- Non-human animals are conscious creatures, not objects
- Non-human animals have their own interests, just as humans
- Humans may not exploit non-human animals, just the same as they cannot exploit other humans
- Humans may not treat non-humans like objects, just the same as they cannot treat other humans
- Humans may not kill non-human animals, just the same as they cannot kill other humans.

The foundation of this whole theory is veganism – with the vegan way of life we automatically give animals their rights, we do not partake in the exploitation of non-humans and we understand the basic idea of equality where both humans and non-humans have the same right to live and to be free.

“Non-speciesistic activism” is striking at the roots of the animal rights movement.

This means that we understand the root of the problem, and we do not differ one exploitation from another. To understand the roots of the problem, means to understand that every form of exploitation is wrong – whether it’s for one or the other industry.

When we realize that, and start boycotting all industries that exploit animals, we can spread the idea of animal rights, because that idea is based on non-speciesism and equality for all animals. Because of that, being vegan is necessary for every true animal rights activist.

VEGANISM

Veganism* is a way of life in which we refuse to partake in any form of animal cruelty. This means that we do not eat non-human animals, nor do we eat anything that is a by-product of animal exploitation (such as milk, cheese, eggs, honey), it means that we do not wear fur, leather, feathers, silk, wool or anything that was made by exploiting animals; it means that we do not use cosmetics or any type of product that is tested on animals or that have animal ingredients in them; it means that we do not visit nor support institutions that keep animals in captivity or use them for the purpose of human entertainment (such as ZOOs, circuses with animals, dolphinariums, aquariums, etc.). In short, it means that we do not partake nor support any form of animal exploitation for any kind of „purpose“.

*The word „veganism“ in this context is used as a movement and a way of life. A person can eat only vegan food, but that is just a dietary choice that doesn't necessarily have to be linked with ethics and animal rights. Furthermore, the word „veganism“ will be used in this definition.

The link between animal rights and veganism is the only logical sequence - we cannot claim that we are for animal rights and equality if we continue to support some form of animal exploitation because animal rights are based on a vegan way of life - if we do not use anything made from animal suffering, then there is no demand for animal products, thus, there is no exploitation of animals, which bring us to the basics of animal rights - a world where non-human animals are not exploited, they live for their own personal interests and we realize that non-humans are also conscious beings that have to have a right to live.

This theory seems almost impossible to many people, but millions of vegans prove with their example that it is indeed possible to live without supporting any form of animal exploitation.

But, if so many people realize the problem of animal exploitation and are against it, how come the whole world isn't vegan yet?

The problem is inconsistency and speciesism (we'll talk about speciesism more later on).

The inconsistency is in the fact that most people do not support violence, they are even terrified when they see scenes of animals being slaughtered and exploited, but still, they support that same violence by consuming and buying products made from animal suffering. To disapprove of violence, but at the same time to support it, does not and will not bring any change, it only encourages more violence.

It is not enough to just disapprove of violence, we must act, and what makes the difference are we and our example. When we personally do not support or partake in any form of violence and we don't support any form of animal exploitation, then we can say that we really don't support violence and that we have made a difference, for a better world.

RADICAL VEGANISM – STRIKING AT THE ROOTS

The author Brian A. Dominick in his work „Animal Liberation and Social Revolution“ explained the term „radical“ in it's best and most true meaning;

"The word "Radical" is derived from the Latin root, "rad" which actually means "root". Radicalism is not a measurement or degree of ideological fanaticism, to the right or the left; rather, it describes a style of approach to social problems. The radical, literally speaking, is someone who seeks out the root of a problem so that she/he may strike at it for a solution. Radicals do not limit their goals to reforms. It is not their business to make concessions with victimizers to bring about an alleviation of oppression's resulting misery. Those are tasks usually left to liberals and progressives. While acknowledging that there are often gains to be found in reforms, for the radical, nothing short of victory is a satisfying end - an end defined as a revolutionary change in the roots of oppression."

Therefore, we can say that the only right way to get equality for all animals is the radical way - the vegan, non-speciesistic approach to animal rights. Complete liberation without compromise. Animal exploitation and the way non-human animals are treated is extreme. The suffering that they go through is extreme, so the fight against such a system cannot be in any other way but extreme.

Then why are we talking about „radical“ veganism in a negative way? Why is it negative to advocate non-violence, but on the other hand, it is normal to promote and support violence?

Can a racist person be against racism? Can a sexist advocate sex or gender equality?

If we have a situation where a person is beating another person seven days a week, but then that person reduces the intensity and starts beating the person once a week, can we say that this person is against violence? Can we say that this person is doing good by just reducing, and not ending violence? Can we advocate equality for women who are white, but at the same time say that women of other colours do not deserve the same rights as white women? The answers are, of course, clear. We cannot. It would be hypocritical and inconsistent, and lastly, it would not have any effect because we cannot advocate something that we ourselves do not do.

Imagine a organization or a group of people who are fighting against violence and they say that it is ok to molest a person once a week, just as long as they don't molest her/him the other six days. Imagine that same organisation or group saying that it's okay to exploit and abuse children as long as they work on fields, but it's not okay to exploit them in closed factories. Or, it's okay to exploit them in any way, but as long as they get one nice, hot meal a day - so that they have better conditions to work in.

We would all be terrified to hear such statements, because violence and exploitation is always wrong - regardless of the intensity.

However, when we talk about animal rights, the exploitation is frequently divided in many areas.

It's divided by the intensity, the way animals are being raised, the conditions in which they are being exploited, the „purpose“ for which they are being exploited and the use that humans have from their suffering. For example, most people are against the breeding and killing of animals for fur, but at the same time they don't see anything wrong in the breeding and killing of animals used for food. Furthermore, this people even think they are advocating non-violence by being against fur, but they ignore the fact that they still support that same violence, just inflicted on other animals – for example, animals that are being raised and killed for food.

Fighting against just one or just some forms of violence, but at the same time supporting other forms of violence, is not a fight against violence. Supporting even one form of violence means supporting the whole system that encourages violence. This kind of approach to animal rights is called speciesism.

SPECIESISM

Throughout history, people have suffered discrimination and violence as a result of views such as racism or sexism. These beliefs have led to slavery and domestic violence against women, which are now seen as abhorrent by the vast majority of society while it was not seen that way in the past. Amazingly, it was once thought natural and right that **some humans were inferior**.

Discrimination such as sexism and racism have not disappeared but they are now being questioned and rejected by large sections of society.

"Whenever you see a parrot in a cage, goldfish in a tank, or dog on a chain, you're seeing speciesism. If you believe that a turtle or wasp has less right to life and liberty than a fox or human, or you consider humans superior to other animals, you subscribe to speciesism. If you visit aquaprisons and zoos, wear cow skin and sheep hair, or eat flesh, eggs, or cow-milk products, you practice speciesism." - from the book "Speciesism" by Joan Dunayer

Speciesism is a discrimination based on species. Like racism discriminates based on physical characteristics, speciesism also discriminates based on psychical characteristics and cultural views on certain species. For example, in most countries it is considered normal to eat pigs, cows and chickens, but at the same time to live in the same home with a dog or a cat.

People who live in such countries are terrified at people and countries who eat whale, dolphin or even dog and cat meat. On the other hand, in some cultures it is considered crazy to eat cows.

The difference between eating species is not moral, but only cultural, because eating, thus taking part in the exploitation of the killing of any living creature is not moral.

It is a known fact that the society and culture in which we grow up impacts our habits and views of the world. From an early age we are taught that other animals are creatures of a lesser value, that they are here just for us to eat, wear or test on them, or use them for entertainment, etc.

Advertisements and the media are bombarding us from everywhere to buy more meat, milk, eggs, leather shoes.... Until we free ourselves from those embedded thoughts, we don't have our own opinion. As long as we are under the impact of media and society, we are not free. And because of that, because of our commodity, millions of non-humans are being tortured, killed and exploited.

Like in every other type of discrimination, we must not be silent about speciesism.

Speciesism was and, unfortunately, still is very present. What is specific about speciesism is that in most cases, people are not even aware of it. The biggest difference is that non-humans cannot talk in our language and they cannot fight for their rights, whereas people who are victims of racism or sexism can raise their voice and point out to the discrimination.

Although racism, sexism and speciesism are same in their core, speciesism is, unlike racism and sexism, accepted in society. For example, if someone lives in a community with a dog or a cat, and claims to love animals, but at the same time eats other animals such as cows or pigs, wears leather shoes, supports animal captivity (such as ZOO's, circuses with animals, etc.), that person cannot call himself/herself an "animal lover" or an "animal rights activist", because he or she still continues to support the exploitation of some animals.

Although all animals are equal - they all want to live, they all feel pain, fear and suffering, society has divided non-human animals into categories, for our own human commodity. So when people talk about animals, they mostly mean just cats or dogs, while they consider other animals as "food". If cats or dogs would go through the suffering that millions of pigs, cows, chickens, etc. go through, it would be socially unacceptable, and no one would want to support such animal cruelty and exploitation.

However, the media and huge corporations have made sure that we never see the transformation process from animal to "food" or any other "product". We only see the finished product. Behind a "steak" we don't see a face of a once living pig or cow, behind "chicken wings" we don't see the eyes of a once living chicken and her family, behind a glass of milk we don't see the rape that cow

had to go through, or how her child was taken away from her at birth, behind a package of eggs we don't see four or five chickens cramped into a cage size of an A4 paper, all until they are too old to give eggs, so they are also sent to the slaughterhouse.

The use of animals for food is the main cause of suffering and death, yet the consumption of animal products is unnecessary for human health. Most of us are taught to eat other animals from a very young age. This habit is deeply entrenched in almost all of us, as we have been conditioned by society to believe that non-human animals (since humans are animals too) are little more than 'resources' or 'objects' to use for our own benefit. We've been educated to differentiate between a child, a dog, and a pig, to play with the first two and eat the third, without taking into account that all of these individuals are sentient. They have the capacity to experience emotions and sensations such as fear, joy, pain, grief and the desire to enjoy their lives and continue living.

Since we do live in a speciesistic society, the fight against speciesism is considered as a crazy idea from a couple of fanatics. I believe that was the same way feminists felt at the beginning of the first wave of feminism.

Feminism is a great example that shows us how social revolutions always begin with a small group of radicals in a world that is completely against their ideas. In a world that lives, makes profit (and consumes) that which the group is fighting against. But it also shows us how consistency and activism with no compromise is the only way to get our idea and point across.

We are aware that changes do not happen over night, but we are also aware that we must never make compromises. The oppressor and the victim cannot and must never cooperate. Only with clear goals and a radical approach can we make a change. Violence knows no compromise, actually, in the case of violence and injustice, it is very black and white - either we are a part of the problem, or part of the solution.

HUMAN RIGHTS ARE ANIMAL RIGHTS

A comment that animal rights activists quite common get is:

"Why do you waste your time on non-human animals, when you should be fighting for human rights?!"

It's very simple; oppression is oppression. Whether it is on humans or non-humans.

Violence and injustice do not differ species, so every form of violence needs to be condemned and eradicated. Animal rights do not exclude human rights, because animal rights are also based on equality.

The problem we see here is speciesism. Since humans are considered to have a "greater" value than non-humans, so is the fight for human rights considered of a higher value than that for animal rights.

Non-human animals are the most exploited beings on this Planet. Every second, millions of non-human animals are being killed, tortured, skinned alive, etc. - all so that those "products" can be used by humans. Those same non-humans do not have a voice with which they can fight for their rights, they cannot organise protests or start petitions against the injustice that is inflicted upon them - they need to have advocates; humans. When we talk about human rights, the situation is easier just because we can raise our own voice and speak for ourselves. We can scream and shout and our voice will be heard. Millions of non-human animals are screaming and shouting every second, but we continue to ignore them, because we still consider ourselves to be more important.

It is not a secret that everyone will fight only for their own rights, because every person is the most important person to themselves, but that is a result of the general state of apathy and selfishness of the society we live in. Because of that, most people wonder and criticize the fight for "others", but what is really the question here is, why is there so little people who fight for the rights of "others" and not just for themselves?

How can we fight for the rights and equality of one species, but support the exploitation of other?

FEMINISM AND VEGANISM

Movements which fight for equality should not be divided. We must not ignore the link between those movements - and the link is very clear; oppression and injustice and the fight against those who make profit on exploitation and those who support and consume that same exploitation.

In a patriarchal society that we live in, we cannot ignore the fact that men and women are not equal. We also cannot ignore the prejudices and norms we have to fight against so that we could get that equality. But what does patriarchy and the oppression on women have to do with other animals?

The oppression of women, like oppression on non-human animals has the same root: exploitation and considering the victim to be a creature of a "lesser" value. In some feminist movements the suffering and exploitation of women is

compared to that of non-human animals; but only as a metaphor, without realizing that, indeed, it is the same kind of oppression!

Statements like "*women are not just a piece of meat*" or "*(someone) treats me like an animal*" have the goal to metaphorically explain how that person feels - abused, exploited, of a lesser value, etc. However, at the same time, such statements encourage the oppression of other animals because non-human animals are being objectified and considered as creatures of a lesser value, in the same way that women were in the original context. We cannot fight for some rights, if that fight oppresses others, making them the victim the same way the original victims became victims.

In the same way that women are victims of a patriarchal society, non-human animals are victims of speciesism - and by eating non-human animals and products made from their suffering, we encourage speciesism, the same way that patriarchy encourages oppression on women.

If a feminist vision and idea of the world is equality and non-violence, where does eating meat and exploiting other animals fit into that?

Personal choice goes to the point of other's freedom - if our personal choice negatively affects others freedom and life, that it is no longer our personal choice, but oppression of others.

Feminists (but not only feminists) can say that their diet is their personal choice and that animal exploitation has nothing to do with the exploitation of women, but at the same time and in the same way can abusers say that it is their personal choice and right to be violent and to exploit women. We can say that a person has the same "right" to beat a women, as does he or she have a "right" to eat meat.

Eating meat, dairy products, eggs, wearing fur or leather, using products that have been tested on animals or visiting places that keep animals in captivity or use them for human entertainment are all forms of violence. Equal forms of violence as those inflicted upon humans. So it is inconsistent to fight for "one freedom" and "one equality", and at the same time to support the exploitation of others, because, "no one is free until others are abused".

If we support just one form of discrimination and violence, we support them all, because discrimination is always the same - no matter who the victim is.

Of course, the same goes vice versa; vegans and animal rights activists cannot be racists, sexist, homophobic, etc. We all have to unite and fight together against the system that exploits us and divides us into categories - because only in that way can we beat the system and get equality for all living creatures.

"HUMANE KILLING"

A question that is often used as an argument to consume animal products is the question of "humane killing" or "better conditions" (animal welfare). But, what is "humane killing"? Can taking away someones' life be "humane"?

"Humane killing" or the so called "better conditions of exploitation" (welfare) are leading nowhere, that is, the main outcome is always the same - in whatever way the animals are killed, in whatever conditions they lived in, in the end, they are killed, and they spent their life being tortured and exploited.

The so-called "animal welfare" has no long term efficiency that would benefit animals.

Reforms in animal treatment have shown to benefit exploiters by increasing efficiency and profit, as well as encouraging the public to feel more comfortable about consuming animal products.

In the end, the result is always the same - exploitation and killing of animals has no excuse, murder cannot be "humane" and exploitation cannot be "done under better conditions".

Would the holocaust done on Jews in World War II be acceptable if they were killed in "humane" ways? Is there such a thing as "humane rape" or "humane child abuse" or "humane slavery"?

What is actually a holocaust? Is it a massacre inflicted upon people, or a massacre inflicted upon innocent beings?

The victims of the holocaust in World War II weren't victims because they were "humans", they were victims because they were innocent living beings.

But, aren't cows, pigs, chickens and other non-human animals also innocent victims then? Do we not treat them like slaves?

If they are not slaves, then what are they? Free? They definitely aren't free.

Just the titles of institutions such as "slaughterhouse" tell us what the deal here is; it's a place where living creatures are being slaughtered, killed.

And no matter the "conditions" of the slaughter, the result is still the same - non-human animals end up being killed. That brings us to the main subject and the root of the problem.

THE ANIMAL HOLOCAUST

1. EXPLOITING ANIMALS FOR FOOD

Fishes

Most of the individuals that die for our consumption are fishes. So great is the quantity of bodies that they are counted by the tonne instead of by the individual, which makes it difficult to calculate just how many die. Despite the numbers in which they are caught and how they are regarded, fishes are individuals with the capacity to experience pleasure and pain, as confirmed by numerous scientific studies. According to Huntiford (2002), fishes have senses for detecting stimulation of pain, and cerebral mechanisms which process the stimulation and provoke negative physical responses. As a result, their interests are just as important as those of any other animal – human or not. Many different methods are used to catch fishes for our consumption, and all involve their suffering and death. Fishing nets used by industry boats, just as the fishing rods and hooks used by anglers, cause them a slow and painful death. Victims of commercial fishing nets tend to die of suffocation, crushed under the weight of the other fish or frozen in the boat's cooling chambers. On fish farms they die after a life of suffering due to the crowded conditions they are subjected to, and the prevalence of parasites and infections.

Cows exploited for flesh

As well as for their milk, cows are also exploited for flesh. 'Beef' cows are normally killed the year they are born, even though naturally they would live 25 years or more. The calves exploited for 'veal' are removed from their mothers to be bought and sold soon after birth. The majority travel long distances to farms in Europe. Forced removal from their mothers, and others of their herd, causes them a great deal of anxiety since they are sociable creatures, capable of recognising each other and establishing strong relationships that can last their whole lives. Leather is also a death sentence for a cow. Buying cow skin directly supports farms and businesses that make their money from animal exploitation. Leather is the second most profitable product of the meat industry.

Pigs

Pigs are individuals fully aware of their own existence, and enjoy their lives when we leave this option open to them. They can spend hours playing, lying in the sun and exploring their surroundings with their keen sense of smell. They take pleasure in doing these things and want to continue experiencing and enjoying their life. Maybe those who suffer most in this industry are the pigs exploited for breeding purposes. They are repeatedly forced to be impregnated throughout their lives, and then separated from their babies soon after giving birth. The lives of these pigs, and their capacity to reproduce, are seen as no more than a way of creating more units of production.

Chickens, turkeys and ducks

'Broiler' chickens who are raised for meat, turkeys, and ducks, are crammed into huge sheds and bred to be ready for slaughter so quickly that their legs often cannot support the weight of their bodies. Chickens and turkeys are sociable creatures who like to forage, to be with their companions, to bathe in sand, and to bask in the sun. For these reasons they suffer enormously when they are deprived of their freedom and devoid of the opportunity to exhibit natural behaviours, just as we would suffer if we were unable to do what we longed to do. Ducks in addition require water to fulfil their needs, to keep clean and to be free from infection. Most ducks are reared without water and suffer immensely due to the frustration caused by their inability to satisfy their natural desires. The animals above are not the only victims of our eating habits. Rabbits, deer, wood-pigeons, ostriches... any kind of animal that we take advantage of, is victimised. 900 million mammals and birds, and hundreds of millions of fish, are victimised in Britain every year for the simple reason that we like the taste of their flesh, or the products of their bodies.

Hens exploited for eggs

All commercial egg-laying hens, battery and free-range, start out life at hatcheries. Since male chicks don't lay eggs, and are not used in the meat industry (instead, faster growing 'broiler' birds are used), they are considered 'useless' and are suffocated, gassed or minced alive at only a day old. Most females spend their lives in tiny wire 'battery' cages, and even 'free-range' birds can legally be kept in their thousands to a shed, with many of them unable to reach the outside. In addition, many 'free-range' hens are de-beaked to prevent them pecking each other in the crowded conditions, just like their battery-caged sisters. Since the value of all commercial hens is based on their capacity to produce eggs, as soon as their egg production drops and is no longer profitable, they are killed, at around one to two years of age, even though a hen can live for up to ten years.

Why reject eggs? Eggs are products derived from animal exploitation. A hen in the egg industry is born for the purpose of laying eggs. They are selectively bred to produce maximum yields and their existence depends on their capacity to produce profit for the farmer. Throughout her life, a hen is deprived of her freedom, whether this is to produce 'free-range' or battery eggs (though the conditions in which they are exploited differ). Chickens are very sociable creatures who like to forage for food, roam in their environment, take dust-baths, perch, nest, lie in the sun and take care of their families. As such they suffer enormously when they are unable to exhibit the entire range of behaviours that come naturally to them.

The deaths behind egg production

All egg production, whether 'free-range' or battery involves the death of male chicks. Commercial egg-laying hens start out their lives in hatcheries, where, hatched in artificial incubators they will never know the care or comfort of a mother hen. Once hatched, the day-old chicks are separated by 'sexers' into females and males. Female chicks go on to become units of production - 'layer' hens - while male chicks are killed at just a day old, as they neither lay eggs or produce meat (different types of chickens, called 'broilers', are used for meat as they have been bred to grow much faster). Those male chicks are either gassed, suffocated or minced alive. On all types of farms, the hens also die at the hands of the industry when their productivity drops. After one or two years, a hen starts to produce fewer eggs than before, therefore 'free-range' farmers, just like intensive farmers, replace her with a younger hen. She could however live for ten years or more. All eggs found on supermarket shelves are produced from the exploitation of an individual.

Cooking without egg

There are many alternatives to using eggs in cooking. Within cakes, banana, vegan yogurt or vegan cream can be used as a substitute which creates the desired texture. There are also egg replacers available from vegan suppliers and many whole foods stores.

Cows exploited for milk

Just like eggs, milk is a product derived from animal exploitation. Cows used for milk are born with the sole objective of providing milk for human use. Just like humans, cows will only produce milk if they give birth. Forcible impregnation is carried out each year and the calves are separated from their grieving mothers shortly after birth. Female calves may go on to be exploited for milk but the unwanted males and 'excess' females are either shot or briefly raised for veal before having their lives drastically cut short in the slaughterhouse. The modern cow used for milk has been bred to produce far more milk than her body can cope with. As a result of the toll on her udder, and the hours spent standing on hard concrete floors being milked, she is plagued by mastitis and lameness with up to 50% of UK cows being affected with these painful conditions each year. Although cows can live around 25 years, the vast majority of cows are killed at around 5 years old, when their milk production drops and they are considered 'spent' by the industry.

Milk - mothers on death row

The media and dairy industry portray happy cows, content with their lives and oblivious to their exploitation, and subject us to constant propaganda that we need milk to keep us and our children healthy. But cows, like ourselves and all other animals, are individual beings with their own interests and desires which deserve to be respected. Instead, as with egg-laying hens, they are treated simply as units of production whose value and lifespan depends on their ability to guarantee a profit for the farmer. **Although she can live for up to 25 years, the modern cow used for milk goes to slaughter at around five years old.**

The life of a cow

To obtain 'dairy' products, a cow will have been selectively bred to provide as much milk as possible, and more than her body can cope with. The amount of milk she has been made to produce is around six times the amount that her calf would normally drink. As a result, she is at high risk of suffering **mastitis**, a painful infection of the udder, and **lameness** from being forced to spend hours standing on hard concrete floors being milked several times a day, her udder too heavy for her back legs.

To produce milk, she must be forcibly impregnated every year (like all mammals, a cow's body only produces milk after she has given birth to her offspring). Her calf is removed within a few days so that the milk meant for him or her can be drunk by us. Just like us, she has a very strong maternal instinct to nurture and protect her calf and suffers immensely when her calf is taken away from her. **Cows suffer grief and she may bellow and search for her calf for days.**

Accounts have been recorded of mother cows going to amazing lengths to get back to their young, one of which walked seven miles to be reunited with her calf after he was sold at auction.

Once separated from her young and deprived of her freedom (they are kept behind fences or in sheds in organic farms as well as in factory farms) she is milked against her will several times a day. To maximise production, she will be made pregnant again within 3 months of giving birth and whilst still lactating. In each lactation, she will typically be milked for ten months, with only two months when she is not milked before her next calf is born. **This constant pressure on her body takes its toll on her health and fertility and she will be worn-out or 'spent' at around five years old.** No longer producing enough milk to be 'profitable', she will be sent to slaughter and replaced by a younger female.

The fate of her calves

Female calves may go on to be used for milk but it is not always the farmer who breeds them that ends up carrying on their exploitation. They may be bred by one farmer and sold on, as a result of their status as mere human property. When separated from their mothers and their herd great distress is caused since cows are social herd animals who establish complex relationships with other members. Male calves are of no benefit to the dairy industry. In the UK every year **up to 500,000 unwanted male calves are either shot at birth or sold at auction**, where most are sent on long journeys to Europe to be killed and turned into veal at just a few months old. **Consuming 'dairy' products directly supports the veal industry and the deaths of these calves.**

Her death

No cow is allowed to live out her natural lifespan of up to 25 years old. **She is taken to the slaughterhouse**, just like her calves, as soon as her milk output drops below the desired industry level (**on both organic farms as well as intensive farms**) since she is born only for her capacity to provide milk and profit. This happens at around five years old. She will likely be transported a long distance to the slaughterhouse, as in the UK few slaughterhouses deal with her "low-grade" flesh. By the time she reaches the slaughterhouse, she may be too worn-out or crippled by lameness to even stand. She is referred to as a 'downer cow'. The interests of any exploited animal always give way in favour of the interests of the exploiter. For this reason we can never seriously say that non-human animals are respected until they stop being purposely created for human benefit.

Other animals exploited for their milk

Cows aren't the only animals exploited for milk. Sheep and goats are also used in this way. In every case the same injustice is repeated: individuals born, deprived of freedom and finally killed in order to obtain a product for our consumption.

Alternatives to animal milk

Despite the powerful dairy industry's publicity campaigns it is simply not necessary to consume non-human animal milk or any other dairy products to enjoy good health.

Calcium

It is true that we need calcium to keep our bones strong and prevent the onset of osteoporosis, but **'dairy' products are neither the only nor the best source of calcium.** We can obtain all our calcium requirements from other foods such as green leafy vegetables: kale, spring greens, broccoli; enriched soy milk, calcium-set tofu, calcium-enriched orange juice, dried figs, sesame seeds, tahini, molasses etc.

Substituting cow's milk

If you want to continue consuming a product similar to milk, but free from suffering and death, you can opt for a variety of plant based milks which can be found in any supermarket these days. Several brands of **soy milk**, including sweetened soy milk, can now be found everywhere, most of which go just as well or better than cow's milk with tea and coffee, cereals and as a cooking ingredient for sauces, cakes etc. All you have to do is follow the traditional recipe, replacing cow's milk with soy milk. At many supermarkets and most health food stores you can also choose to try **almond milk, oat milk** or delicious **rice milk**.

Butter can be substituted with many brands of vegetable margarine, and there are several vegan cheeses on sale at health food stores. As with soy milk, if you don't like one brand you should try another since they vary in flavour and you are bound to find some that you like. You can also buy very good quality **vegan cream and ice-cream** from most supermarkets and all health food stores. In any case, without using direct substitutes there are already endless delicious vegan recipes which will never require any type of milk or dairy replacement, as well as the countless ways to replace dairy in our diet.

Flesh - the body of someone who wanted to live

Tens of millions of pigs and cows, hundreds of millions of birds, and uncountable billions of fishes and other nonhuman animals die unnecessarily every year in Britain alone to end up as food products. Flesh production always involves the death of an animal, in spite of the fact that the vast majority of animals - regardless of our species, level of intelligence, linguistic ability and whether we fly, swim or walk - possess a nervous system which enables us to feel pain and pleasure. When given the opportunity we enjoy our lives and want to continue doing so and, as such, every one of us has an interest in living according to the needs and desires of the species we belong to. In spite of this, from a very young age we are taught to ignore these interest in other animals (let's not forget that we are animals too), and every year 50 billion land animals worldwide, and countless billions of fishes are killed for the simple fact that they don't belong to our own species.

A change in the way we see other animals

Animals are not simply food products, but individuals capable of feeling and with the desire to enjoy their lives. An animal's life is as important and irreplaceable to them, as ours is to us. But as children we are conditioned to view animals as inferior beings whose reason for existence is to provide us meat, milk and eggs, even though behind every animal 'product' has been a unique individual with a personality and a life. It's time for us to change our way of seeing animals, to stop thinking of them as resources available to us to use as we wish, and to start viewing them for what they are: individuals with their own interests who deserve respect.

ANIMALS EXPLOITED IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY

Supporting animal slaughter

Other animals (let's not forget that we are also animals) are used as resources to provide materials for our clothing. Sheep and cows are bred and slaughtered; foxes, mink and rabbits caged and killed, wild animals trapped or shot, to make clothes and shoes from their skin and fur. All animals (human or not) need to protect themselves from the elements, but this doesn't provide justification for depriving another animal of his or her freedom and life, especially when there are so many animal-free alternatives available to us.

'Leather': depriving cows of their skin

While large sections of society reject fur for the suffering and deaths it causes, leather continues to be in high demand and extensive use, its main uses being in the manufacture of footwear, jackets, handbags, leather sofas, etc. Rarely do we question the fact that leather also comes from the skin of an animal, normally a cow (although it can also come from oxen, pigs and horses), which has been tanned and treated to avoid decomposition and obtain the desired colour. If leather isn't rejected like other animals' skins (mink, fox, etc) it's because it is usually thought to be a by-product of the flesh industry. In reality, **leather is no by-product: cows are exploited for their milk, flesh and skin and paying for leather adds to the slaughterhouse value of the dead animal and supports this industry.** In addition, the multimillion pound leather industry would sustain itself even if the other abuses were to end tomorrow.

Pelts

During 'fur' production a significant number of animals, whether raised in cages or trapped in the wild, are skinned alive. Approximately 35 animals are killed and skinned to make a single coat and the 'fur' industry currently kills around 30 million animals a year. The use of fur is now widely rejected due to public awareness by a large section of society for the suffering and deaths it causes. However, we need to apply those same arguments for the rejection of any item of clothing made from animal skins, since every case involves someone else's death. Curiously, the main argument used by those who defend such practices is that the animals raised for fur and leather production are equal to those raised for meat production, where conditions for the animals are the same or worse. For us this only demonstrates the need for rejection of all areas of animal exploitation.

Sheep's hair

Wool is an animal product which is widely consumed and seldom questioned, in spite of the large amount of suffering involved in the raising and exploitation of sheep for wool production. Wool consists of a fine, long and elastic protein called keratin. Before we began exploiting sheep, they used to produce only enough wool to protect themselves from the cold, wild sheep do not need shearing. However, domestic sheep today have been selectively bred to produce more wool than is natural. This selective breeding has resulted in a multitude of illnesses related to their excessive amount of hair, such as overheating and flystrike as well as the pain caused to them during shearing. Workers immobilise sheep during shearing in order to obtain every possible inch of wool from their bodies, ignoring the fear, pain and injuries they suffer as a result. Sheep are individuals with their own interests and desires, not producers of scarves, jumpers, gloves and coats.

Alternatives These days there is an endless supply of clothes which aren't made from animals. It's easy to buy products such as shoes, jackets, jumpers and scarves made from synthetic materials or natural plant fibres such as cotton, hemp or linen. Increasingly, synthetic materials are being recycled with companies now selling clothes, shoes and bags made out of recycled plastic bottles.

3. VIVISECTION (TESTING ON ANIMALS)

Unethical exploitation

Hundreds of millions of nonhuman animals are used as resources or research models every year in experimentation in universities and laboratories throughout the world. Rats and mice, hamsters, rabbits, gerbils, dogs, cats, pigs, cows, sheep, reptiles, trout, Rhesus Macaques, a diversity of bird species and many others suffer our experiments of biology, biochemistry, physiology and psychology...

We inoculate them with viruses, alter their DNA, impregnate them and kill the pregnant mothers so we can study their fetuses, we submit them to starvation or electric shocks to test their resistance, burn them alive, apply irritants to their eyes and skin, we block their glands, force them to inhale toxic substances, provoke paralysis, submit them to radiation and extreme temperatures...

Of all these experiments, those considered most trivial (cosmetics testing for example) tend to be the main targets of criticism, whilst medical experiments tend to go unquestioned by the public due to the benefits they claim for human animals. Nevertheless, all forms of animal experimentation are based on an unfair ideal: the non-equal consideration of the interests and desires of the nonhuman animals involved.

Scientific advancement is one of the foundations of our culture. It implies great benefits for humans, but this advance has certain limits. For example, the majority of society would be against experimentation on humans against their will even if this would lead to great advances in the search for vaccines and cures. The same criteria should also apply to other animals since they, just like us, they are sentient and the emotions and sensations they feel matter to them just as much as ours do to us. Like us, they don't want to die and want to enjoy a free life. Using non-consenting, nonhuman animals for experiments to acquire vaccines or cures for humans is just as arbitrary as would be using a certain group of humans (for example white people) to find cures for a different race. The colour of our skin or our eyes, our gender, the species we belong to, are all irrelevant characteristics when we speak of bearing in mind each other's interests in avoiding suffering and enjoying their life. All that is relevant here is the possession of such interests, independent of race, gender, intelligence or the species an individual belongs to.

Research methods without vivisection

Comparative population studies allow the discovery of common patterns in diseases that allow their prevention. Epidemiological studies have led to the discovery of the relationship between smoking and cancer and the identification of risk factors.

Population studies have revealed the transmission of HIV and other infectious diseases and have shown us how they can be prevented. Studies of human volunteer subjects (in many cases already affected by a certain illness and thus in search of finding a cure for everybody) have enabled researchers to isolate the brain abnormalities of patients suffering schizophrenia and other mental disorders. The in-vitro studies of cell cultivation are used in search of substances and in testing and producing a diversity of pharmaceuticals such as vaccines, antibiotics and therapeutic proteins.

Non-animal based toxicity testing

A variety of substance toxicity testing methods have been officially approved as a replacement for animal based toxicity tests. *We are in the process of updating this section of the report with more information on this subject.*

Animal-Free Studies

The majority of American universities – including Harvard, Stanford and Yale – have replaced live animal studies in physiology, pharmacology and surgical training with animal-free methods. New study methods include direct human surgery observation, human patient simulations, use of human corpses donated to medical research, sophisticated computer programs, specialist learning models etc.

The nonhuman animal experimentation paradox

A show of the inherent injustice of animal testing arises when they state that the nonhuman animals used in their experiments are sufficiently similar to us as to allow them to make use of the results of the experiments they submit them to... but if they are so similar they also deserve the same consideration as we do. The better a model they make for us due to being like us, the more obvious it becomes that they deserve to be protected as our equals.

About questioning the scientific validity of animal testing

Often, animal advocates who oppose vivisection (animal testing) question the scientific efficacy of testing on animals, basing their arguments on the genetic differences that exist between members of different species and the fact that a small difference at a genetic level has negative consequences when trying to apply the results of tests on one species to the human species. However, the problem with submitting nonhuman animals to such experiments is not a scientific issue revolving around the accuracy of the results, but an ethical question which cannot be ignored.

We cannot justify the conducting of harmful experiments on mice when we would not be willing to do exactly the same to human beings. The mere fact that the individuals (the mice) don't belong to our own species does not justify an undervaluing of their interests and using them as resources. If, effectively, the criteria on which we based our decision on who we experimented on was about who would provide us with the greatest benefits and most reliable results, we would be justifying the use of experiments on other humans against their will, and we would even have to conclude that we had a duty to do so for a greater good. After all, we wouldn't have the problems of having to transfer data between species since the subjects of the experiments would belong to the same species as those hoping to benefit from the tests.

We can't maintain double standards which, in reality, only show up our oppressiveness: if what is most important were the benefit obtained, some humans would fall victim of such a mentality. If the reliability of results is not a criteria which justifies such practices, we should not apply them when the victims are nonhumans.

If it weren't for animal experimentation we wouldn't have medicines such as ___ which have saved many human lives.

To state that if it wasn't for animal testing we wouldn't have discovered 'X' medicine is a very bold statement since we can't be sure that its development would have been impossible without using nonhuman animals. In fact, a multitude of medical advances have come about without the use of other animals and if they invested the quantity of resources which currently go into vivisection into animal-free research methods we might quickly advance much more. Medical history shows the delays caused by various animal experiments (false positives as well as false negatives). In any case, the basis for using nonhuman animals is an injustice: they consider the interests of these animals to be less important than those of humans for the simple fact that they don't belong to the fortunate species (*Homo sapiens*) - curiously our own.

In spite of the fact that they have carried out experiments on human animals in the past, surely the majority of us would agree now that we should not experiment on other human animals against their will for the benefit of those human animals which we would save by doing so. Those human lives which have been saved have been saved at the cost of many more nonhumans who were arbitrarily discriminated against... if we truly decided to base our criteria the benefit gained for the rest of humanity (development of medicines, vaccines, understanding of the effects of toxins, etc.) we would have to test on other humans against their will since they would produce better results and a greater advance in medical science... so, is this really the criteria which we believe justifies animal experimentation?

But animal testing is the basis of medical research, so you must be against scientific advances and medical progress.

No. We are in favour of research and scientific progress, but not at any cost. The search for knowledge is not an aim which justifies any possible action. Science has to be subject to an ethical reasoning free of arbitrary discrimination, which prevents those with power from oppressing those without it. In the past there has been research and experimentation conducted on non-consenting humans which obviously didn't respect the interests of the subjects. For example, the experiments into the effects of syphilis, conducted on 399 African Americans in Tuskegee between 1932 and 1972 - recognised by the U.S. government itself - and the experiments carried out by Josef Mengele during the 1940s in Nazi Germany.

ENTERTAINMENT

Amusement?

Circuses, zoos, aquariums, dogfighting, hunting, fishing, horse racing, bullfighting... all of these practices keep animals in captivity and use them against their will for human entertainment. People take part, considering them fun, entertaining, artistic or cultural, but none of these justify the forcing of animals into confinement, to suffer and die, for our benefit. In the past, in Roman circuses, elephants, humans, tigers and other animals were killed for the sake of amusing spectators. In England, bears were forced to fight dogs until one of the two died. Until very recently, in a Spanish town, goats were thrown to their deaths from the church tower during festivals. All of these forms of entertainment have finally been rejected by the majority of society, though still many more forms of abuse are yet to be questioned and eliminated. Many of these legal abuses disgust us, whilst others appear to be perfectly acceptable, but just like the Roman circuses it is probable that they will one day be seen as unacceptable in our society.

Animal circuses

Circuses attract the public, especially children, for being colourful, fun and original. Sadly there is another reality behind those circuses which contain animals. The reality is suffering, deprivation and death. Lions, tigers, elephants, seals... animals whose lives in liberty are full of a variety of experiences, are condemned to a life of repeating tricks to amuse spectators but cause the animals themselves stress, confusion and physical pain.

This goes alongside the life of neglect and constraint, which inherently revolves around entertaining, travelling and solitude. Only visit animal-free circuses, these are indeed fun. For everyone.

Zoos

Zoos are prisons in which hundreds of animals are engaged for the enjoyment of paying visitors. Animals from lions to snakes and all kinds of 'exotic' animals spend day after day in cages, as well as other enclosed spaces whilst they are 'admired' and photographed. Little can be learnt in zoos about the behaviour of animals, only about how to deprive them of their freedom and use them according to human desires. Many zoo animals suffer from 'zoochosis', a term used to describe repetitive stereotypical behavior such as swaying from side to side, head bobbing and pacing. The complex emotional and social relationships animals need to thrive are destroyed in captivity. More can be learned from watching a natural history documentary than seeing the sad shadow of an animal caged in a zoo. But even if we could learn a lot about animal behaviour in the confinement of a zoo, no gaining of knowledge justifies depriving others of their freedom.

Hunting

Hunting is considered a sport. As a result millions of animals die every year. The most common practice is 'small game hunting', in which the victims tend to be partridges, turtle-doves, rabbits, and aquatic and migratory birds. There is also 'big game hunting', in which the victims include wild boar, deer and rams. Hunters use guns to kill certain individuals, and lead pellets to kill, injure and mutilate others.

Aquatic prisons

'Aquariums' are aquatic prisons in which thousands of marine animals - including mammals such as dolphins and orca whales, and tropical, fresh and saltwater fishes - are confined. Many of these individuals would otherwise swim thousands of kilometres a day and possess senses which guide them through their aquatic habitat, but are frustrated in tanks where they are condemned to spend their entire lives. Through the glass of the aquarium we do not see the full picture. We do not see the boredom, the monotony or the suffering endured by the animals behind the screens. Seeing the reality would surely prevent us from participating.

Other 'spectacles'

Other spectacles exist where animals are used to serve a human purpose. Rodeos, horse and greyhound racing are just some examples. In all of these the same wrong is repeated: Animals are created, raised, bought, sold and used for human entertainment to their detriment.

What can I do?

There are countless forms of entertainment which do not cause harm to, or oppress, animals. We can go to circuses that do not use animals, the cinema, the theatre, concerts, shows, art galleries, museums, or go for hikes in the countryside whilst observing animals respectfully in the wild. The possibilities are almost endless. But above all this we can make a difference in our lives by informing others about why these places should not exist. We should all be able to enjoy freedom, human or not.

HOW BOYCOTT IMPACTS THE INDUSTRY OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS

A comment that is often made by vegans, but also by non-vegans is this; "How can I, as a single consumer make a difference on such a huge market?"

We have all asked ourselves that at one time, and we do have a reason to ask that. We realize the situation we are in - capitalism is suffocating us, our voices are barely heard on elections and actually it seems that we cannot make a difference (unless we are wealthy politicians or private investors). But actually, it is us and only us - the consumers - who can make a difference on the market.

Economy is based on three basic questions; "what (to produce)", "how (to produce)" and "for whom?", that is, every society needs to choose what goods they will produce, in which way (more or less efficiently) and how that goods will be distributed.

Those three problems are the basic problems on which every economy of every society on the world is based on. Market economy is the economy based on the balance between supply and demand. The main goal of that economy is a liberal society where the government has no impact on the economy - the consumers answer the questions "what (to produce)" and "for whom" to produce it for.

How the free market works

The freedom of choice is the foundation of a free market. That means that in order to function properly and successfully, a free market needs individuals who endorse and organise production, thereby deciding what and how to produce.

On the other hand, it takes free citizens - consumers - who have the freedom of managing their own income. They make decisions which products they will buy with the money they have. The consumers choose between products on the market and with their decisions confirm whether the decisions of the individuals producing the goods and putting them on the market were right or wrong.

"Money votes" - we decide

Each of us has a number of "votes" in our pockets - 5, 10, 100 or more so called "money votes". With those votes, we vote for those products that we want every time we enter a shop and buy something. By participating in that voting everyday on a free market where prices are formed in that way - free voting with the "money votes" - we answer the question "for whom" (to produce), thereby, we become a part of the system that determines the distribution of goods and services.

By boycotting products and services made from animal suffering and exploitation, we directly say to the market that we do not want those kind of products and services. The only way to shut down the industries that make a profit on animal exploitation is to boycott them.

THE IMPACT OF MARKETING

A big, if not the biggest role in animal exploitation, is marketing.

Imagine a situation in which your whole life, you do not see any advertisement on television, any billboard, any flyer with the newest discounts. Imagine if advertisements didn't exist.

If they didn't exist, would we have any opinion on the products on the market?

Think about where all the myths about the "importance" of animal flesh, dairy, and eggs in the human diet came from.

On every corner, various producers of products made from animal suffering want to place their product as the best product on the market. In order for a product to sell, it has to be presented in a great way, it has to have a great image so that consumers would give their "money votes" exactly to them and for that product, and in that way, continuing to support it's further production and also to raise the profit.

A long time ago, "The father of economy", Adam Smith, explained how manufacturers do not care about the public good, they only care about their

own personal benefit - profit. With the use of marketing that creates an image for a product and places it as "public good", the product will make more profit, and while consumers think that the producers care about the public good, they actually only want to sell the image of the product, and most of the time it is being sold under false promises (these pills will make you skinnier, cow's milk gives you calcium, you cannot be healthy without meat, etc.)

In the media, veganism is shown only from one side - from the side of those who profit on the suffering of other living creatures. For that reason, a lot of people have a wrong image about veganism.

Since we, unfortunately, live in a capitalistic society, advertisements and a constant production of useless products is all around us. From an early age, opinions and attitudes are being forced upon us, and later on we believe that these opinions and attitudes are our own, because we don't know better.

For example, today most people will say that they cannot live without meat because it is a source of iron, just like cow's milk which is a "source of calcium". But, if someone had asked us that in that ideal world where there are no advertisements, no billboards and no other marketing strategies, we would not have that opinion, because that is not our opinion

Also, we would never get the idea to go and suck on the breasts of another animal just so that we can drink her milk. Why don't we drink giraffe milk? Just because it's not being advertised (not for now, at least).

All that we think we know about other products is not our opinion, it's the opinion that is being forced upon us by industries who paid a great amount of money to make a great image for their products and to make us think how that product is important for us and how we cannot live without it.

You still think that the industries want what is best for you - the consumers? A few pages before, we explained what is really going on behind closed doors of slaughterhouses, dairy farms, fur farms, laboratories where animals are being tortured, etc.

If the manufactures are so "concerned" about the wishes of the consumers, why don't they show their consumers the truth about their products, and then let the consumers decide whether they want to support it or not. Why create a false image and lie? Why? The answer is simple; because most people (except for twisted individuals who support and partake in violence), would not want to support violence inflicted upon other living beings. It's easier to just turn our heads away and ignore the violence. It's easier to pretend that we cannot make a difference. Ignorance is bliss. But the fact is that only we can make a difference.

Most people do not want to see videos from slaughterhouses, fur farms, laboratories, etc.

They say that they cannot watch such scenes because they are full of violence and blood, and just so brutal and aggressive. And they are right, all those things are true. But how can we support such practices if they are so brutal and so wrong that we can't even look at them? The freedom of choice on a free market means that we, with our money, decide what we want and what do not want to support. So how can we support when we don't even know the truth behind it.

And why would we even want to support such a thing?

TRADITION, AVAILABILITY, TASTE, HABIT

There are four reasons why people consume animal products; tradition, availability, taste and habit. Tradition is linked with marketing because a common "argument" in the marketing of a product is the "traditional value" of the product.

Common advertisements show us "traditional meals with meat", "milk from happy cows living in old villages", "eggs from happy chickens living next to an old cottage", etc. Those images have nothing to do with the real truth and the real image behind the those industries.

Forcing products as a part of "tradition" and as something that we cannot live without bring us to - availability. Availability is a result of demand, which is a result of the false marketing that forces us to demand products that will "make us healthier, happier, skinnier, etc." The law of mass (capitalistic) production says that the more of the product is made, the bigger the demand and the profit.

That means that an average person will buy that which is available in every store, on every gas station, just because it's available. Not because the person wants that exact product, but because it has been forced as the only (or "the best") choice. Marketing experts know that people today love conformity - people don't want to read every label on every product, they don't want to travel 30 minutes to get to another shop that has more choices, and they don't want to give more money for a better product, if they can give less money for a worse, but always available product.

Tradition and availability are linked to taste and habit. Habit, is again linked of marketing.

A habit is a known form of behaviour, its all those forms of behaviour that are being done automatically, without our will and conscious. Habits are made consciously and unconsciously, and they are created so that certain actions are repeated so much time, they are hardened in our nervous System and they become mechanical.

Not one habit occurs at once, it is always a result of repetition.

Tradition and availability have created the habit, which is now an infallible part of us, so much that we think that we cannot function without that product, and now we are in a situation where the habit manipulates us, instead of us manipulating it.

This brings us to taste, which is a result of the other three components. It is scientifically proven that we can adjust to any flavour as long as we taste it a certain amount of times. Even if that flavour is not good, even if it's poisonous, after multiple times of consuming it, we become addicted to it. That is, we think that we need it (just like we "need" caffeine", although we didn't "need" it before we became addicted to it).

A chain reaction looks like this: everything begins with tradition, which leads to habit, which leads to taste (the more we consume something, the more we like it and the more we want it), and lastly - availability, because animal products are everywhere today.

If this information gave you a headache, don't worry - there's a cure! Not only does it cure headache, but it makes you prettier, skinnier and it improves your IQ. The producers of the cure, of course, do not take responsibility for the side effects, but they can offer a drug that cures the side effects of the first drug. From all the drugs, you're probably going to bankrupt and become depressed, but there are drugs for that too. The only problem is you're gonna get amnesia, because that's the side-effect, but that's good - because with amnesia, you won't remember how much money you gave for all those meds.

See, the media and the industries do care about you!

With this sarcastic (but kinda true) example you can see the vicious cycle that the industries create by not caring about their consumers, but instead, lying to them, poisoning them and making them addicts for useless products, just so that they can improve the production and profit of those same useless, shitty products.

THE CHANGE IS IN US

The goal of this brochure is to show you another side of the story, the side that the industry does not want you to see.

To understand this point of view, you have to have only one thing - an open mind.

Forget about everything that has been forced into your brain from an early age. See the situation from a different point of view, because that which we do not wish to speak about, is something that the animals have to go through.

The change in the way that we treat non-human animals is going to happen only if we make the change.

They don't have a voice, but we and our way of life is a way of speaking up for them and creating an positive example for others.

The change is in us.



The Initiative Stop Speciesism is a non-profit, non-governmental, citizens initiative that advocates animal equality and rights, and opposes speciesism, violence and exploitation of animals.

www.stop-specizmu.org

email: info@stop-specizmu.org

Literature:

„Speciesism“

- Joan Dunayer

„Animal Liberation and Social Revolution“

- Brian A. Dominick

„The Sexual Politics of Meat“

- Carol J. Adams

Information:

www.stop-specizmu.org

www.animalequality.net