

# Vegvibe

NOV/DEC 2011

Cool Cucumber  
**Clarence Tan**

*Also in this issue*

**Project: FIN**  
**Charming Chayote**  
**Soupelicious Recipes**  
**Seven Years in Dog-Land**  
**Introducing The Veg School**  
**Taking Responsibility for Deforestation**

MICA (P) 003/06/2011



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ONLINE



# The Chief Veggie Speaks!

It seems weird to not be flipping through a completed print edition after a year now, but the freedom to pursue our other focus areas is already showing. We have been able to meet and discuss several other opportunities with partners who have been chasing us for several months to sit down with them for a chat.

We are happy to note that our facebook 'fan' base and online subscriber pool continues to grow and we suspect many of our print readers have long since started following our online edition. We do apologise to the readers who were shocked to learn that VegVibe has returned online and are truly sorry that we could not accede to their pleas to release the print edition.

But we believe this will be just a momentary confusion as we return to business as usual, doing the thing we love best - producing a wonderful and sincere magazine for our friends to enjoy.

In this issue, we feature one of these friends of ours - Clarence Tan, who is a talented photographer as well as an incredibly witty vegetarian (page 14). We are also pleased to introduce a local comic author, who has published a graphic novel entitled *Seven Years in Dog-Land* that explores the theme of animal domination (page 09).

Environmentalism is hot in this issue as we have passionate contributors discussing the dire situation that deforestation has brought the region (page 18), and a local enterprise that envisions saving paper by bringing e-billing to the next level (page 06). In addition, we review the movie *H2Oil* which offers a superb snapshot of the oil drilling damage caused in Canada (page 13).

Other contributors share with us the good work that *The Veg School* has been doing (page 10) and also the critical role that fruits and vegetables play (page 20), while we clue you in on an excellent initiative that goes to the heart of the Shark's Fin problem here in Singapore (Page 22) and share *The Hungry Ang Mo's* excellent take on *North South East West* vegetarian restaurant (page 04).

Well, thank you for being the wonderful supporters that you all are, and do continue to keep us posted on developments that you come across which would be beneficial to the community. Do send us your story ideas, contacts whom we can feature, or recommendations on places, books and movies to review, to [vision@vegville.com](mailto:vision@vegville.com) or [vegville@gmail.com](mailto:vegville@gmail.com).



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## Contributors

*Harveen Narulla, Adeline Tan, Luke Otter,  
Wong Kee Yew, Betty Khoo-Khingsley*

*The publishers would like to thank Mr Clarence Tan, Ms Ng Shwu Huey, Ms Kiran van Egmond, Ms Miranda Hau, Mr Johnny Tay, Ms Annie Khoo and Tjeannee Yeoh for their invaluable assistance in preparing this issue.*

# Vegling Corner

## Free-spirited *Harris Solosa*

is a lively toddler who is all of 2 years and 3 months. Described as intuitive and inquisitive, mum Miranda observes that he can be as cheeky as he can be charming! This confident little boy loves living life through dance and play, and also enjoys seeing others laugh. Harris' responsible side comes out when taking their family dog, Toby, out for walks and his favourite food is McVities Chocolate Digestive biscuits. Mum and dad Bernard regularly take Harris along on adventures to new dining places, and the family spend time together by going for walks together.

## *Arun Hendrik van Egmond*

is an active 17 month old toddler who loves to move, dance, climb, crawl and roll over cushions and pillows. Together with mum Kiran, he loves to read and sing along to songs and enjoys completing nursery rhymes sung by her. When with dad Thom, Arun can run around and kick a ball in the field for hours. His typical meal is rice and lentils with vegetables, which is washed down with yoghurt and a tiny spoon of sugar-free jam. And for snacking, he munches on fruits and healthy rice and corn crackers.



Chayote is a good source of trace minerals like copper, zinc, magnesium and potassium which are important for overall health.

Chayote originally grown in Mexico, is part of the squash family and can be both eaten raw or cooked.

Chayotes are high in Vitamin C, amino acids, dietary fibre and are virtually fat-free, making them a good food option for those on a diet.

Chayotes contain phytochemicals such as apigenin and luteolin which help scavenge from the body harmful oxygen-derived free radicals that can cause cancer.

Chayotes are an excellent source of folate, which can promote heart health.

Chayote is also known as Buddha's Hand Melon or Closed Palm Melon.

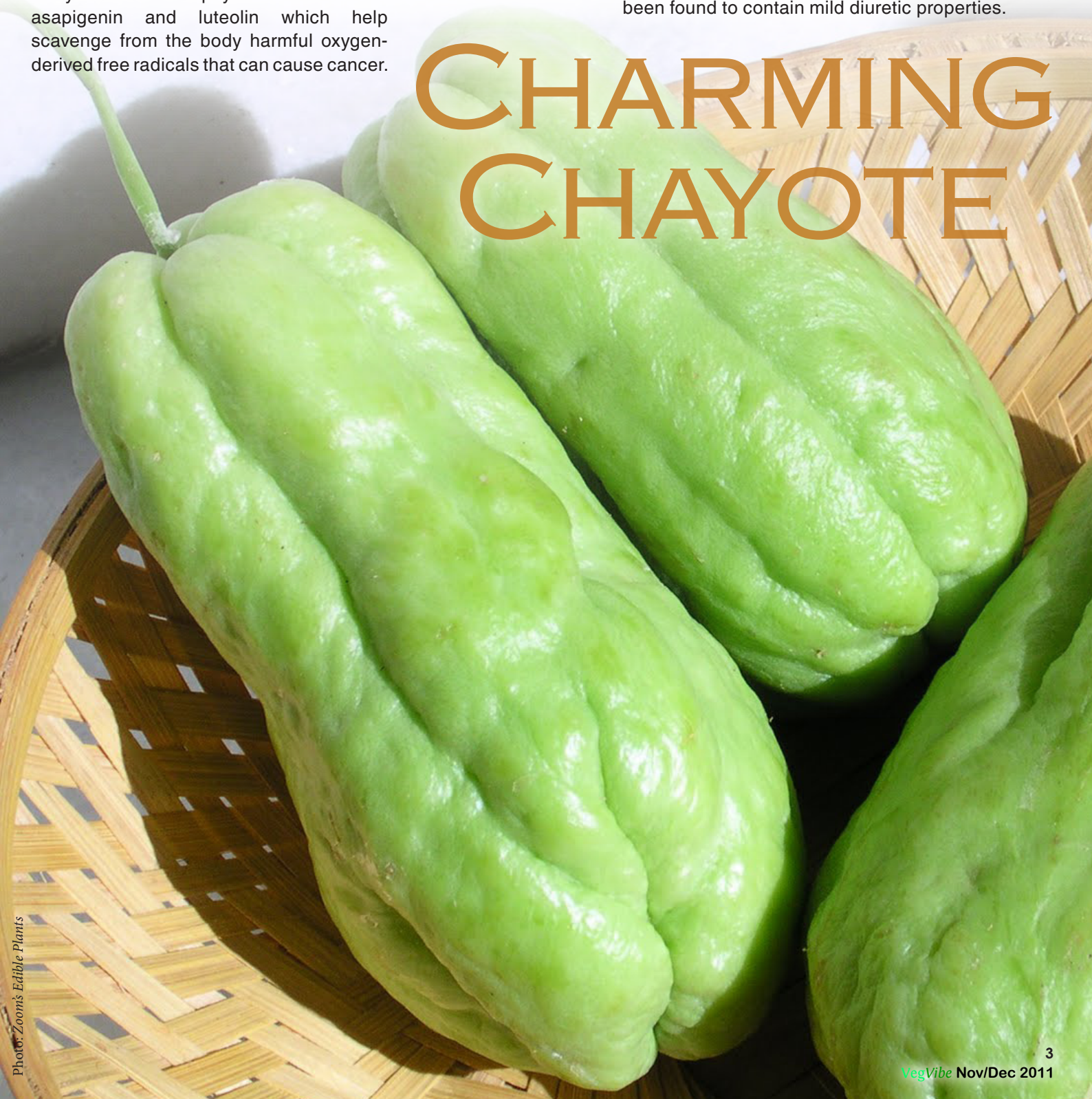
When choosing chayote, select those that are firm and have unblemished skin.

Chayote can be stored in the fridge in a paper or plastic bag for up to a month.

Chayote should be cooked lightly to retain its crispiness and nutrition.

Research suggests that a herbal tea made with chayote squash leaves may lower high blood pressure, dissolve kidney stones and treat atherosclerosis, while a tea containing the flesh of chayote squash has been found to contain mild diuretic properties.

# CHARMING CHAYOTE







**North South East West**

**200 Tanjong Katong Road**

**Tel: 81000049**



**N**orth South East West quickly emerged as one of my favourite vegetarian eateries in Singapore - after visiting it numerous times, I was overwhelmingly impressed by the consistent quality of all the dishes. Admittedly, I was a little frustrated when I heard they had shifted to Tanjong Pagar, as it is a little more tricky for me to get to, nevertheless, it is within a few bus stops from Parkway and the new Dakota MRT station is also not too far away.

I was pleased to see that the location change did not effect the menu. *North South East West* has probably one of the most vast and detailed menus that you are likely to find in Singapore. Subsequently, customers can often be spoilt for choice which is, of course, a good problem to have! One thing that has changed, however, is seemingly more dishes on the menu have a white sticker over them saying 'not available'.

Without a doubt, one of the highlights from my previous visits was the *Mustard Cheezy Balls* at \$3.00 (bottom, facing page). Although some people may feel a little aggrieved by only receiving five balls, I do find that the quality of this snack makes it justifiable. The dish may be an acquired taste for some and the best way to 'attack' it is upon arrival at your table, so that the mustard filling will ooze out when you take that precious first bite.

The signature dish of *North South East West* is without question the *Hainanese Beef Noodle* at \$5.50 (above). This was the dish that blew me away on my first visit and I

am pleased to note that the quality has still remained the same after the relocation. Portion size is acceptable and the thick brown broth is absolutely delicious. The turnips do a great job in absorbing the broth as well and taste great when you bite into them, and the 'beef' is derived from mushroom stems, which again goes well with the rest of the ingredients.

The *Choppy Chicken Meal* at \$6.80 (below) did feel a little dry, but the batter tasted really fantastic - and overall, I did not have any problem greedily finishing the lot. The components making up this dish were all credible, although nothing really leaped out as being extraordinary.

I breathed a heavy sigh of relief, when I discovered that the food quality was still the same, as *North South East West* is a restaurant which I truly cherish in Singapore. For those who have not experienced the food from here, I urge you all to do so as it is, in my mind, one of the best vegetarian restaurants in Singapore. Don't let the more awkward new location put you off from visiting!



This review first appeared  
on *The Hungry Ang Mo*  
in October 2011

By Luke Otter with photos  
blog author of *The Hungry Ang Mo*



The world faces many environmental crises today, with most of them capable by themselves of causing serious disruption to our lives and continued viability on the planet within the next 100 years.

The appallingly quick loss of forest cover affects biodiversity, climate and rainfall, topsoil cover, ocean acidification, suitability of the atmosphere for humans, and even possible future cures for diseases. Big drivers of forest destruction are the palm oil and biofuel industry, construction, and the need in our daily lives for paper.

But individuals can easily reduce the demand for paper through smart daily decisions and, together, greatly reduce a country's forest footprint. A typical 30-year-old growth tree accounts for some 8,000 sheets of A4 paper.

If even an extra 5-10% of people went paperless with things like reading, filling and managing forms, and instead get electronic bills (i.e. doing these online instead of through printed documents), this would ease pressure on the remaining forest cover.



In addition, water systems also benefit as bleaching of pulp for paper production pollutes huge quantities of water.

**By Harveen Narulla, co-founder of GreenPost**

# Protecting the Environment with Systems Design

## The GreenPost Experience



### System design dysfunction

When we first looked at the problem of moving people to electronic bills, one fact that jumped out at us was the disparity between the number of people that transact online or do internet banking (about 50% of Singaporeans), and the number that get e-bills monthly (averaging only about 5-7%).

Surely, if someone has passed the high trust-threshold to buy things online and manage their bank account through the internet, then there should be no excuse for them to still do a low trust-threshold activity such as receiving information (monthly bills) in paper?

Investigating this phenomenon further led us to the following conclusions:

- many more people care about the environment than the low e-bill take-up might suggest
- many of these people would switch if given a convenient alternative
- the way monthly e-bills are usually presented to consumers just does not work for them as it involves logging into their different bill accounts separately (i.e. multiple websites, multiple login IDs and passwords, and bills released on different days)



It was clear to us that this was not a case where shock tactics (e.g. the famous *KitKat* rainforest destruction ad by *GreenPeace*) or guilt-trip scenarios would do much to change user behaviour.

This understanding demonstrated that for most people, convenience is a big driver in decision-making and, on the positive side, showed that there was enough awareness amongst the people that they would make the environmentally-conscious choice given a good solution.

### Designing a system that works

This knowledge helped us focus our efforts on designing and building a system that made it easy for people to get all their e-bills. It necessarily had to be operated by a third party so that it could support e-bills from multiple bill-issuers without getting bogged down by inter-biller competitive tension.

We also factored in billers' preference for doing minimal technical work and instead using their existing infrastructure wherever possible. Finally, we established that any service that could be provided digitally should also be made available on the mobile platform and all services should be kept free as a bonus incentive for most users.

The result of all this has been the *GreenPost* system which is accessible via a website and through mobile applications. 20 bill-issuers (from Singapore, Australia, Malaysia and the US) are currently supported, which is expected to increase to 40 by end 2011.

Early indications are that, with an aggregate e-billing solution, anywhere between 40-50% of people would easily switch over to e-bills. If just 10% of people in Singapore (say 400,000 users) switched to e-bills (at 4 bills monthly of 3 pages each) the conservative savings are 16.5 hectares of old growth forest and water enough to supply the annual drinking water needs of about 24,000 people.

### HOW IT WORKS

*GreenPost* acts as the proxy of the user, to go on behalf to the billers' websites and retrieve the e-bills stored there. Such proxy services are commonplace in the US and Europe, but almost non-existent in Asia. The user enters her credentials into the system and these are then used to securely retrieve the user's e-bills monthly without any further intervention by the user. Additionally, the system automatically archives all e-bills retrieved, provides easy access, sends reminders and alerts as necessary and gives the user information on spending trends so that he or she can make better decisions.

*GreenPost is offered as a free service and users are encouraged to try the service at [www.gogreenpost.com](http://www.gogreenpost.com) or through the relevant apps for iPhone, iPad and Android*





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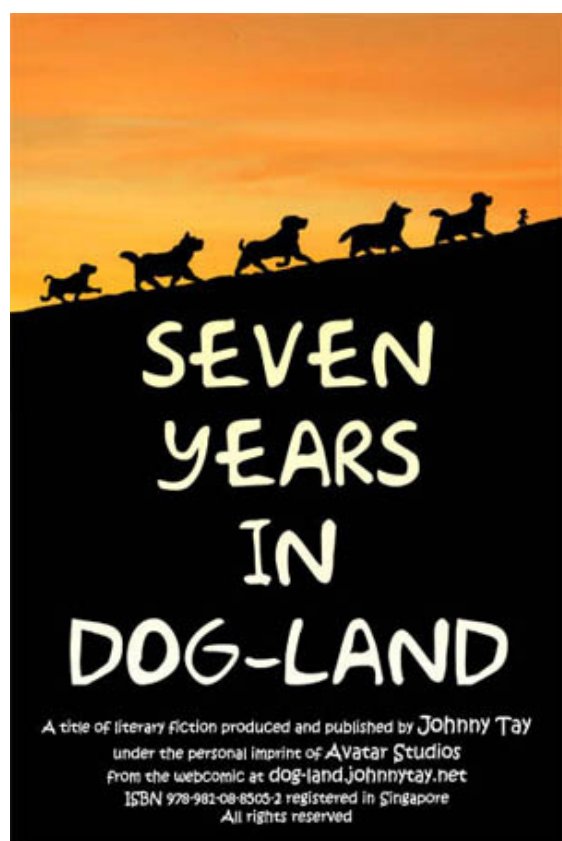
Infusing the idea of the human-pet relationship with an interesting twist, *Seven Years in Dog-Land* is a locally-produced comic book that explores how a world where humans are the pets might look and feel like.

A minimalist-styled black-and-white artwork complements a gripping story where a young girl called Alice runs away from home to look for her lost dog. As she wanders in search of her pet, she stumbles upon the kingdom of *Dog-Land*, an alternate world where dogs are the masters and humans, their pets.

While the story is well-animated, the clever exploration of how people treat dogs in their care is praiseworthy. Depicting human beings caged up to perform tricks or being traded like a commodity, the story developments evoke strong emotions in the reader, and it does not take long before one contemplates the reality - of dogs feeling the same emotions of fear, anxiety, hardship and suffering.

*Seven Years in Dog-Land* is available for purchase online at USD\$5.99 (S\$7.50) from *Graphicly*.

[www.dog-land.johnnytay.net](http://www.dog-land.johnnytay.net)



Over an impressive 300 pages, we learn of Alice's treacherous journey back to the 'human' world, and author-artist Johnny Tay fills every panel with expression and energy.

*Seven Years in Dog-Land* is thus a literary fantasy set in a gritty and cruel kingdom of dogs. It is an exploration of humans' relationship with nature and the human condition itself.

The seven years in this story correspond with the idea of the *Seven Ages of Man*, namely, *infant, schoolboy, lover, soldier, justice, pantaloons*, and *second childhood*, and are congruently spread over seven chapters.

In addition, the book is only available as an e-book, which is a commendable approach to reducing the use of paper and saving the environment as well.





# A NEW FORCE TO SCULPTURE THE VEGETARIAN LANDSCAPE

By Wong Kee Yew,  
founder of The Veg School



Photos courtesy of *The Veg School*

The vegetarian community witnessed the dawn of a new age when *The Veg School* opened its doors in October this year. Officially establishing a new 'vegetarian education system' its first course was successfully conducted at the *National Library Board's Central Library*, and involved some 35 participants who were empowered with the knowledge regarding *The Basics of Healthy Diet*.

In this first of a four-module course, participants were shown how to balance a plant-based diet by taking the right nourishing foods and understanding the science behind a healthy diet. There were also interactive activities to engage the participants so that there was some practical application of the essential skills, including creative food preparation as well as some 'survival skills' for a vegetarian to tackle adverse situations.

The school places a high premium on making real change in students' personal lives and goes the extra mile to motivate its students to do practical assignments on their own after every workshop, and even offers lifelong consultation support for them. For example, students were asked to create their own original recipes at home by applying principles that had been taught, which were then submitted as an assignment that counted towards their graduation.

## Based on Science

Another unique element of *The Veg School* is that it encourages step-by-step, science-based learning instead of self-taught vegetarians who typically learn via random reading and occasional seminar enrichment - which could be confusing and sometimes even misleading due to contamination of information by those with vested interests.

The systematic education system of the school ensures impartial and comprehensive views so that students can rely on a set of science-based principles and guidelines to gradually build their foundation for their vegetarian path.



Gifts for students include emergency snack packs consisting of organic dried fruits and nuts

The founder and principal lecturer of *The Veg School* has built the content for the programmes using the knowledge and expertise gained over 10 years of biomedical research experience. Being a qualified molecular biotechnologist, he harnesses insights gained from his academic research to assure that a vegetarian diet is adopted in a safe and sound manner.





The school's science-based approach enables even the casually-learned to attend the programmes to verify the health information that they have discovered, and helps them to avoid common pitfalls, allay confusion and adopt a healthy vegetarian lifestyle with confidence.

### Attention to Detail

*The Veg School* has been in the pipeline for over 14 months and the time has been spent building the solid infrastructure, reflecting the sincerity and commitment of the 6 executive members involved. These dynamic individuals come from all walks of life but share the same mission to improve general public health, mitigate animal cruelty, and conserve the environment via a plant-based diet.



In long term, the school aspires to become a mainstream institution that has a more significant impact on society, not just to raise awareness on vegetarianism, but also to help the public practically integrate the vegetarian element into their day-to-day lives.

It believes that the vegetarian diet should not be just a personal preference, but a basis for everybody's well being. And in conjunction with that, it envisages that the day will come when talking about being healthy will be synonymous with having gone through training at *The Veg School*!

Find out more about *The Veg School*  
at [www.thevegschool.net](http://www.thevegschool.net),  
including the latest course details  
Email: [kee\\_yew@TheVegSchool.net](mailto:kee_yew@TheVegSchool.net)  
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- 3) RETURN WITH YOUR OWN CREATION!



*Chef Halimah of Kalavira  
vegan cuisine expert*



The '*best vegan baker in town*' is now sharing her secret right out of her cosy home! Now you too can produce delicious vegan food that satisfies even the most ardent anti-vegetarian!

Sessions are fully 'hands on' and will be conducted at Chef Halimah's residence **near Clementi MRT Station**, in class sizes of between 3 and 4 participants each. Participant fee of \$75 onwards includes all ingredients, light refreshments and additional materials.



## Class Schedule & Gallery

[www.facebook.com/Kalavira.Vegan.School](https://www.facebook.com/Kalavira.Vegan.School)  
[kalavira.cakes@gmail.com](mailto:kalavira.cakes@gmail.com)



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- Variety

# H<sub>2</sub>Oil

what's more important, water or oil?



Director Shannon Walsh's *H2Oil* probably gives one the best general overview of Canada's very own environmental and moral black hole. The feature-length documentary looks at how the *Alberta Tar Sands Project* is affecting communities in the area, as well as its impact on a young couple who operated a bottled water company near the site.

The film is a polemic against the excesses of the project, which is responsible for the majority of the greenhouse gas emissions in North America. It produces synthetic oil in what is described as a two-stage process. First, the oil sand, or bitumen, is washed. After this is completed, the bitumen is heated (cracked) using natural gas. The film focuses on the negative effects of the first step.

*H2Oil* is a hard-hitting if thoroughly depressing eco-documentary that demands to be seen.

**Matthew Turner,**  
**ViewLondon**

A large amount of water is also used to wash the bitumen, which then becomes contaminated and is not safe to be released into the water system. The contaminated water is therefore stored in tailings ponds which are basically earthen dams that are prone to leak. The leaking contaminated water contains high levels of heavy metals and other carcinogens, and is suspected to be causing high cancer rates among many First Nations people living along the Athabasca River watershed.

In one community located downstream from the extraction sites, the medical doctor there has received a warning form *Health Canada* for unnecessarily alarming people because he raised some concerns about the cancer levels in the town - especially some rare cancers.

The government officials and industry representatives claim there is no correlation between oil extraction and illnesses and discount the serious gravity of the claims.

The *Alberta Tar Sands Project* is thus the most environmentally damaging megaproject in the history of the human race, and the film focuses on the poisoned water issue, particularly in relation to the two entrepreneurs who bottle the spring water.

In fact, Walsh was inspired by their struggles to produce the documentary and the film enables those outside of the affected communities to appreciate and understand the environmental impact of the oil extraction process while appreciating the global implications it invariably has.

*H2Oil* is available for purchase online for S\$41 (CA\$33) from Amazon



# Clarence

# Tan

## CONFIDENT MAVERICK

**W**e recently caught up with one of the vegetarian community's most active advocates, Clarence 'Cucumber' Tan Hong Juen. The 45-year-old recording studio owner and professional photographer has been vegetarian since 1990 and embarked on a vegan diet 4 years ago.

***Why did you become a vegetarian?***

Back in the day, there was a sci-fi tv series called *V*, about a reptilian-like alien race coming to Earth to harvest humans for food. It got me thinking, isn't that exactly what we do to animals? Turning living, feeling creatures into satay and hamburger? After university, while envisioning what I wanted for the rest of my life, I just decided to go for it - overhaul my diet and stop eating animals.

***Are you a vegan? If so, what prompted you to become one?***

Earthlings, a very brutal, but powerful documentary on our abuse of animals for food, sport and entertainment – was the turning point for me. It made me sad and angry, and resolute not to contribute to this cruelty.

***What were some of the challenges you faced when you first became a vegetarian?***

Back then, there was no internet, no meet-up groups, no VSS, and very few veg restaurants, so everything was sort of DIY, trial and error. But it was exciting; exploring something new, stepping out of the comfort zone.

***How did you overcome these challenges and/or what strategies do you use to deal with them?***

The first day I was veg I had no idea what to eat, so I just had salads. By evening I was ready to give up! Then I discovered this wonderful thing called mock meat. My first taste of mock chicken was an epiphany! So much better than real chicken – no hairs, cartilage and other funny bits which I always had to pick out. Seriously, the mock stuff really helped me transition.

Photos by Ng Shwu Huey





### ***How has your life changed since you became veg?***

I dropped about 14 kg and stopped falling sick ever so often. Listening to my body and discovering the effects of different foods upon it is very empowering. I've also noticed becoming calmer (or perhaps that's just age).

### ***What are some tips/advice you can share for others who are planning to become veg and tips on bringing up a veg family?***

Make up your mind and just go for it. It's not hard, seriously. Arm yourself with knowledge, join VSS and take your B12!

### ***How do you handle temptation and social situations with non-vegans/vegetarians?***

I've honestly never missed meat, thanks to all the analogues. And most restaurants nowadays are able to prepare veg dishes (some do it exceedingly well) so outings with non-veg friends are a non-issue. But please don't be tempted to preach; no one likes that.

### ***Tell us about your work with the Vegetarian Society (Singapore). How did you get involved in it? Any notable moments or occasions/achievements?***

My old friend Kheng (VSS's *Social Activities Facilitator*) roped me in. She has a talent for getting people to do stuff! When I first saw the old website, it was screaming 'Help Me!', so I did. The society has done so many notable projects, including talks by Prof T. Colin Campbell and Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn Jr. But it would be hazardous to my health if I didn't also mention VSS's *Valentine's Day Party 2009*, at which I met my wife. As my brother quipped, "it was a match made in vegan".



### ***Tell us about a day in the life of Clarence Tan.***

My time is divided between arranging/ producing music and photographing beautiful women (and digitally making them even more beautiful). I know... I'm not complaining. I've also recently been inspired by vegan athlete, Grai Beal, to take my fitness up a notch, so hitting the gym is now a regular thing.

### ***What do you do during your free time?***

Movies are a favourite indulgence. So is reading superhero trivia.

### ***Any final thoughts?***

Mangoes make me believe there really is a god.



**What is one veg food that describes you best?**

Cucumber. 😊 (What? It's cool and green, no?)

**If you were given one wish for the world, what would it be?**

*That we realise the huge impact of our food choices. What we put in our mouth affects our well being, our fellow animals and the world. Our current habits are simply not sustainable. We change or we die.*

**What is a quotable quote to you?**

*"You may say I'm a dreamer,  
but I'm not the only one.*

*I hope someday you'll join us,  
and the world will be as one."*

*- John Lennon -*

**What misconception about vegetarianism gets your goat?**

*I throw my hands up at how industry sponsored messages have become widely accepted 'truths'. Milk = calcium = strong bones and teeth. Meat = protein = strength. Few people realise the calcium in milk originally came from plants; the protein in meat originally came from plants. Better to just get our nutrients directly from plants rather than second hand.*

**What is your favourite book or film on vegetarianism?**

*The China Study by Prof T Colin Campbell and Earthlings, which I credit for making me vegan.*



# Pro-Teach

[www.pro-teach.com](http://www.pro-teach.com)

Established in 1998, Pro-Teach Student Care & Tuition Centre has expanded dynamically across the island with 29 branches to date. Driven by a team of dynamic and passionate education experts, Pro-Teach is the first and only student care centre to teach using multimedia curriculum and an Australia-based values education programme.



**Some 3,000 children go meat-free at least once a week at our branches! Join Pro-Teach Student Care in this Earth-saving, animal-loving and healthy lifestyle!**

## HEAD OFFICE

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Bukit Batok East Community Club  
23 Bukit Batok East Ave 4 #03-01  
Singapore 659841  
Tel: (65) 6561-0084  
Fax: (65) 6560-2230

## Western Branches

Gombak Corporation	6560-2808
Fajar	6898-1488
Jurong	6892-4920
Pioneer	6898-0418
Pioneer II	6790-8815
Jurong West	6898-4681
Hong Kah	6567-0675
Yuhua	6566-8832
Choa Chu Kang	6560-0828
Yew Tee	6764-2808
	6468-6820

## Central Branches

Toa Payoh	6356-6433
Toa Payoh Central	6253-1418
Ang Mo Kio	6458-0580
Hong Wen (school-based)	6297-6377

## Nothern Branches

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Admiralty	6363-6325
Khatib	6759-5953
Horizon (school-based)	6483-0898
Paya Lebar	6285-9886
Hougang	6385-2297
Rosyth	6481-1426
Rosyth (school-based)	6481-0091
Wellington (school-based)	6561-0084

## Eastern Branches

Bedok North	6444-6227
Pasir Ris	6582-3035
Tampines	6783-9123
East View	6787-4300
Bedok South	6243-1151



Scenes like this are commonplace everywhere. "It's deforestation.... every government has always struggled to deal with the annual floods because root causes are not addressed," says not a scientist or environmentalist but a small restaurant owner whose 30-year-old eatery is about to be swamped (*Straits Times*, October 11).

Singapore, watching the floods in Thailand and Cambodia are reacting in a knee-jerk fashion - *Prepare to Pay More for Thai Rice* screams the headline of one article that advises all of us to pay more and look for new sources of rice (*Straits Times*, October 11). But do we not realise that this is not just a question of having the money to pay for rice and the consequences of other foods?

Floods, droughts, fires, tsunamies, earthquakes, volcano eruptions occurring everywhere will mean looming famine. In August, I was in Australia and noticed that it was importing apples from neighbouring New Zealand for the first time in its history - when Australia has been a major exporter of Apples! Meanwhile, bananas were between A\$12 to A\$15 a kilogramme.

Photos: www.sxc.hu

By Betty L Khoo-Kingsley,  
author of *Cancer Cured & Prevented Naturally*

# It's deforestation and we **ALL** have to take responsibility!



Singaporeans are a generous people and we compassionately dig into our pockets to help the starving poor in countries around us, but do we realise that it is our addiction to the material good life - shopping for material goods we already have more than enough; eating and drinking well beyond what is good for us; investing in bigger and more houses, condominiums, cars and club memberships - that is creating the dire circumstances of the very victims we are rushing to help?

And soon, we will ourselves be victims whether or not we have, as promised airflown strawberries from the 'Singapore farmland' in north Beijing - never mind the huge carbon footprint.

## Plunderers Extraordinaire

Yes, deforestation is the first step to skin-off the Earth. We plunder her forests for timber and, in the process, deprive indigeneous people of homes and their right to a livelihood - not to mention, the death of millions of pollinating animals and insects as well.

The blasting and digging into her bowels (on land and at the seabed) for her minerals, oils (which are needed to lubricate the tectonic plates and help Earth keep her balance), sand, stone, rocks, ores cause massive landslides, sinkholes, and inhabitable deserts.

Governments cannot - even with the best of intentions - promise economic growth, simply because the health of any economy depends on the health of the eco-system as all resources link back to nature.

Al Gore has once again reiterated in a recent presentation that all eco-systems have been so plundered, so abused, so polluted, that they are dead or dying.

## Gumption to do what is right

What we all - that's everyone, from the bottom up - need to do now is take responsibility for the state of the world and begin to make material sacrifices and aspire to live lightly on the land. Think Global. Live/Eat Local.

Just as no doctor, medical specialist or knowledgeable herbalist - no matter how brilliant - can cure a person of his cancer (in order to have a chance against the diseases, the afflicted you has to make the necessary 180-degree major lifestyle change), so too we on this planet must take action from the front.

Green technologies are still light-years away and no saviour can magically appear to make everything right, or offer us another rip planet for us to plunder.

## Cuban Inspiration

We can take inspiration from the permaculturists in Australia and America who studied the amazing turnaround of Cuba which faced the peak of the global Oil Crisis in 1987 when the Soviet Union collapsed.

The country discovered it had had no fuel and faced severe famine overnight, and the people overcame this impending doomsday by working the land organically (i.e. digging dirt, planting by hand and ploughing with oxen), they turned spiritual.

This amazing transformation did not go unnoticed and the country was named the only sustainably developed country in the world by *World Wide Fund for Nature* (WWF) in 2010. In addition, their story has been immortalised on film through *The Greening of Cuba* and *The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil*.





**Y**ou probably already know and can fully relate to the benefits of including fresh, whole vegetables and fruits into your daily diet. The question is, how many of our loved ones and those around us are effectively consuming a minimum of five portions of fruits and vegetables a day?

Almost all fresh whole fruits and vegetables are alkalising in nature. Yes, even your citrusy, sour lemons. Which is why you would feel particularly refreshed and energised when adequate amounts are consumed to balance your body's natural alkaline pH of 7.3. Keeping your body at this alkaline pH level will not only give you the beautiful sense of well-being but will most importantly help your body stay disease-free as it is the optimum level for your body to heal and rejuvenate.

### **Complete Food – Vitamins, Minerals, Fibre, Antioxidants, Polyphenols, Chlorophyll**

Common vitamins found in fruits and vegetables are your A, B (except B12), C, E and K - a combination of which is necessary to maintain healthy immune, nerve and cardiovascular systems, enable cell reproduction and keeps your digestive system working normally from the high dietary fibre content.

Meanwhile, calcium and iron found mostly in dark leafy greens will help strengthen your bones, teeth and oxygenate your body. And though potassium and

magnesium help regulate your blood pressure, the magic lies in the chlorophyll found in all green leafy vegetables - it is the only substance in the world that can convert sunlight into energy for our cells to rejuvenate.

Live enzymes found only in raw or slow-cooked food (cooked under 45 to 75 degrees Celsius) are a life-giving source of energy and antioxidants that also aid digestion. What's more, eating or drinking high fiber foods also helps keep you feeling full, which is good for those trying to lose or maintain your weight.

Thus consuming a minimum 5 portions of fruits and vegetables with variation everyday would give your body all its required nutrients to stay at an optimum level, reducing the risk of developing some types of cancer, strokes and heart disease.

### **Getting Started...**

Slice up a diverse, colourful spread of crudite vegetables such as celery, carrots, cucumbers and red, yellow and green capsicums – portions that can last a day or two. Then, store them in an airtight container in a highly visible place in the fridge that makes it convenient and 'attractive' to you and your family members to eat them as snacks. Alternatively, you can carry them with you to the office or school.

# THE PERILS OF STAYING AWAY FROM FRUITS & VEGETABLES

**By Adeline Tan,**  
founder of LINS SMOODIES



Make sure you consume at least one serving of vegetables (fresh or cooked) and one serving of fruits (fresh, dried, canned or frozen) everyday as a baseline practice. Then, gradually increase this to two servings a day whilst keeping your intake to mostly whole fresh produce. Eventually, the goal is to reach at least five to ten servings a day.

### The Smoothie Way

One quick and easy way to consume as much fresh fruits and vegetables at a go is to make green smoothies (a blend of whole fresh fruits, greens and clean filtered water). Make it taste great by adding 2 or 3 types of fruits such as local bananas, pineapples, passionfruit, packham pears, mangoes, guavas and organic strawberries.

For the greens, choose local organic (or pesticide and chemical free) greens such as *cai xin*, coral lettuce, *xiao bai cai*, or spinach for beginners and alternate with darker leafy or bitter greens such as *kai lan*, *fu gui cai*, purple cabbage, watercress and endives, as you get used to the raw veggie taste.

Notice we focus on using only the green leafy vegetables for smoothies while avoiding non-soluble fibre such as beetroot, carrots, celeries and broccoli.

### The Juicing Option

Another way, though more tedious, is to do slow juicing. With juicing, you can add a wider variety of vegetables but it has to be consumed almost immediately due to its quick oxidising nature as there is a lack of fibre to naturally preserve and reduce the rate of oxidation.

Both slow juicing and high-speed blending helps you absorb all the nutrients from the vegetables and fruits as it 'pre-digests' them for you. This is important because most of us have impaired digestion as a result of making less than optimal food choices over the years. Thereby inhibiting your body's natural ability to absorb all the nutrients.

### Craving for whole fruits and vegetables now?

If you are contemplating moving into a pure fruit and vegetable diet, do it gradually as (in serious cases) the feeling of avoiding your usual meat or sugar and simple carbohydrates can make you experience flu-like symptoms for a few days to weeks until the cravings are out of your system.

Some may also experience mood swings from the lack of animal protein so be sure to counter this by increasing the intake of nuts, seeds and other plant-based replacements.

### Listen to your Body

You can basically blend or juice any fruits and vegetables that you would normally enjoy eating, and the juice or smoothie should taste pleasant or fruity and not make you feel nauseous.

However, it is very important to listen to your body when juicing or blending. If your stomach is churning or feeling discomfort other than the usual detoxifying symptoms, you might have added something you should not be eating - for example, some may experience bloating or indigestion from large amounts of cabbage.

Finally, remember that keeping healthy is a lifestyle choice and simply changing the diet alone will not necessarily translate to better health that is void of illness. Make sure to keep healthy mind, body and soul to complete your quest to total healthy well-being!





# Project: FIN

## SAVE SHARKS, NOT CULTURE

From talks, to movies like *Shark Water*, to even collaborating with a restaurant to serve out mock shark's fin soup at an event (below), the passionate group that make up *Project: FIN* spare no effort to get the message out - that eating shark's fin for the sake of culture simply does not make sense at all.

Begun in January 2010, the initiative aims to bring down consumption of shark's fin by spreading awareness to consumers and businesses alike, with the central focus that people ought to recognise that the importance of cultural practices should never supersede the importance of ensuring sustainability, as the Earth's resources are not inexhaustible.

Based in Singapore, the local group serves a crucial role in the battle against the archaic practice of subjecting a poor animal to be brutally robbed of its limbs and left to drown in the sea - the country is one of the world's largest entrepôts for the shark's fin trade despite its size.

*Project: FIN* is a member of the *Global Shark Initiative*, and works closely with numerous NGOs around the globe.



**Project: FIN**

[projectfin.sg@gmail.com](mailto:projectfin.sg@gmail.com)

[www.facebook.com/projectfin.sg](http://www.facebook.com/projectfin.sg)

Photos courtesy of  
Project: FIN



Wonderful for both cold and hot water, *Idocare Concentrated Laundry Detergent* dissolves quickly and completely for a clean wash. With outstanding stain removal power, a fresh Lavender scent, yet eco-friendly, your clothes will look and feel great. It keeps whites remaining white, and brightens colours and contains an antibacterial agent that eliminates germs and bacteria while the anti-odour formulation makes it suitable for indoor drying and overnight presoaking. This concentrated laundry detergent is not tested on animals and it generates low suds making it great for both Front-Load and Top-Load machines.

**Retails for \$12 per 1KG box  
at major department stores -  
for more information, please visit  
[www.idocare.com.sg](http://www.idocare.com.sg)**



If you are seriously concerned about the existence of pesticides and chemicals in your food, *GreenFlash* offers the first 100% herbal vegetable wash for you. Formulated using ancient knowledge that extracts the best from the properties of Himalayan herbs, the wash gives the best that nature has to offer. The wash can be used to soak vegetables or can be sprayed directly onto to remove the man-made pesticides, chemicals and other contaminants that have been introduced into our food. *GreenFlash* is non-toxic, eco-friendly and all-natural.

**Retails for \$40 per 250ml spray pack direct  
from manufacturer HerbaNature -  
please call Annie Khoo at 84528809**



# SOUPELICIOUS

*Soups to warm you up  
this rainy season!*

1. Peel and slice onions, garlic and potatoes, and wash and chop water cress
2. In pot, add non-dairy margarine and sauté onions until golden brown, before adding garlic and cooking until garlic starts to release some fragrance
3. Add potatoes and vegetable stock, then bring to boil and simmer until potato is cooked
4. Add watercress and simmer until leaves are tender and cooked through
5. Remove from heat and blend until smooth, then add cashew paste, nutmeg, lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste
6. Serve hot

*2 tablespoons non-dairy margarine  
100g medium onion  
3 cloves of garlic  
150g watercress  
100g potatoes*

*2 tablespoons cashew paste  
400ml vegetable stock or water  
Pinch of nutmeg  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
Salt and pepper to taste*

## ***Creamy Watercress Soup***





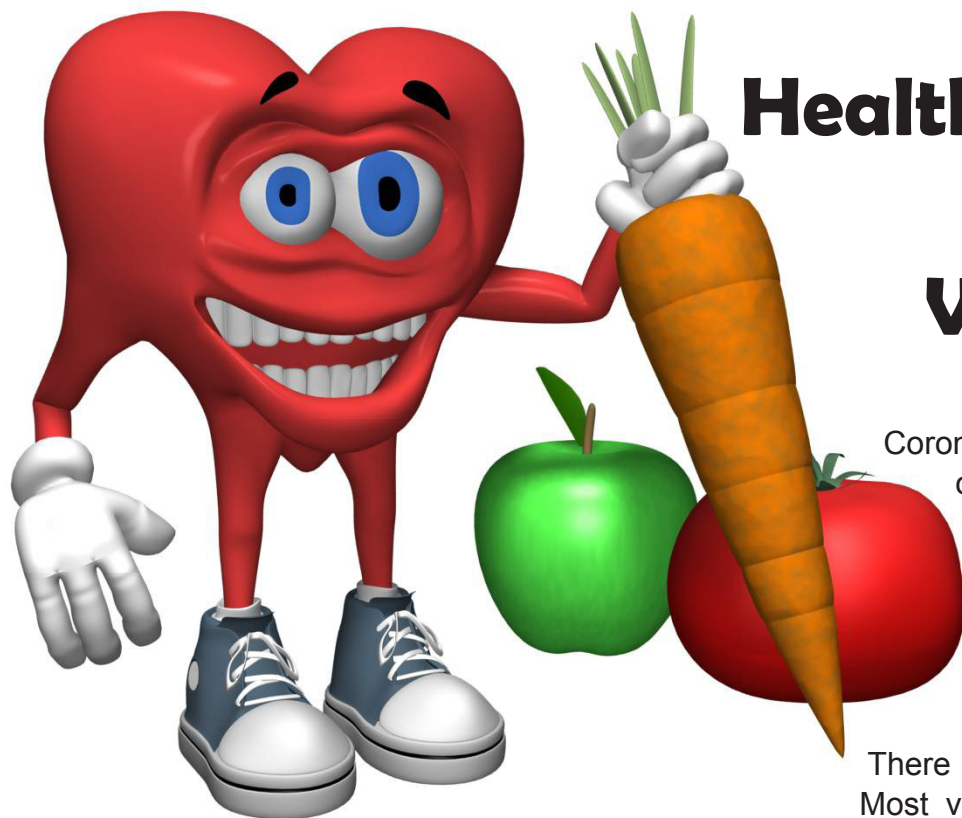
*1 tablespoon olive oil  
150g onions  
4 cloves garlic  
200g leeks  
300g oyster mushroom  
140g potatoes  
400ml vegetable stock or water  
Salt and pepper to taste*

1. Peel and slice onions, garlic and potato, and remove leafy ends of leek and slice them
2. In pot, add olive oil and sauté onions until golden brown, before adding garlic and leeks and cooking until garlic starts to release some fragrance
3. Add potatoes and vegetable stock, then bring to boil and simmer until vegetables are cooked
4. Remove from heat and blend until smooth, then add salt and pepper to taste
5. Serve hot

## ***Leeks and Oyster Mushroom Soup***







# Healthy Heart: Benefits of a Vegetarian Diet

Coronary Heart Disease is the number one killer in the world. Risk factors for Coronary Heart Disease include hypertension, diabetes, smoking, high cholesterol, obesity, lack of exercise, unhealthy diet, hereditary factors and stress.

There are many types of vegetarian diets. Most vegetarians eat dairy products; others eat eggs. Vegans eat only plant-based foods.

- What are the nutritional requirements of which vegetarians should take note?
- Why are antioxidants important elements of a vegetarian diet?
- How can we meet all our nutritional requirements?

To find answers to these questions, join Dr V P Nair's talk on Healthy Heart!

Dr V P Nair is a Consultant Interventional Cardiologist at Mount Elizabeth Hospital, Singapore. His balloon angioplasty and stenting training was at the Regional Cardio-Thoracic Centre, San Francisco Heart Institute, Cleveland Clinic USA and Broussais University Hospital.

He has published many scientific papers and has addressed many regional and international cardiology conventions, and gives regular lectures to doctors and nurses in Singapore and many other Asian countries.



Part of an ongoing series of talks by health professionals and industry experts organised by the Vegetarian Society (Singapore)

**Central Public Library**  
**Multi-Purpose Room**  
**10 December 2011**  
**1.00pm to 2.30pm**

**Open to Public ~ Free Admission**





## Advertising Rates

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[www.vegville.com](http://www.vegville.com)

VegVibe magazine was first published online in August 2009 as the first magazine in Singapore to address vegetarian and vegan issues. We are a wholly content-driven publication that strives to cover anything and everything that matters to the vegetarian and vegan community, and have positioned ourselves as a uniting platform for those interested in **Health & Nutrition, Animal Welfare and Environmentalism.**

### Why Advertise With Us

- Niche readers who follow VegVibe closely
- Regional focus with global reach
- Longer shelf-life due to strength of content
- Established branding and strong ties to the community

VegVibe has been well-received since inception and enjoys a conservative estimate of 4,000 readers per issue, with over 300 direct subscribers, as well as close to 1,800 fans on our *facebook* page – all achieved by word-of-mouth alone. We have also

established ourselves as a reliable news provider and are the Singapore correspondent for the *European Vegetarian and Animals News Alliance* (EVANA) and a registered news source with *Google News*.

**Flat Fee of \$100 per full-page advertisement - inclusive of design and layout!**

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