

The Vegan Diet and How to Make it Work

Veganism and vegetarianism have become prevalent in society in the U.S. More than 7.3 million people identify as vegetarian and 1 million are vegan as of August 2016. On Chapman's campus, there is a strong community of students that are a part of this lifestyle. Both Chapman Veg*ns, which is a club for both vegans and vegetarians, and Chapman's Voice for Animals serve as clubs for students to join.



Emma Liegler poses with a cow.

Photo courtesy of Emma Liegler

According to [The Vegetarian Resource](#) group, "Vegans...do not eat meat, fish or poultry...do not use other animal products and by-products such as eggs, dairy products, honey, leather, fur, silk, wool, cosmetics and soaps derived from animal products."

The diet is the main asset to the vegan lifestyle and is appealing to people for different reasons.

"Not only do I believe that it is the healthiest diet for our bodies, it is the healthiest thing for our mind," said sophomore dance major **Lily Thongnuam**. "Knowing that you aren't causing any torture or suffering to other beings as well as not contributing to the No. 1 industry to create pollution makes me feel like I'm doing something right for the world."

So how do they maintain a balanced diet? Senior film production major **Sam Crainich** said, "I always make sure that I'm getting in raw fiber, vitamins and protein from nutritious whole foods such as vegetables, while also mixing in cooked carbs like pasta, quinoa, rice or potatoes."

Sophomore public relations and advertising major **Emma Liegler** explained, "At first, I wanted the fake meat alternatives to make up for the meat. Alternatives are amazing today. I like Gardein, Beyond Meat, Daiya, or others including Quorn, Yves, and Morning Star."

"It is a common misconception that a vegan diet is expensive, but when you think about it, all of the simplest staple foods, such as rice, beans and potatoes, are the cheapest things in the grocery store," Thongnuam said.



Vegan food from Grain

Cafe. *Photo courtesy Emma Liegler*

Finding meals on campus can be a more difficult task.

“It was only recently (that I) discovered that the rice at QDOBA actually has dairy in it,” Crainich said. “None of the vegans knew this and so a veggie bean and rice bowl is sort of out of the question.”

Another student noticed the options for other on-campus restaurants.

“Some of the only bagel toppings at Einstein’s that are vegan are PB (peanut

butter) or jelly,” sophomore film studies major **Kelly Broderick** said. “You can order oatmeal at Starbucks made with plant milk, and Jamba Juice has non-dairy smoothies and bowls.”

Leah Thomas poses for a photo of her eating sustainably.

Photo courtesy of Leah Thomas



Senior environmental science and policy major **Leah Thomas** shares her experiences eating plant-based foods through her blog Green Girl Food, which launched in January 2016.

“I always wanted to branch out and have a positive space to blog about what I love: sustainability, food and social justice,” Thomas said.

Thomas does not identify as vegan, but is passionate about plant-based foods for the environmental impact.

“I decided to go with plant-based foods mainly because I’m an environmental science and policy student and think reducing meat consumption is important for the environment,” Thomas said.

Thomas touched on her favorite recipes that she makes for her blog.

“I became utterly obsessed with protein-packed oatmeal. I’d have coconut chips, agave, granola, fruits and different proteins. It sounds silly, but I ate it sometimes twice a day, and every bowl was always different.”



One of the many acai bowls one can get at Blue Bowl.

Photo courtesy of Leah Thomas

Source: *The Panther*, Chapman University