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## WHY NONVIOLENCE?

*The following is taken from article 'Why Nonviolence?' from [www.nzvegan.com](http://www.nzvegan.com)*

The essence of veganism is nonviolence and respect. Ask anyone if they wish for an end to violence and with very few exceptions the answer will be a resounding yes. Yet at the same time we are participating in horrific violence every day of our lives. The majority of the products we choose to use on a daily basis come from unspeakable violence wrought against billions of sentient beings, simply for reasons of pleasure (“they taste good”; “I like my leather boots”) convenience, or trivial amusement. Despite the obvious connection people wonder why there is so much unnecessary violence in our world. We fill our days with violence, voluntarily. We are wearing it, sleeping in it, eating it, teaching it to our children. The good news is we can stop so much of it so easily. By being **vegan!** Veganism is true nonviolence—anything less than veganism involves slavery, torture, exploitation and slaughter, and you can’t get more violent than that.

*“As long as there are slaughterhouses, there will be battlefields.”  
~ Leo Tolstoy*

As long as we continue to be violent towards vulnerable nonhumans, we will continue to be violent towards vulnerable humans. Humans are animals too—being nonviolent to animals *includes* being nonviolent to each other. Speciesism is often used to justify violence against all other animals as somehow “not violent”! Vegan advocates have literally had that said to them, multiple times: “But what we do to other animals isn’t *violent!*” When prodded, the justification for that thinking inevitably turns out to be: “Well, because they aren’t human.” They are “different” from us. Sound familiar? The exact same kind of thinking has long been used to justify all violence, including that against other humans.

**RACISM = SEXISM = HETEROSEXISM = SPECIESISM**

Just as a person can choose not to be racist in their own life, they can choose not to be sexist, or heterosexual, or *speciesist*. Each individual controls his or her own choice to be prejudiced or not (and whether or not to teach it to their children). Being vegan is as necessary to nonviolence as is being non-racist; non-sexist or non-heterosexual, etc. Nonviolence does not exist without veganism.

*Nonviolence begins with what you put in your mouth, and wear on your body.*  
~ Gary L. Francione

One of the reasons why being vegan is so rewarding is that by making a few simple changes we are able to eliminate just an absolutely astonishing amount of violence from our lives. There is so much violence in this world that is seemingly out of our control, it can be overwhelming. By being vegan we regain some control over the amount of violence that touches our lives; it is incredibly empowering and the good it does is endless. Anyone can decide to go vegan, and they can do so immediately. Just make the decision—after that there are things to learn, because animal use and animal products are so ubiquitous. No one realises just how much animal exploitation they are participating in until they decide to stop doing so.

There is nothing stopping people from making the *decision* to be vegan, apart from speciesism, fear and/or a lifetime of conditioning, coupled with a ton of misleading information and misrepresentation about veganism—which is why vegan education is so important.

## **NONVIOLENT ADVOCACY**

With regard to advocacy; there are some who feel violence is justified if it is for a “good cause”. However if the problem is violence, *the solution is not more violence*. The NZ Vegan abolitionist movement is a peaceful movement that promotes nonviolence.\*

As long as human beings continue to endorse and commit violence, especially in the name of “good”, which is what all wars and conflicts have always used to justify atrocities, violence will never end and the victims will always be the innocent. As it is now and as it has been for time immemorial, with people justifying violence in the name of “good” and the innocent always lose.

*“I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent*

~ Mahatma Gandhi

*“Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars...Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”*

~ Martin Luther King Jr

\* Peaceful and nonviolent does not translate to “passive” or “inactive”. The abolitionist movement is all about action! Nonviolent action.



## THE NZ ECONOMY

*The following is taken from article 'The NZ Economy' from [www.nzvegan.com](http://www.nzvegan.com)*

It is a well-known fact that a large portion of our income as a nation comes from animal agriculture. According to a 2007 Report by UK Trade and Investment, around 31% of our export earnings come from dairy products and “meat” products alone. New Zealand supplies around 31% of the entire world’s dairy supply and 55% of world trade in sheep meat. According to the same report, New Zealand is the world’s largest producer and exporter of crossbred wool, and is second only to Australia in the export of all wool. Think of the horrendous amount of exploitation, slaughter and pollution that those figures signify, and they do not even include the fishing industry, the deer farming industry, or pig farming and other animal agriculture.

The fact that a large portion of our economy as a nation comes from animal exploitation does not justify continued exploitation, any more than the fact that a large portion of the US economy is based on selling weapons justifies war and the murder of innocent people.

**Question:** *What about the hard-working people who raise animals and will lose their livelihood? Animal agriculture creates jobs for people. Do we want to see these people out of work?*

**Answer:** *War creates jobs. The tobacco industry creates jobs. The prison industry creates jobs. Does that mean we should drop bombs on people, encourage people to smoke, and imprison people for no good reason? Of course not—because economics should not determine our ethics.*

## VEGANIC FARMING

The fact of the matter is, vegans love to eat. Also, as we are animals, we *need* to eat. We also need to wear clothes, among other things. A vegan world still needs farmers! Veganic farming has been practiced for decades, and not only is it a method of farming that avoids animal exploitation; it is also much more environmentally friendly, especially when compared to animal agriculture. It is absurd to claim that veganic agriculture is an impossible way to feed the world population—no one has ever even considered it on a grand scale before!

We are an incredibly innovative species. We have invented touch screens the size of our palms, put people on the moon, discovered quantum physics—and yet when it comes to methods of farming that are new and forward thinking all of a sudden we throw up our hands and claim it's too difficult?

Right now in New Zealand we are conducting experiments on cows, sheep, and presumably other animals to make them *farm & burp less*. Why? Methane emissions. Global warming. Putting aside the immorality of animal use, animal agriculture is destroying this planet, polluting the atmosphere, poisoning the rivers and oceans, devastating the forests. Instead of using our intelligence and creativity, of which we are so proud, to conduct what are no doubt horrific and torturous experiments on the digestive systems of sentient beings, we can put our energy and knowledge into sustainable, ethical, nonviolent farming practices.

How are we going to do this, you ask? By **being vegan**. That is the first step. *We the consumers* are creating the demand for animal products, a demand that is responsible for the slaughter of 58 billion animals a year—an impossible figure. But that does not even include sea-dwelling beings, animals used for clothing, entertainment or the many other things we are using them for. Hundreds of billions of individual, sentient beings every year. Our demand for animal products is responsible for this. If we collectively create a vegan consumer base, those clever producers and farmers will not need to spend their energy and creativity experimenting on innocent animals in an attempt to reduce methane emissions, but will instead use that energy and creativity to produce vegan products, in order to satisfy our demand for them. A point in its favour is that the negative impact on the environment caused by our consumption will be lessened hugely, not to mention the eradication of an utterly overwhelming amount of violence and exploitation.

The first step starts with YOU. Be vegan, use only vegan products, eat only vegan food. Would we not prefer to live in a world without slaughterhouses? It is up to us to make that happen. We must have faith in our farmers' abilities, and trust in their knowledge and determination. We must show them that we no longer demand the products of exploitation, but will support the products of veganic agriculture. The first step begins with going vegan. Being vegan means becoming part of the solution.

**For more information on Veganic Agriculture please see:**

[www.goveganic.net](http://www.goveganic.net)

<http://gentleworld.org/beginners-guide-to-veganic-gardening/>

[www.organicpathways.co.nz/community/story/190.html](http://www.organicpathways.co.nz/community/story/190.html)



## ABOLITION IN NZ

*Taken from article 'Why Abolition? Veganism as the Moral Baseline'*

From [www.nzvegan.com](http://www.nzvegan.com)

Abolition means advocating for veganism and not advocating for anything less. We spend our time, money and resources on unequivocal, nonviolent vegan advocacy, encouraging the recognition of the moral personhood of all animals (which includes supporting and engaging in sanctuary work and adoption/fostering) therefore changing the paradigm of thought with regards to all other beings, as well as contributing directly to saving the lives of individuals. Being unequivocal about veganism, nonviolence and the moral personhood of all animals means not supporting or engaging in: **1.** Welfare advocacy or any other advocacy that reinforces the property status of animals, as that is naturally detrimental to the promotion of the abolition of the property status of animals; **2.** Single issue campaigns that reinforce hierarchical attitudes towards nonhuman animals; **3.** Any advocacy that uses sexism or any other forms of discrimination, as any form of discrimination is violent and unjust or **4.** The use of any violence whatsoever, as violence is the problem, not the solution.

If we are to address the fundamental paradigm we must be consistent and clear. There is so much confusion out there that needs to be overcome, much of it a result of the inconsistent advocacy of the current mainstream animal movement.

The abolitionist movement is necessarily separate from the existing mainstream animal movement, because the existing mainstream movement does not promote veganism as the moral baseline, in fact it portrays veganism as “extreme” and “difficult” and instead primarily promotes vegetarianism which is merely a diet that includes animal products (or even worse it conflates veganism and vegetarianism as if they are the same thing: “vegan/vegetarian” ; “vegans and vegetarians” etc); welfare reform which attempts to regulate unjust institutions rather than call for their abolition; and single issue campaigns that reinforce hierarchical and speciesist attitudes. All of these are detrimental and actually work in opposition to vegan and animal rights advocacy.

Abolitionists support and engage in **vegan advocacy** as the primary means to achieve the abolition of animal exploitation, and there are many fun, exciting and creative ways to advocate for veganism. All it takes is the will to stand up for what is right.

***“A common criticism is that the time is not yet ripe for our reform. Can time ever be ripe for any reform unless it is ripened by human determination?”***

~ Donald Watson – founder of The Vegan Society and creator of the word “Vegan”

Website: [www.nzvegan.com](http://www.nzvegan.com)

Contact: [info@nzvegan.com](mailto:info@nzvegan.com)

For animal rights theory please visit: [www.abolitionistapproach.com](http://www.abolitionistapproach.com)

*Thank you for your interest.*

*For a comprehensive guide to the practical aspects of going vegan please visit: [www.howdoigovegan.com](http://www.howdoigovegan.com)*