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7/20/08

Shalom everyone,

This update/Jewish Vegetarians of North America (JVNA) Online Newsletter has the following items:

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- 5. Al Gore Calls For Major Shift Away From Fossil Fuel**
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- 16. Monkeys Abused in Questionable Experiments**
- 17. Want to Help Distribute Jewish Vegetarian Literature?**

Some material has been deferred to a later update/newsletter to keep this one from being even longer.

[Materials in brackets like this [ ] within an article or forwarded message are my editorial notes/comments.]

**Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of the JVNA, unless otherwise indicated, but may be presented to increase awareness and/or to encourage respectful dialogue. Also, material re conferences, retreats, forums, trips, and other events does not necessarily imply endorsement by JVNA or endorsement of the kashrut, Shabbat observances, or any other Jewish observances, but may be presented for informational purposes. Please use e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, and web sites to get further information about any event that you are interested in. Also, JVNA does not necessarily agree with**

**all positions of groups whose views are included or whose events are announced in this newsletter.**

As always, your comments and suggestions are very welcome.

Thanks,

Richard

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## **1. Update on A SACRED DUTY**

### **a, A SACRED DUTY Accepted by Film Festival**

A SACRED DUTY has been accepted for showing at the first annual Non- Violence International Film Festival.

The Festivals' message to us follows:

Re submission to the first annual Non Violence International Film Festival.

We have been very excited and honored to receive so many diverse films from around the world. It has certainly made the judges' decisions extremely difficult.

This season we received over 180 submissions and selected 75.

With a minimum of four judges viewing each submission, our final decisions were based on technical quality and non-violent content.

We are pleased to inform you that your film has been selected for this Year's Non-Violence International Film Festival.

SNIP [technical issues]

Thank you again and we wish you all the best in the 2008 film festival season and extend an invitation to you to attend our festival if you are in the area.

Sincerely,  
Steve Cross,  
Festival Director

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### **b. A SACRED DUTY Widely Shown and Distributed This Summer**

A SACRED DUTY has been shown and/or distributed or will be shown or distributed at many conferences this summer, including the North America vegetarian Society's SUMMERFEST, "Taking Action for Animals."

The "World Vegetarian Congress," the Farm Animals Reform Group's AR2008, the Havurah Conference and the Coalition on the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE) conference. We have key JVNA representatives and supporters, including Roberta Kalechofsky, Roberta Schiff, Dan Brook, Ron Landskroner and Steve Shaw attending one or more of these conferences and helping promote A SACRED DUTY and Jewish vegetarianism, in general. If you will be attending any of these conferences or other vegetarian or Jewish conference and would help promote our issues, please let me know.

### **c. MANY Thanks to Our Many Wonderful Volunteers**

Thankfully, we have wonderful volunteers who are providing tremendous help in promoting A

SACRED DUTY and Jewish vegetarianism, in general. Some day, I hope to find the time to adequately thank them. I hesitate to mention names now for fear of overlooking some people. But, you know who you are and please know that your efforts are much appreciated.

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## **2. Columbian Rabbi Sees Vegetarianism as a Jewish Ideal**

<http://www.columbiainmissourian.com/stories/2008/07/18/rabbi-finds-vegetarianism-be-religious-ideal/>

Columbia Missourian

Rabbi finds vegetarianism to be a religious ideal

[If only there were many more such rabbis!!!]

Rabbi Yossi Feintuch looked for biblical passages to support his decision to be a vegetarian.

By ALYSSA APPELMAN

July 18, 2008 | 6:15 p.m. CST

Rabbi Yossi Feintuch says vegetarianism is a religious ideal.

"When you read about the abuse of animals in our own industrial meat production, then you cannot say that God's idea about compassion for animals is achieved," he says.

Feintuch blames the nature of modern-day factory farming. "When a shepherd slaughters his sheep, he has some personal sentiments for her, and he will do his best to make sure that she suffers the least, but that is not a value in the meat factory," Feintuch says. "Judaism cannot be a part of that, as I see it."

Born in Israel, Feintuch has been the rabbi of Columbia's only synagogue, Congregation Beth Shalom, for the past 11 years, where he often discusses vegetarianism as a Jewish ideal. He was ordained in 1994 by the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati and spent three years at a congregation in the Caribbean, on the island of Curacao. He also holds a bachelor's degree from Hebrew University of Jerusalem, a master's degree from New York University and a doctorate from Emory University.

Feintuch considers himself to be a vegetarian with a vegan ideology: no meat, limited eggs and limited dairy. Feintuch recalls his pre-vegetarian love for meat. He said he was living in Atlanta with his wife, Judy, when he heard a radio station offer a free dinner to anyone whose name the DJ couldn't pronounce. "So they sent us actually to a restaurant because, of course, they mispronounced my last name," Feintuch says. "The steaks that came, it just came as a steak, not even potatoes or french fries or a salad. This was an expensive restaurant, this was a gourmet restaurant, but the steak was so delicious you didn't need anything but the steak."

The vegetarian shift came to the Feintuch family through Yossi's two sons.

"We weren't as intense about it as we are now because we didn't know as much as we do now about the meat industry," says Zevi Feintuch, now 24. "I was 15, and my brother (Eran) was 13. It was originally his idea, and we basically just really loved animals, so we didn't want them to be killed for us anymore."

Feintuch says that once his children stopped eating meat, he and his wife decided to join them. Feintuch then decided to look for ideological and religious reasons that supported his new decision. "I wanted something more solid, and I went to investigate what the Jewish tradition has to say about it," he says. "I saw that, actually, I have very solid ground to walk on."

Now, at the mere mention of vegetarianism, Feintuch can quickly list biblical passages that speak to his cause. In Hillel's student lounge at MU, he pauses only to look behind him for text to pull out and support his points. "I teach this stuff, and this is a part of the Torah," he says, somewhat combatively. "This is not extrapolation. This is what you read in text, so you don't need to stretch your mind too much to understand it. This is really the facts as they are." He often mentions the biblical prohibition of "t'sa'ar ba'alei chayim," or inflicting unnecessary pain on animals.

Feintuch explains that in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Adam ("the two of them, the he and the she, the two were called Adam") ate only fruit and vegetables. He says Noah brought only vegetarian food on the ark for himself and the animals.

"Not that I necessarily read it as a true, factual story, historical story, but it's the messages that I derive from it, and so the message is that the animals on Noah's ark did not eat meat."

He says the Israelites wandered in the desert with flocks they didn't want to eat but that when they cried out for meat, God sent them quail. He said this teaches that meat-eating should not be an everyday occurrence.

"The association is that you have to crave it, like you have to lust for meat," he says. "It's only when you really, really want it so badly, then ultimately secular slaughtering is permitted."

Feintuch uses the term secular slaughtering to refer to killing done for a purpose other than sacrifice.

He adds that animal sacrifices were not originally a Jewish tradition but a pagan tradition that Jews used to imitate. Feintuch says Isaiah described the Messianic era as vegetarian.

"How do we know that this is not a redeemed world and that the Messiah has not come yet? We still eat meat."

Zevi Feintuch is now a vegan - no meat, milk or eggs - and disagrees with his father's emphasis on vegetarianism as a religious ideal. He says to his father: "The one thing about taking the religious aspect is that you can only affect people in your religion with that."

Yossi Feintuch responded by saying that other religions, not just Judaism, place emphasis on animal welfare.

National organizations share Feintuch's belief in religion-based vegetarianism. In an e-mail to religious leaders, Richard Schwartz, president of the Jewish Vegetarians of North America, writes: "This dietary change would be consistent with important Jewish mandates to preserve our health; treat animals with compassion; protect the environment; conserve natural resources; help hungry people; and pursue a more peaceful, less violent world." His Web site, along with that of the Society for Ethical and Religious Vegetarians, offers statistics and text to support a commitment to spiritual vegetarianism.

While explaining his religious rationale, Feintuch pauses to admit that meat eating is, in fact, a big part of Jewish tradition. The laws of keeping kosher outline procedures for killing, preparing and eating animals. He reconciles this apparent disconnect by referring to Moses Maimonides, a 12th-century Jewish philosopher. Feintuch says Maimonides thought the complex dietary restrictions were meant to frustrate people enough to give up meat altogether. Feintuch says he agrees with this interpretation. "Animals are far and far from being an afterthought in the Torah," he says. "We are to consider their existence as our core fellow creatures."

Feintuch says that whether it outright encourages or enforces vegetarianism, the Jewish tradition clearly teaches God's compassion for animals.

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### **3. Great 12-Minute Video With a Clear, Powerful Vegan Message/Highly Recommended**

If we could only get everyone to see this great video, I think it could change the world.

Thanks to Miriam Gross and Michelle booth for separately calling it to my attention.

<http://www.nonviolenceunited.org/veganvideo.html>

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### **4. Eating Less Meat Can Ease the Hunger Crisis/Two Articles**

Credit crunch? The real crisis is global hunger. And if you care, eat less meat

A food recession is under way. Biofuels are a crime against humanity, but - take it from a flesh eater - flesh eating is worse

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/georgemonbiot>

George Monbiot

The Guardian, Tuesday April 15, 2008

Never mind the economic crisis. Focus for a moment on a more urgent threat: the great food recession that is sweeping the world faster than the credit crunch. You have probably seen the figures by now: the price of rice has risen by three-quarters over the past year, that of wheat by 130%. There are food crises in 37 countries. One hundred million people, according to the World Bank, could be pushed into deeper poverty by the high prices.

But I bet that you have missed the most telling statistic. At 2.1bn tonnes, the global grain harvest broke all records last year - it beat the previous year's by almost 5%. The crisis, in other words, has begun before world food supplies are hit by climate change. If hunger can strike now, what will happen if harvests decline?

There is plenty of food. It is just not reaching human stomachs. Of the 2.13bn tonnes likely to be consumed this year, only 1.01bn, according to the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation, will feed people.

I am sorely tempted to write another column about biofuels. From this morning all sellers of transport fuel in the United Kingdom will be obliged to mix it with ethanol or biodiesel made from crops. The World Bank points out that "the grain required to fill the tank of a sports utility vehicle with ethanol ... could feed one person for a year". This year global stockpiles of cereals will decline by around 53m tonnes; this gives you a rough idea of the size of the hunger gap. The production of biofuels will consume almost 100m tonnes, which suggests that they are directly responsible for the current crisis.

On these pages yesterday Ruth Kelly, the secretary of state for transport, promised that "if we need to adjust policy in the light of new evidence, we will". What new evidence does she require? In the midst of a global humanitarian crisis, we have just become legally obliged to use food as fuel. It is a crime against humanity, in which every driver in this country has been forced to participate.

But I have been saying this for four years, and I am boring myself. Of course we must demand that our governments scrap the rules that turn grain into the fastest food of all. But there is a bigger reason for global hunger, which is attracting less attention only because it has been there for longer. While 100m tonnes of food will be diverted this year to feed cars, 760m tonnes will be snatched from the mouths of humans to feed animals - which could cover the global food deficit 14 times. If you care about hunger, eat less meat.

While meat consumption is booming in Asia and Latin America, in the UK it has scarcely changed since the government started gathering data in 1974. At just over 1kg per person per week, it's still about 40% above the global average, though less than half the amount consumed in the United States. We eat less beef and more chicken than we did 30 years ago, which means a smaller total impact. Beef cattle eat about 8kg of grain or meal for every kilogram of flesh they produce; a kilogram of chicken needs just 2kg of feed. Even so, our consumption rate is plainly unsustainable.

In his magazine *The Land*, Simon Fairlie has updated the figures produced 30 years ago in

Kenneth Mellanby's book *Can Britain Feed Itself?* Fairlie found that a vegan diet produced by means of conventional agriculture would require only 3m hectares of arable land (around half Britain's current total). Even if we reduced our consumption of meat by half, a mixed farming system would need 4.4m hectares of arable fields and 6.4 million hectares of pasture. A vegan Britain could make a massive contribution to global food stocks.

But I cannot advocate a diet that I am incapable of following. I tried it for about 18 months, lost two stone, went as white as bone and felt that I was losing my mind. I know a few healthy-looking vegans, and I admire them immensely. But after almost every talk that I give, I am pestered by swarms of vegans demanding that I adopt their lifestyle. I cannot help noticing that in most cases their skin has turned a fascinating pearl grey.

What level of meat-eating would be sustainable? One approach is to work out how great a cut would be needed to accommodate the growth in human numbers. The UN expects the population to rise to 9 billion by 2050. These extra people will require another 325m tonnes of grain. Let us assume, perhaps generously, that politicians such as Ruth Kelly are able to "adjust policy in the light of new evidence" and stop turning food into fuel. Let us pretend that improvements in plant breeding can keep pace with the deficits caused by climate change. We would need to find an extra 225m tonnes of grain. This leaves 531m tonnes for livestock production, which suggests a sustainable consumption level for meat and milk some 30% below the current world rate. This means 420g of meat per person per week, or about 40% of the UK's average consumption.

This estimate is complicated by several factors. If we eat less meat we must eat more plant protein, which means taking more land away from animals. On the other hand, some livestock is raised on pasture, so it doesn't contribute to the grain deficit. Simon Fairlie estimates that if animals were kept only on land that is unsuitable for arable farming, and given scraps and waste from food processing, the world could produce between a third and two-thirds of its current milk and meat supply. But this system then runs into a different problem. The Food and Agriculture Organisation calculates that animal keeping is responsible for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions. The environmental impacts are especially grave in places where livestock graze freely. The only reasonable answer to the question of how much meat we should eat is as little as possible. Let's reserve it - as most societies have done until recently - for special occasions.

For both environmental and humanitarian reasons, beef is out. Pigs and chickens feed more efficiently, but unless they are free range you encounter another ethical issue: the monstrous conditions in which they are kept. I would like to encourage people to start eating tilapia instead of meat. This is a freshwater fish that can be raised entirely on vegetable matter and has the best conversion efficiency - about 1.6kg of feed for 1kg of meat - of any farmed animal. Until meat can be grown in flasks, this is about as close as we are likely to come to sustainable flesh-eating.

Re-reading this article, I see that there is something surreal about it. While half the world wonders whether it will eat at all, I am pondering which of our endless choices we should take. Here the price of food barely registers. Our shops are better stocked than ever before. We perceive the global food crisis dimly, if at all. It is hard to understand how two such different food economies could occupy the same planet, until you realize that they feed off each other.

monbiot.com

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/apr/15/food.biofuels/print>

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Meat habit is fueling world famine

Posted by: "AnimalConcerns.org" animalconcerns@gmail.com

Sat Jul 19, 2008 8:55 am (PDT)

Approximately 854 million people do not have enough to eat. Thirty-three countries are facing food crises, according to the World Bank, and food riots have recently erupted in Egypt, Haiti, Yemen, Malaysia and other poor nations. This is hard for most Americans to comprehend. The closest many of us will ever come to a food riot is when someone cuts in line for more nachos and hot dogs at the baseball-stadium concession stand.

But we need look no further than our own shores to figure out what's causing food crises overseas: While millions of people are starving, a billion more-many of them Americans-are overweight. Our addiction to

meat is largely to blame for both problems.

When world leaders met at the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization summit in Rome earlier this month, they vowed to halve global hunger by 2015 and discussed strategies to boost agricultural production, which must be doubled by 2030 to meet rising demands. But no one proposed a convincing way to alleviate world hunger.

It takes 3 1/4 acres of land to produce food for a meat-eater; food for a vegan-someone who eats no animal products, including dairy and eggs-can be produced on just 1/6 acre of land. Vegfam, a U.K.-based charity that funds sustainable plant-food projects, estimates that a 10-acre farm can support 60 people by growing soy, 24 people by growing wheat or 10 people by growing corn-but only two by raising cattle. While some are blaming developing nations like China and India for creating food shortages, Americans should look in the mirror before pointing fingers. According to The New York Times, Americans eat twice as much meat as the average person worldwide.

Chris Holbein is a senior projects coordinator for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals' (PETA) vegan campaign, 501 Front St., Norfolk, VA 23510; [www.GoVeg.com](http://www.GoVeg.com).

full story:

<http://www.opednews.com/articles/Meat-habit-is-fueling-worl-by-Chris-Holbein-080717-228.html>

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## **5. Al Gore Calls For Major Shift Away From Fossil Fuel**

Gore Calls for U.S. to Use Renewable Energy by 2018

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/18/us/politics/18gorecnd.html?hp>

By DAVID STOUT

Published: July 18, 2008

WASHINGTON - Former Vice President Al Gore said on Thursday that Americans must abandon electricity generated by fossil fuels within a decade and rely on the sun, the winds and other environmentally friendly sources of power, or risk losing their national security as well as their creature comforts.

Brendan Smialowski for The New York Times

**“The survival of the United States of America as we know it is at risk,” Mr. Gore said in a speech to an energy conference here. “The future of human civilization is at stake.”**

Mr. Gore called for the kind of concerted national effort that enabled Americans to walk on the moon 39 years ago this month, just eight years after President John F. Kennedy famously embraced that goal. He said the goal of producing all of the nation's electricity from “renewable energy and truly clean, carbon-free sources” within 10 years is not some farfetched vision, although he said it would require fundamental changes in political thinking and personal expectations.

“This goal is achievable, affordable and transformative,” Mr. Gore said in remarks prepared for the conference. “It represents a challenge to all Americans, in every walk of life - to our political leaders, entrepreneurs, innovators, engineers, and to every citizen.”

Although Mr. Gore has made global warming and energy conservation his signature issues, winning a Nobel Prize for his efforts, his speech on Thursday argued that the reasons for renouncing fossil fuels go far beyond concern for the climate.

In it, he cited military-intelligence studies warning of “dangerous national security implications” tied to climate change, including the possibility of “hundreds of millions of climate refugees” causing instability around the world, and said the United States is dangerously vulnerable because of its reliance on foreign oil.

Doubtless aware that his remarks would be met with skepticism, or even ridicule, in some quarters, Mr. Gore insisted in his speech that the goal of carbon-free power is not only achievable but practical, and that businesses would embrace it once they saw that it made fundamental economic sense.

Mr. Gore said the most important policy change in the transformation would be taxes on carbon dioxide production, with an accompanying reduction in payroll taxes. "We should tax what we burn, not what we earn," his prepared remarks said.

The former vice president said in his speech that he could not recall a worse confluence of problems facing the country: higher gasoline prices, jobs being "outsourced," the home mortgage industry in turmoil. "Meanwhile, the war in Iraq continues, and now the war in Afghanistan appears to be getting worse," he said.

By calling for new political leadership and speaking disdainfully of "defenders of the status quo," Mr. Gore was hurling a dart at the man who defeated him for the presidency in 2000, George W. Bush. Critics of Mr. Bush say that his policies are too often colored by his background in the oil business.

A crucial shortcoming in the country's political leadership is a failure to view interlocking problems as basically one problem that is "deeply ironic in its simplicity," Mr. Gore said, namely "our dangerous over-reliance on carbon-based fuels."

"We're borrowing money from China to buy oil from the Persian Gulf to burn it in ways that destroy the planet," Mr. Gore said. "Every bit of that's got to change."

And it can change, he said, citing some scientists' estimates that enough solar energy falls on the surface of the earth in 40 minutes to meet the world's energy needs for a year, and that the winds that blow across the Midwest every day could meet the country's daily electricity needs.

Senator Barack Obama of Illinois, the presumptive Democratic candidate for president, immediately praised Mr. Gore's speech. "For decades, Al Gore has challenged the skeptics in Washington on climate change and awakened the conscience of a nation to the urgency of this threat," Mr. Obama said.

A shift away from fossil fuels would make the United States a leader instead of a sometime rebel on energy and conservation issues worldwide, Mr. Gore said. Nor, he said, would the hard work of people who toil on oil rigs and deep in the earth be for naught. "We should guarantee good jobs in the fresh air and sunshine for any coal miner displaced by impacts on the coal industry," he said by way of example. "Every single one of them."

"Of course, there are those who will tell us that this can't be done," he conceded. "But even those who reap the profits of the carbon age have to recognize the inevitability of its demise. As one OPEC oil minister observed, 'The Stone Age didn't end because of a shortage of stones.'

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## **6. Major Conference To Address Dietary Connections to Global Warming**

Forwarded message from the conference coordinators:

Hello!

What wonderful work you are doing to spread the all-encompassing love of God to the people regarding our food choices. In this spirit, we are very excited to announce the most important conference on the environment California has yet to see. For the first time, on July 26th, an amazing line-up of vegetarian speakers will address the most up-to-date data on climate change from scientists, environmentalists and media and the BEST and MOST IMMEDIATE solution we have to stop it:

[Your editor was invited to speak and participate, but I had to turn down the opportunity, since it is on a Shabbat.]

BEING VEGETARIAN. To view all the exciting information and to register please do so at the official website:

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

The event will be broadcast world-wide on 14 satellites and shown live on [www.suprememastertv.com](http://www.suprememastertv.com)

Feel free to email this information to all your networking friends!

May we act quickly so God can bless us more,

With love, Ecofood print

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**7. JVNA Press Release Challenges Al Gore Re Dietary Connections to Global Warming**

**JEWISH GROUP CHALLENGES AL GORE FOR FAILING TO ADDRESS “AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH”**

For Immediate Release:

July 18, 2008

Contact:

Richard H. Schwartz, President of the Jewish Vegetarians of North America (JVNA) and author of “Judaism and Vegetarianism”

President@JewishVeg.com Phone: (718) 761-5876

JVNA announced today a campaign to get Al Gore and others to acknowledge “an inconvenient truth” - that animal-based agriculture is a major contributor to global warming and many other environmental threats that imperil all of humanity.

Richard Schwartz, president of Jewish Vegetarians of North America (JVNA) and author of “Judaism and Vegetarianism” and “Judaism and Global Survival” stated: “Al Gore is to be commended for pointing out that the United States must free itself from fossil fuels and switch to renewable energy sources by 2018. He is correct to stress the urgency of the change by stating: 'the survival of the United States of America as we know it is at risk,' and that 'The future of human civilization is at stake.' However, he dooms his plans by failing to inform people that, according to a UN Food and Agricultural Organization 2006 report, animal-based agriculture emits more greenhouse gases (in CO2 equivalents) than all the cars, planes, ships and other means of transportation worldwide combined. He also fails to mention that the number of farmed animals worldwide, currently about 60 billion, is projected to double in 50 years. If that happened, the increased greenhouse gas emissions would negate the effects of many positive changes that Gore supports.”

JVNA secretary/treasurer John Diamond stated, “When we read daily reports of the effects of global climate change, such as record heat waves, severe flooding, widespread droughts, unprecedented numbers of wild fires, and the melting of glaciers and polar icecaps; when some climate scientists are warning that global climate change may spin out of control with disastrous consequences unless major changes are soon made; when a recent report indicated that our oceans may be virtually free of fish by 2050; when species of plants and animals are disappearing at the fastest rate in history; when it is projected that half of the world's people will live in areas chronically short of water by 2050; it is essential that the Jewish community fulfill our mandate to be a “light unto the nations” and lead efforts to address these critical issues.”

JVNA is urging that tikkun olam-the healing and repair of the world -- be a central issue in synagogues, Jewish schools and other Jewish institutions. “Judaism has splendid teachings on environmental conservation and sustainability, and it is essential that they be applied to respond to the many current environmental threats,” stated Schwartz.

JVNA urges rabbis and other Jewish leaders to make Jews aware of how animal-based diets and agriculture violate basic Jewish mandates to preserve human health, treat animals compassionately, protect the environment, conserve natural resources and help hungry people.

Further information about these issues can be found at the JVNA web site JewishVeg.com. JVNA will provide complimentary copies of its new documentary A SACRED DUTY: APPLYING JEWISH VALUES TO HELP HEAL THE WORLD and related materials to rabbis and other Jewish leaders who will contact them ([mal@JewishVeg.com](mailto:mal@JewishVeg.com)) and indicate that they will use them to involve their congregations on the issues.

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## **8. Statement by JVNA Advisor Ari Knoll on the Agriprocessors' Situation**

### A Matter of Kashrut

With the implementation of constructive changes to enforce protection of laborers at an Agriprocessor's Iowa facility concluding the worthy consumer boycott led by Rabbinical student leaders of Uri L'Tzedek, we must now take proactive measures to require Torah standards for treatment of animals at all livestock facilities serving kosher consumers. Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch reminds us that animals are in greatest need of "the protective Divine word against the presumptions of man" and that even the Torah's limited permission to use animals for a sensible human purpose requires that these uses only occur under strict halachic guidelines entailing the least painful handling of animals.

During much of the 20th century, the primary Jewish communal concerns with regard to the kosher livestock industry were making these food items available and affordable. The challenges in doing so were compounded by the economic forces of factory farming practices throughout the industrialized world and the reliance upon their services for supply along the chain of production. Regrettably, these pressures may have led certain companies serving kosher consumers to neglect Torah mandates. Over the centuries, many of our sages taught that the Torah prohibits cruelty to animals (all living beings). The Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, instructs us that it is also a mitzvah to intervene in preventing cruelty to animals. Precedent certainly exists for Rabbinic intervention in matters of cruel industry treatment of living creatures; Among examples in recent years, Israel's Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef prohibited experimentation on animals by the cosmetic industry as well as the force feeding of fowl for Foie Gras; Tel-Aviv's Chief Rabbi, Chaim David Halevy, held that certain capture and killing of animals for use in the apparel industry violate hilchot tzar baal hacahim. This past week, Haifa's Chief Rabbi Shaar Yashuv Cohen along with the Jewish Vegetarians of North America endorsed a new initiative by the Humane Society entitled "All Creatures Great and Small" aimed at urging consumers to not buy those animal products produced through less humane conditions. This campaign can bolster efforts such as Heksher Tzedek, a program of independent Rabbinic supervision to enforce higher standards in the ethical treatment of animals.

Independent Rabbinical supervision of animal welfare deserves cooperation from the entire Jewish community. We must support ongoing efforts by Rabbis to work together with animal welfare experts and industry leaders to provide every practical means of reducing animal anguish at every stage of this process; before purchasing animal products we must require to see rabbinic certifications attesting to the ethical treatment of animals.

The ethical treatment of animals according to Torah mandates, including the providing of more ethical living conditions, more gentle handling of animals and careful shechita procedures, will justifiably increase the price of kosher meat, poultry and, to some extent, fish. Whereas there have been times when our community was genuinely concerned about the lack of affordable animal protein leading to malnutrition, we are fortunate in our day that there are ample alternative sources of food products, as there are for most uses animals.

Among contemporary Rabbis to question the legitimacy of factory farming, Rabbi Aryeh Carmell wrote that he finds it doubtful that the Torah would sanction factory farming "which treats animals as machines, with apparent insensitivity to their natural needs and instinct....God has delivered animals into our power only for fulfilling humane and wise purposes. As soon as we go beyond this and become insensitive to the physical or mental pain of animals, we become tyrants and torturers." Rav Hirsch further instructs us that among the factors necessary in building a generation of sincerely committed Jews we must "see to it that our children respect the smallest and the largest animals as beings which, like humans, have been summoned to the joy of life and have been granted sensitivity." In the documentary titled "A Sacred Duty" former Chief Rabbi of Ireland David Rosen suggests that in addition to protecting animals, the mitzvah of being sensitive to animal elevates humanity. Through the scrupulous performance of mitzvot, we can continue to serve humanity as a catalyst for

moral advancement.

Ari Knoll  
Brooklyn, NY

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## **9. My Resolution on Global Warming to Be Considered at the World Vegetarian Congress in Dresden, Germany This Summer**

### **RESOLUTION ON GLOBAL WARMING**

Whereas global warming is arguably the biggest social, political economic, moral, and environmental problem facing our planet and its inhabitants; and

Whereas there are almost daily reports regarding record heat, wildfires, an increase in the number and severity of storms, droughts, the melting of glaciers, permafrost, and polar ice caps, rising sea levels, flooding, endangered species, spreading diseases, shrinking lakes, submerged islands, and environmental refugees; and

Whereas, while a small number of individuals argue against global warming, there is a scientific and environmental consensus - among all major scientific and environmental organizations, journals, and magazines, and all peer-reviewed scholarly articles - that global warming is real, serious, worsening, and caused by human activity; and

Whereas the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in its Fourth Assessment Report in February 2007, which was researched and written by about 2,500 climate scientists over the past six years and vetted by over 130 governments, carefully delineates clear trends and potentially catastrophic consequences associated with climate change, warning of the possibility of irreversible change, unless we make concerted efforts to counter global warming; and

Whereas several leading experts, including James Hansen of NASA and physicist Stephen Hawking, perhaps the most famous living scientist, as well as Al Gore, warn that global climate change may reach a 'tipping point' and spiral out of control within a decade, with disastrous consequences, if current conditions continue; and

Whereas a recent 700-page British government report, authored by a former chief economist for the World Bank, projects losses of up to 20% of world gross domestic product by 2050, unless 1% of current world domestic product is devoted to combating global climate change; and

Whereas the US Pentagon states that global warming is a larger threat than even terrorism, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, has said that climate change needs to be taken as seriously as war and, further, that "changes in our environment and the resulting upheavals from droughts to inundated coastal areas to loss of arable land are likely to become a major driver of war and conflict," and a 2007 report by eleven retired US admirals and generals indicated that refugees fleeing droughts, floods, storms and wildfires caused by global warming make instability, violence, terrorism and war more likely; and

Whereas the November 2006 390-page report of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), entitled "Livestock's Long Shadow" [<http://www.fao.org>], states that animal-based agriculture causes approximately 18% of greenhouse gas emissions, Compared to all of the cars, trucks, planes, ships and other means of transportation combined (13.5%); and

Whereas that UN report projects that the number of farmed animals will double in the next 50 years, and that increase would result in increased greenhouse gas emissions that will negate the effects of many positive changes, making it impossible to reach the reductions in overall greenhouse gas emissions that experts feel is necessary to avoid the worse effects of global

climate change; and

Whereas animal based-diets also contribute to an epidemic of diseases, the mistreatment of billions of animals on factory farms, water shortages, many environmental threats and other negative effects;

Hence:

The World Vegetarian Congress resolves:

To urge its member societies and individuals to make it a priority to work to increase awareness of the severe threats of global warming and other environmental problems, and the urgency of a major switch toward vegetarian, and preferably vegan, diets to reduce these threats.

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## **10. Opportunity to Start a Vegan Resort**

Forwarded message from JVNA activist Laura Slitt:

Perhaps a dream but in Bartlett, NH, right across the street from my property, there is a campground for sale. It includes 9 rental cabins, a store, land and lots of road frontage. There is a nice mobile home for owner occupancy as well as a small camper that is very livable where their seasonal worker lives.

I work there now and the owners, due to one's poor health, are selling.

Combined with my river front property, this could be incredible if the right people bought it and then we made one property with mine and theirs.

Just thought I'd put it out there in case anyone is interested in looking at it with me.

the property is MLS # 2656004 listed with Pinkham Real Estate in North Conway, NH

Laura Slitt [maclaura@netzero.net]

Bartlett, NH

<http://www.abetterlifecabinsandcampground.com/AboutUs.htm>

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## **11. Website Focuses On Solar Energy in Israel**

forwarded message From: Jacob Richman  
Sent: Tuesday, July 15, 2008 4:38 PM  
Subject: [ma-chat] New Online: Solar Energy in Israel

Hi Everyone !

Today I launched a new website called:  
Solar Energy in Israel  
<http://www.solar.co.il>

Solar Energy in Israel is a free, on-line, educational resource to learn about solar energy developments in Israel

The site features include:

Frequently Asked Questions - The FAQ sections provide you with answers to the common questions people ask about solar energy systems in Israel and abroad.

The Solar Energy in Israel Blog - The weekly blog updates will keep you informed about developments and news related to solar energy in Israel and about updates to the website.

Videos - A selection of online, educational videos about solar energy in Israel and abroad.

Companies - An index of solar energy companies in Israel

Glossary - Basic solar energy words and terms with easy to understand explanations

English - Hebrew Dictionary - A dictionary of Hebrew solar energy words and terms with English translations and transliterations.

Links - Solar Energy resources in Israel and around the world.

Feedback is welcome.

Please forward this message to anyone that may be interested in learning about Solar Energy in Israel.  
Thank you!

Have a good day,  
Jacob

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## **12. "Save the Earth, Change Your Diet" Campaign Launched**

Forwarded message to the International Vegetarian Union (IVU) by Argentiam Vegetarian Group

Dear friends,

It is essential that our campaign "Save the planet, change your diet" be officially supported by your organization. We believe that people should be informed about the great amount of contamination produced by meat industries, according to the FAO's report. It would be great that the IVU could also contact its member organizations so that they could support this campaign too.

If this were the case, the UVA would continue the campaign in behalf of IVU, and from this point IVU would be in charge of the process of recollecting signatures and sending them to the ONU.

Regards

Manuel Alfredo Martí

**SAVE THE PLANET, CHANGE YOUR DIET**

<<http://www.petitiononline.com/uva1927>>

<http://www.petitiononline.com/uva1927>

Unión Vegetariana Argentina

<<http://www.uva.org.ar/>> <http://www.uva.org.ar>

<<http://www.el-vegetariano.com.ar/>> <http://www.el-vegetariano.com.ar>

<<http://uvapress.blogspot.com/>> <http://uvapress.blogspot.com>

UVA

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### 13. World Animals Day Announced for 2008

Forwarded message:

WORLD ANIMAL DAY  
14 Hewlett Road, Cheltenham,

Gloucestershire GL52 6AA

Telephone: 01242 252871

Email: [info@worldanimalday.org.uk](mailto:info@worldanimalday.org.uk)

Website: [www.worldanimalday.org.uk](http://www.worldanimalday.org.uk)

#### WORLD ANIMAL DAY - 4th OCTOBER 2008 - WHERE WILL YOU BE?

Show the animals you care and be part of something special.

Help make World Animal Day 2008 the Biggest and Best Yet!

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World Animal Day is only about 12 weeks away so it really is time to start thinking about how you're going to celebrate World Animal Day this year.

Even if you don't have a lot of spare time, there are plenty of ideas on the website that don't take much organizing. Also, you could always consider enlisting the help and support of a few friends to help spread the workload. The sky's the limit!

For some additional inspiration, take a look at the Roundup of some of the World Animal Events that took place in 2007. Simply click on the link at the end of this paragraph which will take you to the World Events Overview page and from here you can click on links to Africa, Asia, Australia & NZ, Europe, South America, UK and USA (link to additional image gallery at the bottom of each of these pages). From the overview page you can also click on a link that will allow you to view all the events listed with World Animal Day in 2007, and in previous years. [http://www.worldanimalday.org.uk/2007/EventReports/2007\\_overview.asp](http://www.worldanimalday.org.uk/2007/EventReports/2007_overview.asp)

As you may already know, the aim of the World Animal Day website is to encourage everybody interested in animals to use this special day to express their love and concern for all creatures by doing something special in celebration of our relationship with the animal kingdom. I'm sure you will agree that building the World Animal Day initiative is a wonderful way to heighten public awareness of animal issues and unite the animal welfare movement. It's something that everyone can join in with whether they are part of an organisation, group, or as an individual. [www.worldanimalday.org.uk](http://www.worldanimalday.org.uk) is full of ideas to inspire visitors into getting involved and includes everything needed to help organise a successful World Animal Day event.

I would like to highlight the fact that World Animal Day is not linked to any one individual, organisation or campaign, but belongs to everyone. The official World Animal day website was created and is sponsored by Naturewatch in the UK but the organisation does not benefit from this in any way, shape or form.

The website features an online 'Events Diary' to provide free publicity to any group or individual who is doing something special connected with animals on or around 4th October (events need to take place within 2 weeks either side of World Animal Day). As soon as you have an outline plan, please send a paragraph or two about your event to be added to the

diary. When it's 'live' I'll let you know so you can check your entry and, as plans progress during the lead up to World Animal Day, your entry can be updated simply by sending me an email. Organisations that get involved will also be added to the website list of participating organisations.

After your event has taken place we'd like to give you some extra publicity. All you need to do is send me a short report about it with photographs and we will show the world what you have achieved in the roundup of World Animal Day events.

I look forward to hearing from you very soon and sincerely hope you decide to get involved this year.

Please help us spread the word about World Animal Day by including information in a newsletter and/or by creating a website link. Full instructions for a number of different styles of weblink are available in the 'Resources' section of the website where you will also find the World Animal Day logo in various formats.

This initiative to raise public awareness of animal welfare issues throughout the world is endorsed by World Animal Net.

**Caroline Barker**

Project Manager, World Animal Day  
Tel: +44 (0)1242 252871

A celebration of animals and their contribution to our lives

World Animal Day website created by Naturewatch. All queries relating to [www.worldanimalday.org.uk](http://www.worldanimalday.org.uk) should be directed to:

Naturewatch, 14 Hewlett Road, Cheltenham, GL52 6AA. Email : [info@worldanimalday.org.uk](mailto:info@worldanimalday.org.uk) Tel : 01242 252871

Registered in England. Registration No. 2660946. A Company Limited By Guarantee.

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**14. Article on Judaism and Vegetarianism**

Lisa Pinkus  
BellaOnline's Judaism Editor

Jewish Vegetarianism

<http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art41116.asp>

To an outsider, the vegetarian world can be a confusing place. There are many different ways to practice vegetarianism. Vegans, for example, refrain from eating meat, dairy products, eggs or any food with animal-derived ingredients. Lacto-ovo vegetarians stay away from meat but will eat egg and dairy products. Some vegetarians eat fish. Others eat meat occasionally.

According to the Vegetarian Resource Group Harris Interactive Survey, nearly 3% of the US population is vegetarian - never eating meat, poultry, or seafood. Though it's difficult to find specific figures, there are a number of Jewish vegetarians. A Jewish person's choice to be a vegetarian can travel beyond a mere reflection of pro-animal activism. For some, it also happens to be part of their religious beliefs - something they believe G-d wants us to do.

Any vegetarian may cite ethical reasons for their decision to refrain from eating meat. His or her motivation may be related to animal rights, health incentives, environmental causes or world hunger issues. For the devout Jewish vegetarian, each of these reasons is directly connected to the Torah.

The Torah demands humane treatment of animals including the avoidance of unnecessary pain and suffering, an obligation called tsa'ar ba'alei chaim. Yet, most animal products come from inhumane conditions. The laws of Shechita (slaughter) by which (Kosher) Jews kill animals in the least harmful and most humane way are only the end of the process. The treatment of animals up to that point is questionable as well as how and what they are fed and the impact that has on people and animals.

Torah wisdom also teaches us to regard the land with great respect. "And G-d took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to work it and to keep (protect) it." (Genesis 2:15) We are also reminded that the world does not belong to us but - in essence - is borrowed from G-d. "The Land shall not be sold for eternity; for the land is mine and you are but strangers journeying with Me." (Leviticus 25:23). A vegetarian viewpoint would hold that animal agriculture and all that it entails is extremely detrimental to our environment, our planet, and its future.

Tremendous emphasis in Jewish teaching is placed on human health. We are told to care of ourselves and take care of our bodies. The Torah places an emphasis on prevention. We are told not to harm ourselves or commit suicide and not to ruin or weaken ourselves. Jews have an obligation to preserve and guard life - ... "be extremely protective of your lives" (Deuteronomy 4:15). The Jewish vegetarian warns us that the consumption of animal products - especially red meat - can lead to increased health risks and decreasing health, including heart disease.

The mitzvah of Tzedakah (the obligation to perform charitable acts) is a responsibility held in regard by most Jews - whether affiliated or not. Proponents of a vegetarian lifestyle insist that the concern for world hunger would be less of an issue if we all followed a plant based diet. Millions more people could be fed an adequate diet if even a small amount of land being used to raise meat products would be converted to growing fruits or vegetables. The amount of vegetables that can be grown on an acre of land is significantly greater than the amount of beef produced on the same amount of land.

An observant Jew who adheres to a vegetarian lifestyle will not only offer support from the Torah for the ethical concerns of vegetarians but will further identify places where G-d specifically indicates his desire for mankind to follow a vegetarian diet. Adam and Eve - the first people created - lived in the Garden of Eden on a plant-based diet. It was not until the time of Noah and the flood that people were permitted to eat meat, and G-d created specific procedures regarding how meat products should be consumed.

Throughout the Torah, where eating meat is mentioned, it is commonly talked about in a negative manner. Eating meat is referred to as a "lust" and we are told we can eat it "when we have the urge". When the Jewish people left Egypt and were wandering in the desert, they requested meat when the manna G-d provided was "not enough". G-d became angry at this request and wiped out the complainers with 'fire'. G-d ended up providing meat to the Jewish people - enough quail to last them an entire month - until it came out their nostrils and made them nauseated (Parsha B'ha'alotkha).

The religious Jew who keeps a vegetarian diet sees very clearly how a plant-based diet is consistent with the ultimate wishes of G-d. The laws set out for us in the beginning of time, as well as the conflicts when meat cravings arose exemplify that fact that we are not supposed to be eating meat. The guiding principles G-d has provided us in the Torah are further reason to refrain from eating meat: from protecting our health, to protecting our world, to taking care of others - the moral principles behind vegetarianism can be found within words of Torah.

If eating vegetarian is enticing to you, there are many Jewish Vegetarian websites that provide reasoning, recipes and encouragement. And, if you want further reason, think about how simple keeping kosher would be. You never have to worry about mixing milk and meat.

Related Links:

[Website for Jewish Vegetarians](#)

Website for Jewish Vegans  
Jewish Vegetarian & Ecological Society

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### **15. Two Supporting Letters on Jerusalem Post Article on JVNA Involvement with HSUS to Reduce Cruelty to Animals**

Jews have a choice

Sir, - Thanks for your fine "Cruelty to animals riles Jewish leaders" (July 14).

Richard Schwartz, president of the Jewish Vegetarians of North America, is right in saying that Jews have a choice, and it should be made in the direction of treating animals with compassion. Unfortunately, many Jews, including the Orthodox, do not seem to understand that there is extreme cruelty to animals on factory farms.

We must draw their attention to this problem - which your report certainly did.

Just the other day, I was asked by the supermarket checkout clerk why I was buying cage-free eggs. I explained why, and we both agreed that there isn't sufficient awareness of the subject.

Interestingly, another article in the same issue noted the difficulty of obtaining kosher meat in Zimbabwe ("Unharmful by violence, but suffering economically, Zimbabwe Jews hold out").

Well, let them switch to a vegetarian diet! They, the animals and our planet will be better off for it.

ZIVA ELIEZER  
Chairperson, SPCA Hasharon  
Tzofit

Sir, - I hope that this well-written article helps start a long-overdue discussion in the Jewish community on the many moral issues related to our diets. This is especially important today as animal-based diets are contributing to an epidemic of diseases in the Jewish community and animal-based agriculture is contributing to global warming, widening water shortages, rapid species extinction and many other environmental problems that threaten Israel and all of humanity.

Anyone interested in exploring these issues further can see our new documentary A Sacred Duty: Applying Jewish Values to Help Heal the World at [ASacredDuty.com](http://ASacredDuty.com)

RICHARD H. SCHWARTZ  
New York

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Unpublished letter from JVNA advisor Rina Deych on the issues:

Kudos to Richard Schwartz, Rav She'ar Yashuv Cohen, and the Humane Society for leading the way to a more compassionate world. Most of the meat, milk, and eggs comes from animals who suffer horribly on factory "farms." And while alleged "humane" farms are slightly better for the animals, male chicks from such egg establishments are still mass-killed, cows still have to give birth to give milk (and have their babies abruptly snatched away from them - usually on the first or second day of life), and cows, chickens, and other animals still meet a gruesome, violent, painful death at the end of their short lives ... all for our lust for flesh.

With this carnivorous gluttony, we not only damage our health (and obviously that of the animals), but we are destroying the entire planet. A vegan driving a Hummer is responsible for less greenhouse gas emissions than a meat-eater riding a bicycle.

The film A Sacred Duty, available for viewing in its entirety at [asacredduty.com](http://asacredduty.com), is an eye-opening masterpiece. It eloquently discusses the connection between animal agriculture and global warming.

We, as Jews, should be in the forefront of the humane and environmental movements. I am glad to see that some select luminaries among us are leading the way.

Rina Deych, RN  
Brooklyn, NY 11219

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## **16. Monkeys Abused in Questionable Experiments**

Investigation of ONPRC Reveals Horrifying Abuse of Monkeys Used in Useless Experiments

Thanks to A SACRED DUTY Producer Lionel Friedberg for forwarding the following message to us:

[http://www.stopanimaltests.com/f\\_onprc\\_monkey\\_abuse.asp](http://www.stopanimaltests.com/f_onprc_monkey_abuse.asp)

The Oregon National Primate Research Center (ONPRC) confines more than 4,000 monkeys who are used in cruel studies. This facility received more than \$33 million in taxpayer money in 2007, much of which is used for needless studies of illnesses that have already been well researched using clinical data from humans.

During a four-month undercover investigation inside the facility, PETA documented monkeys who were driven insane by laboratory conditions, living in constant fear, confined to small cages, and traumatized by employees' rough handling.

In addition to other examples of cruelty observed at the ONPRC, sick monkeys received inadequate veterinary care and pain relief, employees chased terrified monkeys in their enclosures and pinned their arms behind their backs to force them into transfer boxes, employees sprayed water with high-pressure hoses into cages while monkeys were still in them, monkeys were forced to pick food from waste trays beneath cages, and monkeys showed signs of psychological disturbance such as frantic pacing, spinning, and rocking inside small steel cages. Please watch the video to learn more about the cruelty documented.

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## **17. Want to Help Distribute Jewish Vegetarian Literature?**

If you would like to distribute Jewish vegetarian literature, please let me know, as we can provide you with free leaflets and booklets. Thanks.

Thanks to author, lecturer and JVNA advisor Dan Brook for sending us the following:

Top 10 Reasons to Distribute Vegetarian Literature

10. Ignore what your mother said - it's fun to talk to strangers
9. Practice your best pick up lines
8. Get free Vitamin D
7. Feel good about accomplishing something
6. Meet others who want to make a difference in the world
5. Give people life-saving information
4. Turn your good intentions into action
3. Get out of the house and away from the computer
2. Converting a meat-eater is cheaper than giving birth to one and
1. You can have a veg snack or meal afterwards to celebrate your hard work!

(adapted from Tammy of Bay Area Vegetarians)

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Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D.  
Professor Emeritus, College of Staten Island  
Author of "Judaism and Vegetarianism," "Judaism and Global Survival," and "Mathematics and Global Survival," and over 130 articles at [www.JewishVeg.com/schwartz](http://www.JewishVeg.com/schwartz)  
President of Jewish Vegetarians of North America (JVNA) [www.JewishVeg.com](http://www.JewishVeg.com)  
and Society of Ethical and Religious Vegetarians (SERV)  
Associate Producer of A SACRED DUTY ([asacredduty.com](http://asacredduty.com))  
[president@JewishVeg.com](mailto:president@JewishVeg.com)