

Reasons to consider veganism: Crucial for saving the world

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Eco Reps – Rider University

Going vegan may seem impossible to you, but would you reconsider it if you were told that it would cut your carbon footprint in half? What if you were told you could get all of your needed protein without eating animals? According to recent news on *GreenBiz.com*, **the food industry is the single largest catalyst of climate change and is responsible for a large portion of carbon emissions and our declining amount of freshwater.**

A 2006 report from the UN described that **the “livestock sector” is the guiltiest in contributing to environmental degradation.**

Shortly after, a follow-up report from *The Guardian* advised how veganism was going to become crucial to saving the world from a climate disaster and serious food shortages. So how does veganism help the climate?

Being a vegan is like being a pioneer for climate activism because each person who is vegan helps to show others what is possible.

Junior musical theater major and vegan **Emily Goulazian** said, “**it is our job as humans to become aware of the things happening around us and to do our part and being a vegan is definitely a huge step. It is good for our earth, our animals and our bodies**”

Non-vegans question how one person not consuming any animal-related products would change anything, and it's simple: it's a domino effect. The consumer eats less and spends less money on meat, then the companies follow the money and produce more plant-based foods. Fewer livestock raised and manufactured means a significant decrease in global carbon emissions and a sharp increase in the amount of freshwater available for human consumption. In fact, Disney World has just created 400 new vegan options at its park as of Sept. 2019 for this very reason: supply and demand.

Raising livestock to slaughter is responsible for three-quarters of global consumption of freshwater, almost half of all land use and, terrifyingly, accounts for 19% of the world's greenhouse gases. That's one fifth of all emissions and larger than the transportation sector.

As a result, one of the biggest meat consumers in the world, **Disney World**, is significantly producing less meat and therefore, lowering its carbon footprint. At Rider, there are growing meatless options in **Daly Dining Hall**. The Rooted station has varying selections daily, like the newly introduced vegan chicken nuggets, and the teaching kitchen is a great resource to be able to fix whatever vegan dishes you desire.

What does it mean to be a vegan?

As senior musical theatre major and vegan **Lucy Connell** put it, “It morphed less into just a diet and more of a lifestyle as I found more reasons that it wasn’t just about me, but the planet as a whole.”

With increasing vegan options and a growing vegan community, their power is immeasurable and on the brink of a social revolution.

“We all need to be aware that while we are small, we have mighty effects.

Every little bit counts towards major change, so we have to speak out for what we believe in and act!

Becoming a vegan is a strong, simple step that a person can take to help the future of our entire planet,” said Connell.

Source: Ashlyn Whiteside---Eco Rep---The Rider News, Lawrenceville, NJ