

Vegetarian diets work to benefit of all

by Victoria Smith

Becoming a vegetarian or vegan, or following far more extreme diets, has become increasingly popular in today's society. These lifestyles are considered by their proponents to be a more "civilized" way of living as well as the "in" form of eating with various advantages. These groups continue to grow in devoted followers, people choosing to drastically alter the manner in which they feed themselves and their families. The question remains why people should put so much time, energy and money into preparing their meals. Some would respond that it is simply because people want to be as "healthy" as possible. Yet, there are many conflicting opinions as to what is indeed the healthiest food for the human body. Plenty of omnivorous and nearly carnivorous people would claim they are in perfect health. Common knowledge dictates that one ought to eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products, but after that it gets tricky.

The necessity of meat is undoubtedly questionable. Humans do need protein, perhaps even "animal" protein, but there are many other sources of this than eating meat alone. Extremely healthy alternatives such as nuts, beans, milk (soy in particular) and tofu are simply a few examples of high protein foods. Then, health concerns aside, one must take into account the moral aspect of the situation. Many would argue that farm and certain domesticated animals were raised for food and should be used as such as long as they are killed for that purpose and in a humane way. The blaring counterpoint, however, is that only a very small number of people are truly aware of how the

animals are killed or even prepared for consumption. After all, being the ever evolving, superior beings of Earth that humans claim to be, there is no reason why they should not rise above the savage killing of animals as done by their predators in the wild.

If the average person were asked if they believed animal cruelty was wrong, the majority would most likely respond with an overwhelming, "YES!" What they may not realize is that animals on today's factory farms have no legal protection from cruelty that would

be illegal if it were inflicted upon our beloved household pets, such as neglect, mutilation and genetic and hormonal manipulation. Besides, a cat or dog is no more intelligent or perhaps lovable than a cow or pig could be. Nevertheless, farmers wish to boost their product output and decrease their costs, and no one would blame them, initially. When people realize that this means relying on forcing their animals into miniscule cages, over-crowded sheds, or on filthy feedlots, deprived of any life worth living at all, they are forced to second guess themselves.

Babies are taken far too early from their mothers, stolen from them and slaughtered for veal cutlets and lamb

chops. Even animals that live to adulthood are often heavily drugged and brutally abused. Many are castrated and badly burned for branding purposes or have their horns, beaks, toes, etc. severed off to be made more manageable inmates.

Do not be deluded into believing the meat sold at the grocery store grows in its cellophane encasement. The burgers and hotdogs sizzling on the grill, that fresh turkey on the platter, came from animals that died so humans could needlessly

shove them down their gullets without so much as a 'thank you' to whose tortured and burned flesh they are devouring.

Farm animals, chickens for example, are not killed quickly and painlessly. They generally commence death due to the effects of the antibiotics they are given, which regularly cause heart attacks and agonizing deformities. After they become useless to their owners, some think nothing of just beating them to death. Many other animals, like pigs, also cannot sustain their drug-induced enormity and are viciously murdered. If drugs do not kill the chickens, they are often starved on their way to the slaughterhouse, where their throats

will be slit while still conscious and scalded alive in the feather removal tanks. Even hens that are left alive under horrendous conditions many times have their beaks excruciatingly seared off to keep them from attacking one another in their cramped surroundings, employing a scorching blade. Shortly after birth, baby pigs have their ears mutilated, the ends of their teeth and tails chopped off and then are castrated.

Painkillers are not used for the disfigurement imposed on any of these poor beings. To make matters worse, many suffering animals are not put out of their misery; as long as they are technically living, they can still rake in a profit if they make it to the slaughterhouse.

Nobody wants to think about these things, but anyone who was the least bit affected by the above statements is encouraged to see the horrors for themselves. I am in no way saying that all farmers or factories treat their animals horribly, but the point is that many do and most people are completely unaware of how their meat arrived on their plates. Simply make informed food choices.

Search on the web or find books and other articles on animal cruelty to hunt down the animal offenders, but not literally, nobody wants to stoop to their level. Sites by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and other similar organizations can be quite eye-opening to all animal lovers. A website containing a video that shows just how these animals are bred, treated and butchered can be found at www.goveg.com/factoryFarming.asp. What is shown in it is what prompted my revolt through vegetarianism and this article. It is graphic and highly disturbing in nature so to those with a weak stomach, be forewarned.



photo by Victoria Smith

Senior Adam Hawkins enjoys a delectable salad as part of his vegetarian lunch.

Farmville conquers

by Cain Azar

Once upon a time, before Facebook even existed, high school students would go home after a long day and spend their time wisely. One would go online, surf the web, talk on the phone, take pictures -fully clothed- for Myspace and even occasionally throw in some schoolwork. These trends, however, have recently fallen victim to a widespread phenomenon that many are calling addicting.

This illness can only be classified as an addiction to Farmville. With its pretty colors and wide array of crops, Farmville offers gamers the ability to harvest imaginary vegetables and earn imaginary money. There is no better feeling than earning useless money and experience points.

Farmville has become the most popular application available on Facebook. An innocent teenager may log onto his or her account to be whammed with notifications from friends reading, "Playing Farmville." The more popular social update, "Harvesting Crops," can be seen all over the news feed. One would hope America's status updates would read, "Helping the needy," or "Volunteering at a homeless shelter." These updates do not exist, for everyone is too busy huddled over their computer screen at one o'clock in the morning planting.

The trend does not stop with just the children. Adults have fallen before Farmville's allure, and our nation's tweets have also been influenced. Facebook states that 73 million people are active on Farmville, a huge progress for society as a whole.

According to insidefacebook.com, the most reoccurring words in people's status updates have been, H1N1, FML,



photo courtesy of Facebook

Oh no! A stray cow has wandered onto The Trumpet's page.

R.I.P, Lady Gaga, New Moon and Twilight. All of these words, however, failed in comparison to Farmville, which conquered America's current actions.

To put it simply, Farmville is overrated. There are many other ways to spend the time. By all means, disregard work in general; however, do not forget about Facebook's other splendors.

Instead of tilling the fields and sweating in the hot sun, muster up enough guts to post on that special girl's wall. Join a funny group about millions of people who hate it when their socks come off when removing boots. Take the superhero quiz, or get sorted by the sorting hat. Heck, even call random people's numbers from those "Dropped phone in pool!" groups. They can come in handy later when one realizes they prank called the same person three times in one night.

To conclude, do anything to avoid the addicting Farmville. If already addicted, there are probably support groups and counseling somewhere in addition to the "I'm addicted to Farmville" groups. Regardless, this global epidemic can be avoided. Everyone knows farming is not fun.

Celebrities need privacy

by Riddhi Doshi

One of the first things a kindergarten teacher teaches students is that no one is perfect. Let's emphasize that. "No one is perfect." That is right, even Hannah Montana knows this. She knows about it so well that she sings about it in her hit song, "Nobody's Perfect." Miss Montana understands that normal people, including celebrities, have flaws. Within seconds, stories



photo courtesy of perezhilton.com

of a celebrity involving an accident, an affair or a speech gone wrong are all over television screens, magazines and newspapers with people analyzing the occurrences to the extreme.

Hypothetically speaking, say a celebrity or maybe even an athlete, gets into a car accident. Gossip magazines and all the TV channels all go crazy trying to get information. The paparazzi parks in front of the celebrity's house for days until the police finally bring everyone back to earth by charging the celebrity with only a fine and nothing else. It is not over yet. The next week those same gossip magazines and TV channels decide that the celebrity has been having an affair with a Las Vegas showgirl of some sort. The media goes on about this affair for the next two weeks. Peaceful and quiet at last, that couple with eight kids finally got a divorce. Breaking news: the celebrity who was in the car accident and the affair with that Las Vegas girl, has been having an affair

with two other women. Now his model wife wants a divorce and full custody of their two children.

One month before this accident, this was the perfect celebrity couple. This is how far paparazzi and gossip magazines have gone. A simple car accident in November has ended in the divorce of one of the happiest celebrity families by December.

However, if Joe Schmo had this same exact car accident on the very same day, the furthest

the news would have gone is to the police office. The next day Schmo would receive a fine. Schmo would pay the fine and the deal is over. There is no divorce, his kids are not going to be living on a different continent with his ex-wife, and his life is back to normal. The media is ruining lives of celebrities by prying into their lives and blowing everything out of proportion.

Celebrities do everything they can to let the common folk know that they have gone too far with the scandals. They write books, tell talk show hosts about this problem and even write songs about how far everyone has gone. For example, Mariah Carey's "Obsessed" may not have been about Eminem. The song could have just been the random paparazzi man with a Napoleon complex was following her. The moral of the story is, leave celebrities alone. They are human just like everyone else. Just because they choose to live in the spotlight does not mean that the media has the right to rip apart their lives.