
A Wise and Delicious Choice

BY STEWART ROSE

Vice President

Vegetarians of Washington

Food is there to be enjoyed! There's no doubt about it. However, many people feel that they're caught in a bind. They want to enjoy delicious food, but at the same time they worry that the food they most enjoy is the least healthy for them. Many people also feel that the idea of consuming animals for food weighs heavily on their minds, but resign themselves to eating meat, thinking that it's us or them. When people discover how environmentally unsound animal agriculture is, they often say "But I have to eat to live!"

In light of all this, Vegetarians of Washington would like to offer you this deal. You can enjoy the most delicious food you can imagine, and at the same time greatly improve your health, while easing your conscience about the animals and the environment. Sound good? We think so too, so we wrote this cookbook to help more people to get in on a good deal.

Let's talk about enjoying our food first. We admit it, we love great tasting food and we'll accept nothing less. The fact is that vegetarian food has come in to its own as the most desirable of cuisines, attracting the world's most noted chefs and cookbook authors. The restaurants in the Northwest have caught on and we've included recipes from the region's best restaurants and natural food market delis. We'll help you learn the secrets of delicious food. In this book you'll find lots of information on how to get started. Look for shopping and cooking tips on healthy food and lots of information on ingredients that may be new to you throughout the book. We'll grab you by the taste buds and we won't let go!

The land, the air and the water are so much a part of our lives. There's a good feeling that comes from helping to sustain the environment. While some people think of helping the environment by recycling, we think of enjoying a veggieburger! The satisfaction of eating in a way that protects the environment makes the food taste even better.

Today's factory raised animals have a much rougher time than they used to. The animals are our friends, so let's give Elsie the Cow a well deserved vacation. While good old Elsie is enjoying her vacation, we can also enjoy ours in excellent health. It's another win-win situation.

Trying new foods and learning as you go will give you a chance to be creative. The secrets of success on your journey are to be willing to experiment with new foods, to be willing to learn, to proceed at your own pace and to just do the best you can. We take the optimistic approach. However far you come on your journey makes you that much further ahead.

Just who are those vegetarians anyway? The big news is that vegetarians are everywhere these days and, in fact, they have always been an important part of our society. They have made contributions in all walks of life throughout history. Examples include Albert Einstein in science; Thomas Edison in industry; baseball and football stars in sports such as Hank Aaron, the homerun king, and Desmond Howard, the Superbowl MVP; Paul McCartney of the Beatles; and founding fathers such as Benjamin Franklin. But most vegetarians are not famous. They're the people who live next door, the lady who sits next to you at work or the guy standing behind you in line at the movies. They're everyday people.

Vegetarians of Washington was founded by everyday people. We welcome everyone whether you're a vegetarian, a beginner or just curious. We're having a good time discovering new and tasty foods, and we invite you to join in the adventure and the fun.