

Animal rights

What does this mean:

Pain and well being are experienced by all living creatures.

Animals deserve consideration of what is in their own best interest regardless of whether they are “cute”, useful to humans or endangered species. This consideration means recognising that animals are not ours to use and abuse for food, clothing, entertainment or experimentation.

Whether they are bred and slaughtered for their meat, their skin, their fur or for experimentation there is no nice or comfortable way to look at it; the suffering and pain inflicted in captivity, transport or killing are immense and totally unacceptable from a “humane” perspective.

Some myths and facts

About eating meat and animal products

Myth: buying free range means animals are well treated so all is fine.

Fact: Free range does not mean “cruelty free”, even if the animals get a measure of freedom in their short existence, the same horrifying end awaits them in the form of over packed transport and terribly cruel slaughter conditions.

Myth: It is natural for us to breed animals to eat their meat, we need animal protein to survive.

Fact: Meaty meals high in saturated animal fat and cholesterol have long been linked to the 3 biggest killers in the UK: heart disease, cancer and strokes. Vegetarians have a 40% lower risk of getting cancer, as well as a considerable lower risk of contracting many other illnesses...

Protein and other nutrients necessary to a balanced diet can be found in many other products which do not involve animal cruelty. (look around for vegetarian websites with healthy/tasty suggestions)

Myth: What we eat does not affect world hunger or the environment

Fact: We could feed far more people on a vegetarian diet. The world's cattle alone consumes a quantity of food equal to the caloric need of 8.7 billion people, more than the entire human population on earth. Factory farms use enormous amounts of water, fuel and electricity, and the massive amount of excrement produced pollutes the water and the air.

Myth: Just one individual adopting a vegetarian diet can hardly have an impact on animal welfare as a whole...

Fact: Think about it, during his/her life time, an average meat-eater is responsible for the abuse and slaughter of thousands of factory farmed animals. We pay for something which is done in our name.

Every week 2000 people in Britain stop eating meat...

About leather and fur

Myth: leather is just a by-product of the meat industry and has no added effect on the general mistreatment of animals.

Fact: The meat industry relies on leather sales to boost profits, buying leather serves to perpetuate factory farm cruelty.

Much of the leather sold in the UK comes from India where animal hides are actually worth more than their flesh.

About animal experiments and use of by-products

Myth: Animal experimentation is the only alternative to human testing...!

Fact: Many of the products we use every day have been tested on animals in terrible conditions ie: soaps, detergents, household products, shampoos, cosmetics, baby products etc...Yet many Companies can also produce similar products without these dated cruel techniques.

The EU testing ban on cosmetics will fully apply in 2009 when testing will be prohibited irrespective of alternatives to animal testing being available. The “marketing ban” will apply unconditionally to all human health effects with the exception of three toxicological effects such as

repeated-dose toxicity, reproductive toxicity and toxicokinetics. The year 2013 is foreseen as the deadline for a ban on these specific health effects. Until then as consumers we have the choice to refuse to buy from the ones who still maintain a policy of mutilation, shocking, poisoning and burning unnecessarily.

European public opinions polls throughout the years have clearly demonstrated that on moral grounds, the general public is overwhelmingly opposed to animal testing for cosmetics.

Myth: Testing pharmaceuticals on animals is justified for it benefits humans.

Fact: This is a much debated issue. The immorality of such a statement notwithstanding, the truth is that some drugs which had been declared safe for animals after thorough testing went on to cause devastating birth defects and even killed some of the patients they were supposed to treat.

(ex: Thalidomide-Zomax-DES-Accutane) If you refer to the links below you will find many more similar examples. Animals of different species have major differences in the ways their bodies absorb, metabolise and eliminate substances. Although European law currently still requires new drugs to be tested on animals, forward thinking companies are proving that it is safer and more reliable to use non-animal methodologies. Medical historians also tell us that the majority of true medical breakthroughs have occurred in the clinic and not in animal labs. Now in the 21st century there are sophisticated alternatives to animal tests- such as clinical and epidemiological studies; cell and tissue cultures; mathematical, computer and mechanical models-these are faster, safer and less expensive.

Alternatives to animal testing are now very well documented and efficient.

Useful links

PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) You will find on this site information on companies which do not test on animals, vegetarian food and clothing, non-leather shoes, lists of other humane organisations...

tel: 020 7357 9229

www.peta.org.uk

www.drhadwentrust.org

www.defenders.org

and some facts:

www.vivisection-absurd.org.uk/indexf.html

If you need any additional information or practical advice please use the contact form on this site. Otherwise the internet is a wealth of information if this topic interests you enough.

“There will come a day when such men as myself will view the slaughter of innocent creatures as horrible a crime as the murder of his fellow man... Our task must be to free ourselves - by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty.”

Albert Einstein