



## 2013 at a glance

### From the CEO



We have made remarkable progress this year.

Investments in staff and infrastructure have resulted in more effective outreach and efficient working at all levels. Ruth Semple joined us earlier this financial year to head-up a new Communications, Public Policy and Research department. We are proud to have a fully motivated team engaged with many exciting projects. Our Business Development department is going from strength to strength with increasing numbers of trademark holders. There have been so many achievements these past 12 months; it has been difficult to select highlights.

Next year, we look forward to delivering innovative and creative campaigns that will help to move us closer to a world where humans do not exploit other animals, where people eat sustainable, healthy diets, and where the environment is in balance. With a careful strategy in place, we will focus our resources to achieve lasting change at individual, policy, and corporate level.

Thank you for your support. Our work is only possible with your generosity and commitment.

**Jasmijn de Boo, Chief Executive**

### From the Chair of Council



2013 marks a pivotal chapter in the story of The Vegan Society – one where loose ends have been connected, strengthened, bonded together. Collaboration underpins everything we do, and staff, Council, volunteers, and Patrons have been working together as one to achieve our mission.

Global trends and challenges – such as a surge of interest in veganism, the need for greater food security – offer tremendous opportunities for The Vegan Society. I believe that the potential of these opportunities is still to be fully unlocked.

With our team of talented and creative people, I am confident that generous donations made to The Vegan Society today, can be transformed into a better future for people, other animals, and the environment.

The Vegan Society is a highly significant charity with a strong vision: reducing animal and human suffering and environmental damage. Congratulations to all who have worked hard to make this message clearer than ever before.

**Ian Liddle, Chair of Council**

Volunteers

Trademark

Research

Hospitality

Science

500+ people signed up to volunteer at recent events

£190K income from the Vegan Trademark in 2013

### Volunteers help us to achieve more

New to 2013, The Vegan Society now has a member of staff working full-time alongside our growing network of volunteers. Our Volunteer Development Coordinator, Alex Douglas, is there to support volunteers and improve the volunteer experience with The Vegan Society. People from all walks of life have been getting in touch to volunteer with us and staff are quickly recognising the value that volunteers bring to our organisation. With volunteers taking on specific projects, staff are supported to achieve their objectives more efficiently.

### Joining forces to tackle world hunger

This year, The Vegan Society collaborated with more than 200 other charities and organisations for the Enough Food for Everyone IF Campaign. The campaign provided The Vegan Society with the chance to give veganism a voice in the global food security debate and show people how much of a difference going vegan can make. In response to calls from the IF Campaign and the longer term work of our Senior Advocacy and Policy Officer, Amanda Baker, the benefits of plant-based diets seem to be gradually dawning on the UK government.

### We love *The Vegan* magazine

In our revamped and refreshed magazine under the new Editor Anna Thorley, we're including more news, stories, and recipes from around the world than ever before. New sections include Vegan Sports and the return of the Letters page, offering you a platform to share your views. All of this comes in a lively, easy-to-read style – perfect for vegans of all ages. Further changes are planned for future issues in collaboration with new designer, Lia Cumming of Shrieking Phoenix Design. Become a member of The Vegan Society today and never miss an issue!

### The Vegan Society launches new brand identity

As part of the biggest rebranding project The Vegan Society has been through in decades, we're unveiling a new logo. Initiated and led by Head of Communications, Public Policy, and Research, Ruth Semple, the Society's revitalised image brings our values to life and marks a new stage of growth. Through establishing a strong, consistent image, we shall be able to have more impact in our campaigns, attract more people to a vegan lifestyle, and connect with a wider audience.



I completed a six week internship with The Vegan Society over the summer, as part of my degree. Being part of an organisation where people are not working to make profit, but to drive a collective aim forward, was the most valuable experience I've ever had. The atmosphere in the office was simply amazing. Everyone was extremely busy, but we still had a lot of fun together.

Marius Huebler, International Economics student from Germany

45,000

global poverty campaigners attended the Big IF rally in London in June



Something I want to be a part of.  
Stuart Hinde, Member

### Giant leap forward at new trade event

The Vegan Society held a stall at the new V-Delicious 2013 at London Olympia, led by our Head of Business Development, George Gill. Over a quarter of the stall holders at the event were already registered with the Vegan Trademark. Their stalls were busy all day, with both new and returning customers, demonstrating the value of the trademark. Thanks to Sales and Membership Co-ordinator, Spencer Harris, and Business Development Assistants Paul Philbrow, Sarah Hoyle, and Grace Shuck, who helped to make the event a huge success.

### Key connections in the media

The Vegan Society's media profile has blossomed this year as our new Media and PR Manager, Samantha Calvert, has linked up with key journalists in the UK and abroad. This is part of a project to build relationships with an increasing number of journalists, who can then feel that they can come to The Vegan Society for news or comments. Our name has been positioned numerous times in front of several well-known news outlets such as BBC News and Vegetarian Living, not only increasing our profile with their readers but also ensuring that veganism is more widely recognised.

### 12 people take the Pledge every day

Our Vegan Pledge scheme – monitored until recently by Verity Hunt-Sheppard – is there for anyone who would like to try veganism for seven days, one month, or longer. Support and advice may be offered by phone and email, with links to helpful information on every aspect of vegan living. People taking part in the Pledge may also choose to be put in touch with their own vegan mentor, an experienced vegan who can answer questions or just chat about vegan living.

### Surge of interest in the Vegan Trademark

It's been a busy year for the Business Development team, with exhibitions at four popular trade events including V-Delicious and the Natural and Organic Products Europe (NOPE) show. The sunflower trademark is the leading symbol of vegan products and is an important part of promoting veganism worldwide. More and more companies are becoming aware of what it takes for a product to be registered with the Vegan Trademark, and they are applying this knowledge to make their products suitable for vegans, which in turn helps more people to consider veganism as a lifestyle choice.

# 80

new members signed up in one weekend



I was delighted to listen to the BBC Radio 4 Food Programme on veganism. It is so good that, with help from the team, the BBC featured the many aspects of the growing vegan world and its history. Let's hope this is just the start.

Anthony, Member

# 4,472

people signed up to take the Vegan Pledge in 2013

### Student chefs keen to cater for vegans

One of over 300 exhibitors at the National Hospitality Show in the NEC in January, The Vegan Society gave out hundreds of information booklets to student chefs and answered questions from caterers working in hospitality departments up and down the country. Our aim at this prestigious event was to talk to new audiences about vegan lifestyles, and improve knowledge and practice in vegan catering. We also encouraged the development of vegan-friendly options at schools, universities, and in the wider hospitality industry.

### Inspiring speakers at the IVU World Congress

CEO Jasmijn de Boo attended the 40th International Vegetarian Union (IVU) World Congress at the San Francisco VegFest where she gave a talk on the Vegan Pledge scheme to an audience of around 300 international people. As part of the four day congress, Jasmijn discussed effective vegan outreach, based on research into human behaviour change. Members of the audience also watched The Vegan Society's short film, "Do you want to make history?" We were delighted that people from all walks of life were inspired by the film, and went away with new ideas from the discussion.

### Supported by universities and research networks

The Vegan Society's new Research and Policy Advisory Committee was set up by Ruth Semple, Head of Communications, Public Policy, and Research at The Vegan Society, and the group met for the first time in 2013. With links to universities and research networks, the Committee will be developing studies on all aspects of veganism. This will not only extend our reach as a charity, but will also enable us to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration across specific areas of interest; staff have access to the latest research on veganism and can take advantage of joint funding opportunities.

### The new website is coming soon

The online world is constantly changing, and it is vital that we maintain a strong online presence through our website and social media. The Society's new website will offer users a better experience and support vegan outreach at a whole new level. With a fresh new design and improved usability, the website is set to facilitate and further the Society's work in several different areas including business development and membership as well as volunteering and fundraising.

Veg Out caterers in Sussex, who registered with our Sunflower Standard last year, won the Best Caterer of the Year 2013 award at VegFestUK London



The Vegan Society has a long and proud tradition of drawing on robust academic evidence to back up its arguments for veganism, knowing that we face an often sceptical audience. The new Committee is an exciting extension of that tradition, enhancing the credibility of the Society and extending its influence.

Matthew Cole, Chair of the Research and Advisory Committee

# 20

researchers and academics form our new Advisory Committee

### Veganism goes mainstream at tradeshow

The trademark team attended the Natural and Organic Products Europe Show (NOPE) to promote the Vegan Trademark. A strong message of veganism was conveyed through 1,000 colourful free goody bags, which proudly displayed the Vegan Trademark logo. The bags were extremely popular, with one in eight people who visited the event walking away with one. This event was effective in generating an enormous amount of interest for the Business Development team, and the impact was felt throughout the event.

### Plant-based eating is healthy – it's official!

We are proud to be working in collaboration with the British Dietetic Association (BDA), side by side, to improve information and policies on vegan nutrition. The BDA is the professional body of registered dieticians that the Government listens to. This was triggered by the Editor of *Dietetics Today*, the magazine of the BDA, taking our Vegan Pledge. Amanda Baker is working on a plant-based nutrition special interest group with a view to writing fact sheets supported by timely and reliable plant-based nutrition advice from the BDA.

### "Eat meat less often," says select committee

Mainstream politicians are beginning to address the need to move away from meat. "Eat meat less often," was the major conclusion of the Global Food Security Inquiry, based on written evidence provided by The Vegan Society to the International Development Select Committee. Our Senior Advocacy and Policy Officer, Amanda Baker, worked with Chris Payne, a member of The Vegan Society's Advisory Committee, to submit this powerful evidence. We were delighted to see that our work on policy has had such a positive impact, influencing the UK Government to consider a transition towards plant-based agriculture.

### Giving customers a better experience

Browse hundreds of vegan-friendly products and receive your orders promptly through our new online web shop. In an entrepreneurial move led by our Sales and Membership Co-ordinator, Spencer Harris, we've reduced how much it costs to update the web shop, reduced how much time it takes to maintain and process orders, and can now perform everything in-house. Running the web shop is more efficient than ever before, resulting in a large increase in orders.

# 1000

goody bags handed out in two days, filled with delicious samples generously donated by our trademark holders

Plant-based nutrition was the cover story of *Dietetics Today* in December 2012



Without a shadow of a doubt, the ubiquity and cheapness of meat and meat products, as a goal for progress for Western agriculture, let alone developing world agriculture, is one we have to seriously question now for reasons of climate change, emissions, ecosystems and local reasons.

Tim Lang, Professor of Food Policy at City University in the Centre for Food Policy.

100,000 people visit our website each month

47 countries now sell VEG1



### Proactive approach wins the day at VegFestUK

Celebrating all things vegan, promoting delicious vegan food, and networking with other campaign groups – where else would The Vegan Society be than at the much-loved VegFest? Fuelled by vegan treats and positive energy, Spencer Harris, Anna Thorley, and Alex Douglas put on two great stalls that engaged visitors to take part in our activities and support our work by becoming members of the Society. Following a successful stall at VegFestUK in Brighton in March, the Society's expectations were exceeded at VegFestUK Bristol.

### Changes to our database systems

Web and Digital Marketing Officer, Kathleen Bright, is project managing a new Contact Relationship Management database. This will enable us to communicate better with members, supporters, volunteers, and clients. We are starting to see the benefits of changes we've made in greater efficiency and effectiveness, and more are expected. Thanks also to our Administration and Finance Officer, Allan Oakes, for helping to drive this project forward.

### Student nurses quizzed at university stall

We asked student nurses at Birmingham City University, "What ingredients in medication may be unsuitable for a vegan patient?" This was during their nutritional support across a lifespan event for healthcare workers. 300 Vegan Society questionnaires were filled in, providing our staff with essential feedback and raising awareness amongst student nurses of healthy eating for patients and choices relating to healthcare. Leaflets were handed out to interested students who took away information and ideas about veganism. Our stall had crowds of enquirers all day, and not just students – university staff were also keen to talk to The Vegan Society.

### Open minds at Cheltenham Science Festival

In partnership for the first time with Cheltenham Science Festival in June, The Vegan Society hosted a public discussion on the science behind veganism featuring Tim Lang, Tara Garnett, and Richard Twine. The theatre, which seated 200, was nearly full. A captivated audience listened to the points raised in the debate, many of them new to veganism. We hope to increase the number of people adopting a vegan diet through more of the same positive, open engagement within research and science networks, which proved extremely effective this year.



**I volunteered with The Vegan Society at VegFest both in Brighton and then at Bristol. For me, the sense of belonging that I got from volunteering at the stalls was really inspiring. I must have spoken to hundreds of people about veganism, and it was great fun!**

**Sam Austin, Volunteer**

# 20,000

people visited VegFestUK in Bristol



**The quality of the questions asked indicated a different type of engagement. The audience wasn't trying to poke holes in the speakers' arguments; rather they were fully engaged with the subject. I've been dealing with veggie/vegan issues professionally for the last 11 years and I've never seen such positive dialogue before.**

**Liz O'Neill, Head of Communications at The Vegetarian Society**

### Growing our grants programme

In the past year, we have received grant applications from around the UK and as far apart as New Zealand, Estonia, Serbia, France, and Africa. Each application was assessed according to our guidelines so that we can ensure every penny used supports as many people as possible to go and stay vegan. Karen Varga, Grants Officer, has co-ordinated funding for a wide range of activities. We thought you might like to hear about one of the more unusual projects among them – the purchase of a polytunnel for a group working with asylum seekers in Manchester, which benefits people, other animals, and the environment.

### Case study

#### The Growing Together project

The Growing Together project is a therapeutic horticulture project for asylum seekers and refugees, based at the Highfield Eco Allotment Project (the HEAP) in Levenshulme, Manchester. Each week, the Growing Together group brings together 15-20 people to learn about vegan horticulture first-hand. The project team applied for a £750 grant in November 2012 to purchase a poly-tunnel.

### Looking to the future

At the end of a busy and successful year, The Vegan Society would like to thank each and every one of our volunteers, trustees, members, supporters, partners, contractors, and trademark holders for your loyalty and commitment over the last 12 months. Together, we have taken significant steps forwards.

For a relatively new team to have achieved so much in one year is remarkable in itself. Coupled with a growing sense of camaraderie and pride at The Vegan Society, we have even higher hopes for the coming year.

Celebrations for our 70th Veganniversary will soon be in full swing. With a number of fundraising initiatives, a concentrated membership drive, and new opportunities for volunteers, there are exciting times ahead. We hope you can be a part of it.

# 22

grants were given to support grass roots events and outreach work



**We follow vegan horticultural principles as promoted by the Vegan Organic Network. We share The Vegan Society's educational role and we are continuous advocates of veganism within the allotment and the local community. We don't sell any produce from the allotment; we share and give it all away to participants.**  
**The Growing Together project**



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