



President's column

by Robert

Chicken

There are far more chickens killed for meat than any other land animal. In Australia nearly half a billion chickens are slaughtered each year. Selective breeding has produced the broiler chicken which grows to its final weight in only 6 weeks. That means that at any time there are several broiler chickens cramped somewhere in a shed for each man woman and child in Australia. The average per capita consumption is equivalent to about 21 birds per person each year.

Chicken meat consumption has risen dramatically and continues to climb. The price has fallen in real terms over the last few decades whereas other meats have not changed much. There has also been a lot of publicity about the dangers of red meat consumption.

There is also a push to reduce beef consumption for environmental reasons. But that doesn't mean that chicken meat is environmentally friendly. More than 2 million tonnes of grain is fed to broiler chickens each year in this country. It doesn't take much to show what a waste this is. About 3kg of feed is needed to produce 1kg of actual meat and that meat has only about ¼ the protein that the feed had. What's more, those 3kg of feed require thousands of litres of water to produce.

Anyone who cares to look into the life & death of the broiler chicken will find that these sentient beings live shortened lives with much suffering.

Globally meat consumption is rising too and a lot of this is in the form of chicken. There is another price to be paid though. Avian flu is well established and while there has been no major pandemic yet, human deaths are occurring regularly. Many believe that a major pandemic is inevitable. Something on the scale of the 1918 Spanish flu (now known to have been Avian flu)

would cause hundreds of millions of deaths. I suppose there is going to be no winding back of the worldwide chicken industry but you have to wonder why the human race is willing to take such a risk just for a taste sensation.

Here in a rich country we could lead by example so that people of other nations might aspire to eat a healthy plant-based diet.

Vegetarian Society at a crossroads?

the Annual General Meeting is coming on May 12.

In terms of a formal committee role I've given all I'm prepared to give and I'm selfishly taking back my life. I've even been thinking about possibly studying again (it's a sickness that I have!), and travelling too.

The other committee roles also need filling. If people don't step up at the AGM the society cannot continue as incorporated body. Magazine subscriptions will be transferred to the publishers and the society's assets will be wound up in accordance with the rules of the society.

Formally, there must be a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer and 4 ordinary committee members who normally would have other active roles (membership secretary, web editor, newsletter editor, contact person, stall coordinator, librarian and so on). On their own these roles are quite manageable, however when they all fall to the same few people the situation is simply not sustainable.

Please contact me if you want more detailed information about what these roles involve. For anyone who wants to get involved, there is a healthy bank balance, a web site that gets a modest number of hits, regular invitations to do information stalls and all the

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infrastructure to make it happen.

The number of paid memberships is about 100 (some family memberships so there are more than 100 members overall). There are about 400 people on the mailing list.

In addition there are delegate roles to the Conservation Council and the Environment Centre, of which we are a members. I did put some time into the Cons Council when I was the secretary but there hasn't been any time for this over the last year. The Environment Centre is a separate organisation we have only just joined. These may become more important as people switch on to the destructiveness of the livestock industry.

While the number of info stalls has increased from last year, our presence in the media - newspapers and radio - has dropped away mainly due to time constraints.

The Australian Vegetarian Society will run another National Vegetarian week this year with a high profile. Again, we've not had much time to be involved however there are opportunities there.

You may like to reflect on the newsletter & website and change the way that information is put out to members and the public. Things are becoming more instant and interactive these days and there is also technology such as Facebook & Twitter which we've not yet tried.

The AGM notice is listed below, hope to see you there,
Robert

AGM Notice

Tuesday 12 May

Ethiopia Down Under

Pearce Shops

Dinner from 6.00pm

Meeting to start at 7:30pm

Election of Office Bearers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer), plus 4 ordinary committee members

Presentation of society's accounts for 2008

People may join the society at the meeting.

If you can't make the meeting:

Someone can be elected to the committee if they are absent from the meeting, provided that they have been nominated beforehand.

An RSVP would help us with estimating the numbers.

For more information contact Robert Davy- contact@vegetariansociety.org.au or 0417 464 675

Committee doings

what we're up to

The committee activities have mainly been a number of stalls. There was the multicultural festival in February , and two stalls in March: the Whaledreamers film at the ANU and the Harvest Festival at the Environment Centre. We had a high level of interest at these stalls and handed out lots of free information.

Thanks to the small group of people who've helped with setting up and running these stalls.

Judy Matusiewscz resigned as treasurer in February and Jenny Persi was elected as the new treasurer. Alison White resigned as membership secretary and Robert will perform this role until the AGM.

Robert has been editing the web site too, sorry there has been nothing new there for a while.

Thanks to Judy and Alison for all the work they have done for the society over a long period.

A Delicate Balance

film / DVD

<http://adelicatebalance.com.au/>

I purchased this DVD and it is very good documentary on the positive health and environmental aspects of a plant based diet. It mostly focuses on the health message, and has interviews with T. Colin Campbell, Neal Barnard and others. If you're looking to convince someone else to change their diet it might be just the thing.

Restaurant Review: Zen Oasis

By Kath Faulkner

Medway Rd, Berrima NSW.

<http://www.zen-oasis.com/>

As soon as you walk through the doors of the Zen Oasis Vegetarian Restaurant you will be struck by the country yet classy feel of the beautifully re-furbished woolshed. With the calm surroundings of Berrima countryside, newly established gardens and relaxed open seating, Zen Oasis has everything for either lunch for two or the ability to cater for large functions to celebrate whatever you please.

Each weekend the restaurant opens it's doors between 11.30 and 1.30 for a buffet lunch and then closes for an afternoon of private functions. All food is vegetarian and vegan options are clearly labelled. The menu consists of: approximately 9 entrees; Soup; 5 mains; salads; sushi bar and a dessert bar.

The little details:

Where: Just off the Hume Hwy about 1.25hrs from

Canberra. Just before the village of Berrima.

Service: Great. Looked after well when seated. Meals are self-serve.

Value: Excellent. Eat as much as you please and you'll go back for more.

Food: Vegetarian and Vegan.

Noise: Background music and although it's always busy voices don't carry.

Children: Seem most welcome.

Price: \$24 for adults and \$12 for children under 12.

Open: Saturday and Sunday 11.30 – 1.30. You can book the venue out for private functions from 2pm.

Christmas in July

Fundraising Luncheon

1pm Saturday the 4th of July

🎵 Figaro Restaurant Kingston



Vegan 2 course 'Peasant' Meal

Fundraising for:

A Poultry Place

A self-funded sanctuary for rescued farm animals and a much-loved haven for our native wildlife too.

Supported by:



ACT VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

&

**ANIMAL LIBERATION
ACT**

Tickets on sale now: \$35 Concession & \$45 Adult
Phone Kath: 041 223 9914 or Peter: 0430 411 370

Some health articles

collated by Robert Davy

Sometimes there is an assumption that being vegetarian and eating soy go hand in hand, and so we often find ourselves defending soy, tofu, etc. Well if you do find yourself in that situation here is a recent study that can back you up.

Soy Intake in Childhood Reduces Breast Cancer Risk Later in Life

<http://www.pcrm.org/news/archive090326.html>

A new study looking at more than 1,500 Asian-American women living in California and Hawaii showed that those with the highest intake of soy during childhood (younger than 12 years old) had a 60 percent lower risk of developing breast cancer later in life. Regular soy consumption in adolescence (12 to 19 years old) and adulthood (20 years old and older) also had a protective effect but with 20 and 25 percent reductions in risk, respectively.

Prior studies have shown similar protective effects of soy consumption before adulthood.

Soy Foods May Lower Risk of Prostate Cancer

A recent meta analysis published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition looked at all available studies on the issue of soy and prostate cancer.

Consumption of soy foods was associated with a reduction in prostate cancer risk in men, depending somewhat on the type and quantity of soy foods

consumed. Overall, there was a 26% reduction in risk in the group with the highest consumption compared with the lowest consumption. They also looked at that old bugbear, fermented vs non fermented soy. Non fermented soy resulted in a 30% lower risk, while for fermented soy there was no detectable benefit.

<http://pmid.us/19211820>

Fish Consumption Guidelines Not Environmentally Sustainable

Researchers have known for some time that there are big problems with the fishing industry. However a recent study looked at the various health benefits attributes to fish eating. They found that the health benefits have been overstated. As we are faced with the emptying of the oceans by mid century, these researchers have pointed out that if long chain omega3 supplementation is found to be necessary it should be sourced from plant sources such as algae.

"At best, fish oils are just one factor out of many that may reduce ailments such as heart disease and researchers found that people who do not eat fish, such as vegetarians, are not at increased risk of illness. "

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/03/090317142843.htm>

World Peace Diet

book by Will Tuttle

World Peace Diet is an interesting book that looks at the cultural roots of animal use ,and the way in which violence against animals works its way into our own lives.

It is published by Lantern Books but also available for free download here

<http://worldpeacediet.org/download.htm>

Until the next newsletter...

*Be Healthy - Be Social
Enjoy Life!*



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