

Something new to digest

V Vegan - what... no animal products? Are you crazy!

A Why Victor, it's good for animals and the environment, healthy for humans and does not disturb or offend any religion.

V Yes, but I almost only eat meat.

A This is not healthy! Every day - how much?

V All meals. More than 500 grams every day.

A If you eat like that for a year, you need almost 200 kilos of meat!

V I have lost 25 kilos with this diet in the last 6 months. That's healthy, isn't it?

A That's very unhealthy for you and the environment. You are eating way too much protein and saturated fat. And you need a big cow every year for you alone. If everyone eats like this, there would be no room for the poor animals to live. Also think about how much this would damage the environment - not to mention far too little space for the necessary plants and trees!

V We have to eat something Angel. Why is it better to eat only plant based products?

A Plants are good for the environment, they cost a lot less and you do not have to kill any animals. We should be moving forward not backwards! You should also think about the farmers. In such conditions it would be impossible for them to keep to high standards and make a decent living.

V Ah yes my granddad was a farmer and I remember looking at the animals roaming in the fields - very pastoral. But then he had to sell his small hold as it was not financially sustainable. He could not afford all the new machinery and said the price of milk was too low. Would be nice to have more small farms where you could buy local produce.

A This would be possible if less meat was consumed and more fields were used for example for seed vegetables or to grow different plants. Also if less cow's milk was produced and no longer was a staple food, prices would increase, so farmers could afford to have less cows on the same size of land and let them have more humane conditions.

V But plants have feelings too?

A Plants live a higher percentage of their potential lives, they can be cultivated with good conditions and plenty of space and are vital for our survival. Besides, I do not mean that you have to stop eating meat all in one go. Maybe you can start eating half a cow and then a quarter. If everyone eats 50% less meat, only half the animals would die and the rest would live in much better conditions being able to graze more comfortably and actually have a real existence.

V But half the milk - what would we drink then?

A There are many possibilities. Which product you choose depends on your tastes. For example, I do not like almond milk, because it's too watery. But I like to use oat milk, because it tastes good both in tea and with cereals for breakfast.

V Is that practical - where can you find this?

A Oat milk as well as other vegetable milk are bought in the supermarket or at the very least in health food stores. It is also very convenient, because oat milk can usually be left closed for at least 6 months in the house and then still taste delicious. You can also try coconut, rice or soya milk or yogurt.

V Very interesting, but how can you cook without eggs?

A You can, for example, bake cakes with olive oil and different binding ingredients. You can make chocolate mousse with avocado and orange juice. And it is also possible to prepare your own eggs substitute with flour, baking powder, sunflower oil and water.

V But cheese without milk is not possible? I cannot survive without cheese!

A For cheese sauces, I use nutritional yeast because it is super easy to prepare and tastes delicious. In some supermarkets and all health food stores you can buy vegan cheese made out of different ingredients such as nuts, potato starch and soya. It is also possible, for example, to make your own plant based cheese with oats, spelt grains, cashews and almonds at home.

V Yeast as cheese - that doesn't sound right. What nutritional goodness can you get from that?

A Nutritional yeast is full of minerals and vitamins especially vitamin Bs. You can also buy the fortified option, which has additional B12. When the flakes come into contact with liquid they

transform into a creamy consistency. Another advantage is that you can keep this for a long time. A lot of vegan products are very good store cupboard items.

V What do the cheese substitutes look, smell and taste like? These are all vital features for me when having cheese. I don't just want to have a bland blob smelling like potatoes.

A Most vegan cheeses are styled like their animal counterparts with same consistency, and they smell interesting. You can for example get ones like Mozzarella, hard Italian cheese, Red Leicester or Cheddar. Just like normal cheese you probably will only like some of them.

V You are a nutrition encyclopaedia! I have to go now and pass by the supermarket.

A Has all this talk about food made you hungry?

V Yes I'm low on meat at the moment.

A Haven't you understood anything I said?

V You said that I can eat half a cow.

A Maybe next time I should preach no muh!

V That's a good idea - I still eat exotic animals!

A Ah, I think you still have to digest tempeh, lupine and tofu.