



Mad cow has been discovered in 31 countries, now including the United States. When countries begin using rapid mad cow tests, they discover large numbers of infected cows. Could it be the virtual certainty that there is more mad cow in the US herd that is preventing the beef industry-controlled USDA from instituting meaningful, large scale testing here?

U.S. needs to do right thing to stop mad cow disease

by John Stauber

When Sheldon Rampton and I wrote our 1997 book, *Mad Cow USA: Could the Nightmare Happen Here?*, it received favorable reviews from some interesting publications such as the Journal of the American Medical Association, New Scientist, and Chemical & Engineering News.

Yet although the book was released just before the infamous Texas trial of Oprah Winfrey and her guest Howard Lyman, for the alleged crime of "food disparagement," the book was ignored by the mainstream media, and even most left and alternative publications failed to review it.

Apparently many people who never read it at the time bought the official government and industry spin that mad cow disease was just some hysterical European food scare, not a deadly human and animal disease that could emerge in the United States.

In March 1996, when the British government reversed itself after 10 years of denial and announced that young people were dying from the fatal dementia called variant CJD - mad cow disease in humans - the media in the United States dutifully echoed reassurances from government and livestock industry officials that all necessary precautions had been taken long ago to guard against the

disease.

Those who did read *Mad Cow USA* when it was published in November 1997, however, realized that the U.S. assurances of safety were based on public relations and public deception, not science or adequate regulatory safeguards.

We revealed that the U.S. Department of Agriculture knew more than a decade ago that to prevent mad cow disease in America would require a strict ban on "animal cannibalism," the feeding of rendered slaughterhouse waste from cattle to cattle as protein and fat supplements. The USDA refused to support the ban because it would cost the meat industry money.

It was the livestock feed industry that led the effort in the early 1990s to lobby into law the Texas food disparagement act. When Oprah hosted a program in April 1996 featuring rancher-turned-vegan activist Howard Lyman, she and her guest became the first people sued for the crime of sullyng the good name of beef. Oprah eventually won her lawsuit, but it cost her years of legal battling and millions of dollars.

In reality, the public lost, because mainstream media stopped covering the issue of mad cow disease. As one TV network producer told me at the time, his orders were to keep his network from being sued the way Oprah had been.

In the six years since the publication of *Mad Cow USA*, Sheldon Rampton and I have spoken out in media interviews, at conferences of American families who had lost relatives to CJD, and we saw our book published in both South Korea and Japan.

Our activism won us some interesting enemies, such as Richard Berman, a Republican lobbyist who runs an industry-funded front group that calls itself the Center for Consumer Freedom. Berman is a darling of the tobacco, booze, biotech and food industries, and with their funding he issued an online report depicting us as the ring leaders of a dangerous conspiracy of vegetarian food terrorists out to destroy the U.S. food system. In just the last week of December alone he issued two national news releases attempting to smear us.

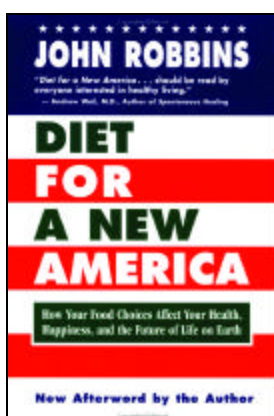
Of course, he had an easier time attacking us before the emergence of mad cow disease in America. I was saddened but not surprised when mad cow disease was finally discovered in the United States.

When the first North American cow with the disease was found last May in Canada, I told interviewers that if the disease was in Canada, it would also be found in the United States and Mexico, since all three NAFTA nations are one big free trade zone and all three countries feed

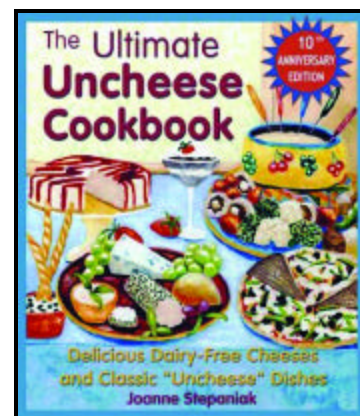
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**DIET FOR
A NEW
AMERICA
TURNS 15
P. 6**



**SMILE
AND SAY
CHEEZ!
P. 9**



A word from the Chair

Happy New World

2003 ended with a bang when mad cow disease was discovered in Washington state. This Winter issue of EarthSave News we present a number of interesting perspectives on the subject, including an article from Michael Greger, MD looking at a controversy now gaining increasing attention -- whether a US version of mad cow disease has already been here for years, perhaps killing thousands annually (see page 5).

EarthSave's prescient Test Cows Now initiative has taken some important steps forward. In April of last year, John Robbins presented Presidential hopeful Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) with thousands of signatures collected by EarthSave from people demanding more mad cow testing. Rep. Kucinich has responded with a promise (along with Rep. George Miller (D-CA)) to introduce legislation which would mandate increased testing for mad cow (see page 5).

You might ask, why is an organization which promotes a shift away from a meat-based diet and toward plant-based eating interested in testing cattle for mad cow? Because if there is widespread mad cow in the US herd -- as many experts believe -- this is a fact consumers have a right to know so that they can make informed choices about their diets. And making diet choices based on accurate and honest information is what EarthSave promotes.

The past Fall also saw a celebration of the 15th anniversary of the publication of *Diet for a New America*. This is, of course, the seminal work that brought EarthSave International into existence. Its author - our founder, John Robbins -- continues to inspire people to live healthier, saner and more compassionate lives. He and his work were honored in October at an event at Roxanne's, a fabulous gourmet raw foods restaurant in Larkspur, CA (see pages 6 and 7).

We have been heartened by the outpouring of positive comments in response to last issue's article on restructuring EarthSave, and have selected a few to print in the Letters section, below. Thanks so much for your support in this transition. And please consider using the form at the bottom of page 12 to make a donation to help EarthSave continue our critical work. Our planet and our health are depending on it.

Yours for a happy, healthy and well-informed New Year,
John D. Borders, Jr., JD
CHAIR, EARTHSERVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



John Borders and family.

Is this cow mad?

by Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson

Charles Darwin once famously asked what a cow thinks about when she looks at a dying companion. The answer has evaded humans for centuries, because we have not generally cared what cows think about their lives, let alone their deaths. Research, however, indicates that cows have enormous, complex, folded brains, not so unlike those of humans. What do they use such large brains for? To relate to one another, to keep track of family relations, just as we do. Any farmer can tell you about the long moans (they sound like "moo") that a cow gives forth when her calf is taken away from her routinely a few hours after birth. Her mental anguish is probably not so different from the anguish of a mother who loses her child at birth.



Jeffrey Masson

We actually know quite a bit about the emotional lives of cows and what they want. We know that cows want to be with each other. We also know what they want to eat: grass. They evolved to eat it. And we especially know what they don't want to eat: each other or any form of meat. They are obligate vegetarians. When we feed cows ground up carcasses, chicken excrement, and blood from other cows (a common and legal practice in the U.S.), we are opening up the floodgates to diseases like BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease, the one that wastes their brains and ours), that will affect not only cows, but also us.

Have we caused this disaster? Of course. Think about "downer" -- that horrible but evocative word to indicate a cow too sick to walk. How many are there? The Agricultural Department estimates that in 1999 there were at least 195,000. (If we use the more stringent definition of "downer" used by Europe and the rest of the world, the figure is closer to 700,000 annually in the U.S.) Of these, all through the 1990s, only a few hundred were ever tested. (In Canada the one diseased cow was tested only because it was thin.)

How many diseased cows are we missing? Humans ate the Washington cow's muscle, and its spinal cord became food for pigs and poultry, which we in turn eat. Is this risking human health? Are there other cows, as yet untested, harboring the disease? Of course, or as my daughter used to say when she was a teenager: "Duuhh, Dad!"

Can anything good come of all this? Yes. We can re-examine how we treat these deeply feeling animals. In the 1990s outbreak in Britain of BSE, 143 people died, and millions of cattle were slaughtered. But cattle are slaughtered every day in the U.S., to the tune of 35 million a year, not because they are sick, but because we want to eat them. Somehow, five thousand years ago, we began to believe that it was our God-given right to slaughter any living creature for food. It is time, for our sake, if not the sake of the animal, to pause and reconsider.

Salmonella, E. coli, Campylobacter, clogged arteries, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, corporate greed, political inertia, human arrogance, the words pile up, and panic begins to seep into our lives. The solution is so simple. Humans are in fact far better off when we avoid animal products; we do not need to eat meat. My wife is a pediatrician, and before we married I asked her what was the single best thing I could do for my health and the health of our as-yet unborn children. Her answer? "Let's eat a healthy diet free of animal products." And we did. It used to be considered a "fringe diet" for people to eat this way, suitable for fanatics and cultists. And yet when heads of major corporations like Michael Eisner of Disney and Steve Jobs of Apple and world-class athletes like Carl Lewis and Edwin Moses all eschew animal products, you know it's made its way into the mainstream.

Is this a solution to the present problem? You bet. Is it likely to be followed? Yes, it is, by ordinary people who care about animals, who care about the health of our planet, and who care about how long and how well they are going to live.

Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson is the author of *The Pig Who Sang to the Moon: The Emotional World of Farm Animals*. Visit <http://jeffreymasson.com>

Left-wing crap

While reading last issue's main article about, among other things, Earthsave's mission, I was disappointed to see an article on the back page about the Iraq campaign and Fox news.

Like the fool who can't eat a meal without including meat, you can't run an enterprise devoted to vegetarianism without adding your left-wing crap.

David Sklar
Chicago, IL

The Editor responds: Part of the reason EarthSave exists is because there is so much distortion and dishonesty in the media. The fact is, what people are exposed to day in and day out relating to diet is not what's best for their individual health or the health of the planet, but what is primarily best for the meat, dairy and food industries. Does Fox News run free Public Service Announcements attacking PETA because they are looking after the welfare of the American public? No, they are and have been providing free air time to attack a vegetarian non-profit because Fox's bread is buttered by

Letters

the food-industrial complex. It's important and useful to the EarthSave cause to help people realize they cannot believe what they hear and see, and that certain outlets have certain agendas, which agendas are at odds with truth. It is neither "left-wing" or "right-wing" to point out liars, but it is part of how EarthSave does its job.

Hooray for restructuring!

The enclosed check is *not* a renewal. It is an additional year end donation. It is important to me that the people at EarthSave know why I am choosing to do this.

When I first heard of you a few years ago, what most prompted me to become a member was your non-judgmental approach and your attempt to encourage a shift *toward* a plant-based diet. While I myself am vegan, not everyone is ready or will ever be ready for that. And while I may agree with the goals of animal rights groups, some of their methods go against my values and

therefore I do not give them financial support. Sometimes I think their approach turns more people against vegetarianism than it converts.

I just wanted you to know that this member, anyway, supports your position to change. I think there is a very real need for your group, and because of your friendly, welcoming, non-judgemental attitude that does not exclude anyone, you are the one group I plan to support in the future. Thanks for all your hard work.

Julia Ambrose
Elgin, IL

We totally agree with your decision to retain most of the yearly membership fees!

Using the Sierra Club and Habitat for Humanity as idea sources is another positive concept.

You are not abandoning the local chapters with this decision. You can be more effective using the fees to sustain and in 'building

membership', there is strength in numbers, especially if they are active; thus making for a healthier dynamic organization.

Another facet: EarthSave must be inclusive. My wife is "still", on occasions a meat eater, she has progressed slowly and in the main, is a vegetarian, with an urge once in awhile for her ribs. We all come the vegetarianism at our own pace. Being judgmental or critical of others does not serve to further "our way."

Also agree with your restructuring and emphasis using to the Mission Statement which was used over many previous years.

We also belong to numerous animal rights organizations and work with them in their particular causes. Where they merge or are parallel with EarthSave within a community . . . that is a plus!

We feel EarthSave is on the right track, and feel very excited with the energies expressed in your cover article (and the whole issue for that matter!). Go do it!

Personally, we haven't been more enthused and hopeful about EarthSave as we are now.

Namaste,
Lauren & Ginger Brightwell
Bellingham, WA

Let me commend you on the the honest, thorough and important cover article in your Fall '03 newsletter. I got confusing information from my local chapter about what was going on, and (seemingly) no information from national headquarters, so I had decided to discontinue my EarthSave membership. I was not interested in supporting an organization with internal divisions, staffed by people moved by the same intentions, but unable to work together. Your article turned me around. I appreciated your willingness to expose mistakes, and then move forward after correcting them.

Also, I didn't understand why EarthSave decided to change its mission several years ago. I now want to say that I believe this organization is back on track.

Name withheld by request

Think About It...

- "In a world where an estimated one in every six people goes hungry every day, the politics of meat consumption are increasingly heated, since meat production is an inefficient use of grain -- the grain is used more efficiently when consumed directly by humans. Continued growth in meat output is dependent on feeding grains to animals, creating competition for grain between affluent meat eaters and the world's poor."
-Worldwatch Institute
- "The impact of countless hooves and mouths over the years has done more to alter the type of vegetation and land forms of the West than all the water projects, strip mines, power plants, freeways, and subdivision development combined."
- Philip Fradkin, in Audubon magazine
- "Although cattle grazing in the West has polluted more water, eroded more topsoil, killed more fish, displaced more wildlife, and destroyed more vegetation than any other land use, the American public pays ranchers to do it!"
-Ted Williams, environmental author
- "The contamination of the nations' waterways from [pork] manure run-off is extremely serious. Twenty tons of [pork and other] livestock manure are produced for every household in the country. We have strict laws governing the disposal of human waste, but the regulations are lax, or often nonexistent, for animal waste."
- Union of Concerned Scientists

Read John Robbins' *The Food Revolution* for these and many other important facts about the impact of diet choices on the environment, our health, and all life on earth.

Study: More TV means fewer veggies for teens

The more television children watch the less fruit and vegetables they eat, probably because the advertising they see leaves them craving junk food instead, according to a Harvard study published in December of 2003.

Children surveyed for the study who spent more time watching television ate 0.16 fewer servings of fruit and vegetables for every extra hour watched. That additional hour a day of TV watching added up to one less nutritional serving every six days.

Heavy television viewing by children has been linked to eating more junk food, getting less exercise and obesity, but this was the first study to show that TV watching led to lower consumption of nutritious fruit and vegetables, said the report, which was published in the journal *Pediatrics*.

At the start of the survey in 1995, the children, who averaged 12 years of age, ate an average of 4.23



servings of fruit and vegetables per day, which was below the government-recommended five daily servings.

The rising epidemic of childhood obesity in the United States and other industrialized nations has been linked to cardiovascular disease in even young children, and to an accumulation of health problems later in life.

American children spend more time watching television than engaging in any other activity except sleeping, averaging 22 hours of viewing a week, the report said. They are exposed to 20,000 TV commercials a year, or 150 to 200 hours worth.

Study author Renee Boynton-Jarrett of the Harvard School of Public Health said most food advertising aired during children's shows conflict with healthy eating habits.

"Little of this marketing is aimed at fruit and vegetables," the report said.

Eat your onions to protect against prostate cancer

A new analysis of prostate cancer rates in different countries suggests that vegetables, including onions, can help reduce the risk of prostate cancer.

Previous work has suggested that lycopene, the substance that makes tomatoes red, can protect against prostate cancer. But this isn't found in a new study from independent health researcher William B. Grant, who is based in Virginia, USA. Starting from data on prostate cancer rates in different countries, he found no protective effect from lycopene. Prostate cancer mortality rates in the US and Northern Europe

are about five times more than they are in Hong Kong, Iran, Japan and Turkey. According to Dr. Grant, animal products such as dairy and meat are the strongest risk factors for prostate cancer. And vegetables, especially onions, cereals and beans were risk reduction factors. The findings re-emphasize the importance of including plenty of fresh produce in your daily diet, and avoiding or reducing meat and dairy products.

Source: *European Urology* 22nd December 2003

Human evolution can't cope with fast food, say scientists

Calorie-packed fast food encourages over-eating and weight gain because it is out of step with human evolution, scientists have said.

They pointed out that humans are designed for conditions in which food is relatively scarce and low in energy.

But fast food from take-aways and convenience stores is typically energy dense. You do not need to eat much of it to consume a lot of calories.

The result is people accidentally over-eat without feeling particularly full.

Nutrition experts Professor Andrew Prentice and Dr. Susan Jebb highlighted the problem by combining British and African diet study data with information on the ingredients in fast food.

Professor Prentice, head of the Medical Research Council's International Nutrition Group at the

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said: "We all possess a weak innate ability to recognise foods with a high energy density. We tend to assess food intake by the size of the portion, yet a fast food meal contains many more calories than a similar-sized portion of a healthy meal.

"Since the dawn of agriculture, the systems regulating human appetite have evolved for the low energy diet still being consumed in rural areas of the developing world where obesity is almost non-existent.

"Our bodies were never designed to cope with the very energy dense foods consumed in the West and this is contributing to a major rise in obesity."

The World Health Organisation estimates there are 300 million obese people worldwide.

Beef industry develops beef-based snack food called cheeseburger fries

At 4 grams of fat per fry, they just may kill off their customers!

If the National Cattlemen's Beef Association has its way, beef won't be just for dinner anymore. Looking to emulate the success of Chicken McNuggets and fried mozzarella sticks, the group is hoping to inject some red meat into the American snack food diet with cheeseburger fries. The fries, which look like a squat version of standard french fries, are made of a meat and cheese compound that tastes - as the name suggests - like a cheeseburger.

Breaded, deep fried, and served with ketchup or barbecue sauce, cheeseburger fries have found their



way onto menus in several states, including Nebraska, Minnesota and Texas, since June. There is also a version being made available to public school cafeterias.

"The challenge is getting people to think of other ways to eat beef," said Betty Hogan, director of new product marketing for the association.

Like most bar snacks, cheeseburger fries pack quite a dietary wallop. Each individual fry has about 75 calories and 4 grams of fat. The fries for schools have less beef per serving but still have about 60 calories and, in fact, more fat - a total of 6 grams - in each fry. And nobody eats just one.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association couldn't be happier. "We want beef in dessert if we can get it there," Hogan said.

U.S. teens are fattest

Teenagers in the United States have higher rates of obesity than those in 14 other industrialized countries, including France and Germany, a study of nearly 30,000 youngsters ages 13 and 15 found. Among American 15-year-olds, 15 percent of girls and nearly 14 percent of boys were obese, and 31 percent of girls and 28 percent of boys were more modestly overweight.

The findings are based on school questionnaires given to youngsters in the 15 countries in 1997 and 1998. The study was led by Inge Lissau, a researcher at the National Institute of Public Health in Copenhagen, Denmark, and was published in the January issue of *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*.

U.S. teens were more likely than those in other countries to eat fast food, snacks and sugary sodas and were more likely to be driven to school and other activities, contributing to a more sedentary

lifestyle, said co-author Mary Overpeck of the U.S. Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

"The rest of the world may be catching up, but we're still in first place in a race that unfortunately we shouldn't want to be winning," said Dr. David Ludwig, an obesity researcher at Children's Hospital Boston who was not involved in the study. He led a study published Monday in another journal, *Pediatrics*, that found that nearly one-third of U.S. youngsters eat fast food on any given day.

Lithuania had the lowest obesity rates in the latest study. Among Lithuanian 15-year-olds, about 2 percent of girls and 0.8 percent of boys were obese, and 8 percent of girls and 5 percent of boys were overweight.

That is probably because Lithuania has fewer fast-food restaurants and its teens have less money to buy snacks and fast food, Overpeck said.

Doctors group seeks to eliminate sodas in schools

Soft drinks should be eliminated from schools to help tackle the nation's obesity epidemic and pediatricians should work with their local schools to ensure that children are offered healthful alternatives, the American Academy of Pediatrics said in January.

In a new policy statement, the academy says doctors should contact superintendents and school board members and "emphasize the notion that every school in every district shares a responsibility for the nutritional health of its students."

Some schools already limit contracts with vendors of soft drinks and fast foods, though the soft drink industry has fought efforts by some states to mandate such restrictions.

While some schools rely on funds from vending machines to pay for student activities, the new policy says elementary and high

schools should avoid such contracts, and that those with existing contracts should impose restrictions to avoid promoting overconsumption by kids.

The policy appears in the January issue of *Pediatrics*. "The purpose of the statement is to give parents and superintendents and school board members and teachers, too, an awareness of the fact that they're playing a role in the current obesity crisis, and that they have measures at their disposal" to address it, said Dr. Robert D. Murray, the policy's lead author.

Soft drinks are a common source of excess calories that can contribute to weight gain. Soft drink consumers at all ages have a higher daily calorie intake than nonconsumers, the academy's policy said. It cites data showing that 56 percent to 85 percent of school-age children consume at least one soft drink daily.



What does a healthy plant-based diet look like?

✍ It would include lots of fresh vegetables and fruits.

✍ It would be low in refined and processed foods and sugar.

✍ It would not include hydrogenated fats and trans-fats (found in many margarines and white flour pastries).

✍ It would be low in both saturated animal fats and vegetable oils such as safflower, corn, sunflower, and cottonseed oils.

✍ It would include more water and less soda pop, more baked potatoes and fewer French fries,

and more whole grains and fewer products made from refined flour. (The American Institute for Cancer Research says 40 studies have linked regular consumption of whole grains with a 10 to 50 percent lower risk of certain cancers).

✍ When possible, it would feature locally and organically grown foods.

✍ It would not include msg, artificial preservatives, colors, or other chemical additives.

EarthSave NEWS

Our Mission

EarthSave educates people about the powerful effects our food choices have on the environment, our health and all life on Earth, and encourages a shift toward a healthy, plant-based diet.

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EarthSave International
PO Box 96
New York, NY 10108
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More than 35 chapters and branches -see page 12

EarthSave News is distributed as a membership benefit to EarthSave members. Basic annual membership in is \$35 (tax-deductible).

COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

We welcome your feedback and ideas. Please write or email us.

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The deadline for articles, letters and photos for the next issue is March 30, 2004, for consideration in the next issue. Fax, mail, or e-mail submissions to the Editor at the office, or to information@earthsave.org.

The editor reserves the right to reject or edit all submissions. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of EarthSave International.

EarthSave educates, inspires and empowers people to shift toward a diet centered on fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes -- food choices that are healthy for people and for the planet. Our influence and effectiveness is dependent upon our members, donors, and benefactors.

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MACULAR DEGENERATION: BLIND FROM THE WESTERN DIET

by John McDougall, M.D.

Like other degenerative diseases -- heart disease, stroke, arthritis -- age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is due primarily to our diet and secondarily to our lifestyle -- therefore easily preventable, and to some extent reversible. This form of eye disease is the leading cause of blindness in people age 64 or older living in Western countries. The severe form with impairment of vision affects 1.7 million people in the United States, with 200,000 new cases annually. Characteristically, this is a disease of progressive, painless, loss of the central vision in the macula of both eyes simultaneously. The macula is the part of the retina which provides our most acute and detailed vision, and is used for visual activities, like reading, driving, recognizing faces, watching television, and other fine work.

Multiple studies clearly show that the same risk factors that predict the development and progression of coronary artery disease (heart disease) also predict the chance of you losing your eyesight from AMD:

* Overweight people have more than twice the risk of progression of this disease from the mild form, which affects nearly 8 million people in the United States, to the severe blinding form over the next 5 years.¹ Other common risk factors shared by both diseases are cigarette smoking, lack of exercise, high cholesterol, and hypertension.¹

* A diet high in all kinds of fats, including animal, trans-fats (margarines, shortenings), monounsaturated fats (olive oil), and other vegetable fats, increases the risk of developing AMD by two to three times compared to a diet low in fat.^{2,3}

* A diet low in fruits and vegetables is associated with an increased risk of AMD.⁴

* Vigorous physical activity decreases the risk of AMD.¹

* As people in underdeveloped countries, for example Japan, Taiwan and China, switch from their native diets based on starches (like rice) to Western diets, their risk of AMD increases parallel to their risk of heart disease.⁵

AMD is a Form of Atherosclerosis from the Western Diet

Disease of the arteries, known as atherosclerosis, is so common in Western societies

that it is considered a normal part of aging. However, this disease is rare or unknown in parts of the world where people consume a diet based on starches, vegetables and fruits. The underlying mechanism involves the depositing of cholesterol and fat from the diet into the walls of the arteries.⁶ In smaller vessels, such as in the eye, this process results in stiffening of the walls, inflammation of the vessels, a decrease in blood flow, and finally leakage of fluids through the vessel walls into surrounding tissues. The average blood flow reduction in people with AMD is 37% compared to people without this disease.⁷ The end result is deprivation of oxygen and nutrients to the visual tissues of the eye found in the retina and concentrated in the macula -- and the receptors of light and color (rods and cones) soon become non-functional and die.

Preserving Your Sight

The commercial solution to AMD is to take vitamin and mineral supplements. One recent study found supplements containing vitamins C and E, beta carotene, and zinc resulted in a 25% reduction in the risk of the intermediate stages of AMD progressing to the advanced stages within 5 years.⁸ Despite this one study, a more honest conclusion is: in the face of intensive marketing, high profits, doctors' recommendations, and widespread use, no supplement has been found to be effective at preventing AMD or delaying its complications.⁶ (A related story of supplements failing heart disease patients is found in my August 2003 Newsletter article, "Plants, not Pills, for Vitamins and Minerals.")

The simple, cost-free, side-effect-free, non-profitable solution for preserving your sight for a lifetime is the same one you should be presently using to preserve the circulation to your heart, brain, kidneys, etc. -- a healthy low-fat, no-cholesterol diet, moderate exercise, and clean habits. As a secondary therapeutic approach for some people with elevated blood cholesterol levels (above 150 mg/dl), I recommend cholesterol-lowering medications. (More information on this subject can be found in my September 2002 newsletter article, "Cholesterol - When and How to Treat" and my June 2003 newsletter article "Cleaning out Your Arteries.")

Even if you have already started to lose

your vision it is not too late. Treatment of blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels has been shown to improve vision in a person with very high levels of blood fat (triglycerides).⁹ Circulation to the eye and the rest of the body is improved immediately after switching from a high-fat to a low-fat diet.^{10,11} The underlying disease, atherosclerosis, is also reversible in time.¹² Inflammation subsides and cholesterol and fat deposits are removed from the artery walls. The damage left from meat- and dairy-laden forks and spoons is the scarred tissue (sclerosis) that has forever lost its ability to distinguish light. The sooner you make long overdue changes in your diet the better sight you will have in your later years.

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Acne has nothing to do with diet? Wrong!

by John McDougall, M.D.

Standard dogma from your medical doctor is that your oily skin and acne have nothing to do with the foods you eat. Next time you hear this message, ask for the evidence. You will find this learned professional speechless and almost empty-handed, because this incorrect information dates back to a single article published by Dr. James Fulton in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* almost 35 years ago (in 1969). Furthermore, the results of this study have been justly criticized and effectively discounted for more than 25 years.² Still, countless millions suffer needlessly.

Dr. Fulton studied 30 adolescents (14 girls and 16 boys) attending an acne clinic and 35 young adult male prisoners with mild to moderate acne. The Chocolate Manufacturers Association of America provided the study with two kinds of candy bars - one with and one without chocolate. Both bars were made mostly of fat and sugar and had similar amounts of calories (557 to 592 calories per bar).

The subjects then added one or the other bar to their usual daily food intake for the next four weeks. Nothing else was changed in their diet during the experiment, except

better and 9 were worse. (Not unexpectedly, the rate of sebum excretion increased by 60% with the addition of either kind of the high-fat, high-sugar candy bar, with or without chocolate, in all subjects.³ Sebum is a fatty substance secreted by the skin.) Yet the results of this single, seriously flawed, and completely irrelevant (it only tested the effects of chocolate candy bars), experiment are the heart and soul of the claim that "diet has nothing to do with acne."

The "Acne Plague" is Found Only Where Rich Food is Eaten

Acne develops when the pores in the skin (sebaceous follicles) become blocked with dead skin (hyperkeratinization); then fatty materials (sebum) accumulate within the blocked pore. This overstuffed pore then becomes infected by bacteria, resulting in inflammation - the pimple. The bacteria eat the sebum and thrive. Prevention and treatment are now

directed at unblocking the pore, reducing the accumulation of the sebum, lessening inflammation, and killing the bacteria, by various pharmaceuticals sold over the counter and by prescription. As with all Western diseases, there is a better way - and that is attacking the cause and invoking the cure with a healthy diet.

Incidence of acne in Western Countries⁴:

- Adolescents -- 79% to 95%
- Older than 25 -- 40% to 54%
- Middle aged -- 3% to 12%
- Incidence of acne in underdeveloped countries: often 0%

Multiple studies of people living on their traditional native diets - almost all of which are low fat-diets, based on starches, vegetables, and fruits - have found these people have little or no acne. When these healthy people learn the Western diet, acne becomes an epidemic - as do the other diseases of modern civilization (obesity, heart disease, diabetes, prostate and breast cancer). Examples of well-studied populations include the Kitavan Islanders of Papua New Guinea who live on a diet of 70% carbohydrate from plant foods, and the Ache' of Eastern Paraguay with a diet of about 70% of the calories coming from manioc (cassava - a root vegetable).⁴



The killer among us

Could mad cow disease already be killing thousands of Americans every year?

By Michael Greger, M.D.

In October, 2001, 34-year-old Washington State native Peter Putnam started losing his mind. One month he was delivering a keynote business address; the next, he couldn't form a complete sentence. Once athletic, soon he couldn't walk. Then he couldn't eat. After a brain biopsy showed it was Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, his doctor could no longer offer any hope. "Just take him home and love him," the doctor counseled his family. Peter's death in October, 2002 may have been caused by mad cow disease.

Seven years earlier and 5000 miles away, Stephen Churchill was the first in England to die. His first symptoms of depression and dizziness gave way to a living nightmare of terrifying hallucinations; he was dead in 12 months at age 19. Next was Peter Hall, 20, who showed the first signs of depression around Christmas, 1994. By the next Christmas, he couldn't walk, talk, or do anything for himself. Then it was Anna's turn, then Michelle's. Michelle Bowen, age 29, died



Michael Greger M.D.

in a coma three weeks after giving birth to her son via emergency cesarean section. Then it was Alison's turn. These were the first five named victims of Britain's Mad Cow epidemic. They died from what the British Secretary of Health called the worst form of death imaginable, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, a relentlessly progressive and invariably fatal human dementia. The announcement of their deaths, released on March 20, 1996 (ironically, Meatout Day), reversed the British government's decade-old stance that British beef was safe to eat.

It is now considered an incontestable fact that these human deaths in Britain were caused by Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), or Mad Cow disease. Bovine means "cow or cattle," spongiform means "sponge-like," and encephalopathy means "brain disease." Mad Cow disease is caused by unconventional pathogens called "prions" – literally infectious proteins – which, because of their unique structure, are practically invulnerable, surviving even incineration at temperatures hot enough to melt lead. The leading theory as to how cows got Mad Cow disease in the first place is by eating diseased sheep infected with a sheep spongiform encephalopathy called "scrapie."

In humans, prions can cause Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), a human spongiform encephalopathy whose clinical picture can involve weekly deterioration into blindness and epilepsy as one's brain becomes riddled with tiny holes.

We've known about Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease for decades, since well before the first mad cow was discovered in 1985. Some cases of CJD seemed to run in families; other cases seemed to just arise spontaneously in about one in a million people every year, and were hence dubbed "sporadic." The new form of CJD caused by eating beef from cows infected with Mad Cow disease, though, seemed to differ from the classic sporadic CJD.

The CJD caused by infected meat has tended to strike younger people, has produced more psychotic symptoms, and has often dragged on for a year or more. The

most defining characteristic, though, was found when their brains were sampled. The brain pathology was vividly reminiscent of Kuru, a disease once found in a New Guinea tribe of cannibals who ate the brains of their dead. Scientists called this new form of the disease "variant" CJD.

Other than Charlene, a 24 year old woman now dying in Florida, who was probably infected in Britain, there have been no reported cases of variant CJD in the U.S. Hundreds of confirmed cases of the sporadic form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, however, arise in the United States every year, but the beef industry is quick to point out these are cases of sporadic CJD, not the new variant known to be caused by Mad Cow disease. Of course, no one knows what causes sporadic CJD. New research suggests that not hundreds but thousands of Americans die of sporadic CJD every year, and that some of these CJD deaths may be caused by eating infected meat after all.

Although the fact that Mad Cow disease causes variant CJD had already been strongly established, researchers at the University College of London nevertheless created transgenic mice complete with "humanized" brains genetically engineered with human genes to try to prove the link once and for all. When the researchers injected one strain of the "humanized" mice with infected cow brains, they came down with the same brain damage seen in human variant CJD, as expected. But when they tried this in a different strain of transgenic "humanized" mice, those mice got sick too, but most got sick from what looked exactly like sporadic CJD. The Mad Cow prions caused a disease that had a molecular signature indistinguishable from sporadic CJD. To the extent that animal experiments can simulate human results, their shocking conclusion was that eating infected meat might be responsible for some cases of sporadic CJD in addition to the expected variant CJD.

This is not the first time meat was linked to sporadic CJD. In 2001, a team of French researchers found a strain of scrapie – "mad sheep" disease – that caused the same brain damage in mice as sporadic CJD. "This means we cannot rule out that at least some sporadic CJD may be caused by some strains of scrapie," says team member Jean-Philippe Deslys of the French Atomic Energy Commission's medical research laboratory.

Population studies had failed to show a link between CJD and lamb chops, but this French research provided an explanation why. There seem to be six types of sporadic CJD and there are more than 20 strains of scrapie. If only some sheep strains affect only some people, studies of entire populations may not clearly show the relationship. Monkeys fed infected sheep brains certainly come down with the disease. Hundreds of "mad sheep" were found in the U.S. in 2003. Scrapie remains such a problem in the United States that the USDA has issued a scrapie "declaration of emergency." Maybe some cases of sporadic CJD in the U.S. are caused by sheep meat as well.

Pork is also a potential source of infection. Cattle remains are still boiled down and legally fed to pigs (as well as chickens) in this country. The FDA allows this exemption because no "naturally occurring" porcine (pig) spongiform encephalopathy has ever been found. But American farmers typically kill pigs at just five months of age, long before the disease is expected to show symptoms. And, because pigs are packed so tightly together, it would be difficult to spot neurological conditions like spongiform encephalopathies, whose most obvious

symptoms are movement and gait disturbances. We do know, however, that pigs are susceptible to the disease – laboratory experiments show that pigs can indeed be infected by Mad Cow brains – and hundreds of thousands of downer pigs, too sick or crippled by injury to even walk, arrive at U.S. slaughterhouses every year.

A number of epidemiological studies have suggested a link between pork consumption and sporadic CJD. Analyzing peoples' diet histories, the development of CJD was associated with eating roast pork, ham, hot dogs, pork chops, smoked pork, and scrapple (a kind of pork pudding made from various hog carcass scraps). The researchers concluded, "The present study indicated that consumption of pork as well as its processed products (e.g., ham, scrapple) may be considered as risk factors in the development of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease." Compared to people that didn't eat ham, for example, those who included ham in their diet seemed ten times more likely to develop CJD. In fact, the USDA may have actual-

ly recorded an outbreak of "mad pig" disease in New York 25 years ago, but still refuses to reopen the investigation despite petitions from the Consumer's Union (the publishers of *Consumer Reports* magazine).

We do not know at this time whether chicken meat poses a risk. There was a preliminary report of ostriches allegedly fed risky feed in German zoos who seemed to come down with a spongiform encephalopathy. Even if chickens and turkeys themselves are not susceptible, though, they may become so-called "silent carriers" of Mad Cow prions and pass them on to human consumers. Dateline NBC quoted D. Carleton Gajdusek, the first to be awarded a Nobel Prize in Medicine for his work on prion diseases, as saying, "it's got to be in the pigs as well as the cattle. It's got to be passing through the chickens." Dr. Paul Brown, medical director for the US Public Health Service, believes that pigs and poultry could

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EarthSave's Test Cows Now campaign paying off

EarthSave's TestCowsNow.com program has lobbied Congress to increase testing for mad cow, and increase consumer protections. In April of 2003, EarthSave founder John Robbins presented Rep. Dennis Kucinich with thousands of petitions demanding increased measures (pictured below). In late December, after discovery of mad cow in the US, Rep. Kucinich promised EarthSave he will take action in early 2004 and introduce the legislation we seek.

On Mad Cow

by Representative Dennis J. Kucinich

The unfortunate discovery of a dairy cow in Washington State infected with Mad Cow Disease, or BSE, is a result of irresponsible US agricultural policies. BSE in the United States is preventable, but the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must do more to protect American consumers.

Last year, the USDA tested only 19,990 cattle believed to be at risk for Mad Cow Disease, out of a population of about 96 million or 1 out of every 5,000 cattle. By contrast in Europe, every single animal above a given age gets tested for this fatal brain-wasting disease (one out of every four cattle).

USDA argues that there is no risk to humans because slaughter houses are required to remove all central nervous system (CNS) tissue from sick cattle. This tissue is where BSE is found and can infect humans if eaten. However, removing this tissue is rarely completely effective. USDA's own studies found that 35 percent of advanced meat recovery product tested was contaminated with CNS tissue.

While the USDA-sponsored Harvard risk assessment of BSE in the U.S. noted that compliance with FDA's 1997 BSE feed rule is the most important factor in preventing a BSE outbreak, it is clear that this rule is not being rigorously enforced. Two GAO reports have shown how lax the FDA has been in ensuring compliance with the feed rule. The first GAO report published some three years after the BSE feed rule went into effect found fairly widespread non-compliance. The 2002 GAO report found no improvement and found that the FDA compliance data was unreliable.

When Congress returns I intend to



introduce legislation that will:

1. Prohibit meat from downer cattle from entering the human food supply;
2. Test all downer cattle using modern rapid quick tests (estimates range from 190,000 to 970,000 cattle);
3. Establish a mandatory trace back system for all bovines;
4. Require mandatory recall of food products infected;
5. Prohibit the feeding of the remains of any mammal to any animals that humans eat;
6. Tighten the law on dietary supplements, which currently allow supplements to contain CNS tissue;
7. Require doctors and hospitals to report all cases of Creutzfeldt-Jakob to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

More can and must be done to protect Americans, and our economy, from this devastating disease and the public panic it can cause.

Diet for a New America turns 15

An evening honoring John Robbins

On Tuesday, October 28, 2003, a few dozen EarthSave International leaders and supporters gathered at Roxanne's Restaurant in Larkspur, California to honor EarthSave founder, John Robbins. The occasion was the 15th anniversary of the publication of John's bestselling *Diet for a New America*. The evening was hosted by restaurant owners Michael and Roxanne Klein along with Carolyn Davis and Alex Mehran. The food was fabulous, and the company warm and inspirational.

Among the speakers during the evening was Jeff Nelson of the EarthSave Board of Directors. Jeff started out by showing a video tribute to John, which can be viewed online on the EarthSave.org website.

Following are remarks delivered by Jeff during the event:

I want to thank our hosts for putting on this wonderful evening - Michael & Roxanne Klein, thank you! The ambiance and food have been exquisite. The only way most of us can get into this restaurant is to be invited to a party like this tonight - the restaurant is so wonderful it's booked months in advance!

I also want to thank and acknowledge Carolyn Davis and Alex Mehran for hosting tonight along with Michael and Roxanne - thank you all for a wonderful evening.

My name is Jeff Nelson and I'm the Vice-chair of the Board of Directors of EarthSave International.

A few years ago my wife, Sabrina, and I were having dinner with a friend of mine I'd just finished producing a TV project with. Sabrina was asking the waiter if there was any chicken stock in rice, and my friend turned to me and said, "You're not vegetarian, are you?"

And I said, "Yeah, we have been for several years."

"You're kidding!" he said, "you seem so normal!"

Well, he was wrong about that - we're not normal! But his reaction demonstrated that some people make uncharitable assumptions about others based on what they

ably make some uncharitable assumptions about our guest of honor tonight, John Robbins. But my reaction and assumptions toward John are just the opposite of my forefathers.

There are times in your life when things happen to make your life go in a different direction, milestones that change the trajectory. You start kindergarten, finish 8th grade, graduate high school, college, get married, have your first child. All these are major milestones that can change you.

One such event for me was reading John Robbins' *Diet for A New America*. It changed me in some profound ways.

Everyone remembers where they were when JFK was shot, or when 9-11 happened. Like those important events, I can still recall the first time I heard John Robbins.

It was November, 13 years ago and I was driving back from Paramount studios, listening to talk radio host Tom Lykas and he was interviewing the fellow who had a new book out, John Robbins. John was making some really fascinating points about how what you choose to eat impacts so many aspects of your life, and I decided to stop at the Bodhi Tree bookstore to pick up a copy of the book he was talking about. As I read it, John's health arguments about diet were so cogent, so logical, I decided to become vegetarian immediately.

eat aren't any different from the ones which were part of her family - the chickens we eat were just terrorized and lived horrible lives. Sabrina decided by the end of the first chapters of *Diet for A New America* that she could no longer eat animals, she could no longer be part of a system that represented so much cruelty.

Flash forward six years of being vegetarians, and one day Sabrina was diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disease called relapsing polychondritis (RP). RP is a disease where your immune system attacks and destroys the cartilage in your body. It's progressive and usually fatal within 20 years. Sabrina suffered a year of relapses and took prednesone, a drug that's arguably as bad as the RP.

One day Sabrina read a book by John McDougall, M.D. in which he discussed autoimmune diseases and dairy proteins, specifically diseases in the lupus family, which RP is. After reading about this connection, Sabrina came downstairs and said, "I'm vegan."

I said, "Well, I guess if you're vegan...I'm vegan, too."

Three weeks after going vegan, Sabrina's monthly blood test showed her RP was inactive. After three months of similar tests, her rheumatologist declared Sabrina's RP in remission. That was 7 years ago, and it's stayed in remission since.

Sabrina and I decided then to open a vegetarian website, vegsource.com. We did this in part because Sabrina felt she'd been given a second chance in life, and we wanted to share with others the information that saved her. And the other reason for starting VegSource was that, like everyone we have a stake in life. We have kids, and we want to make sure that they and their families have a healthy planet to inherit.

So part of starting vegsource was giving back, and part of it was our own form of kitchen activism. And a big part of it was just to have fun.

When we opened the site, we dedicated it to John Robbins and Deo, because we were on this path because of them.

Vegsource grew and has become the most trafficked food website on the internet, according to Jupiter-Media Metrix and other ranking systems.

Then, because of Vegsource, I was invited by Howard Lyman to join the EarthSave Board of directors. It was like coming full circle.

In the first board meeting I attended - here in Marin county - I met John and Deo. It was a thrill. Not everyone gets to meet their heroes.

I was trying earlier to think of words I would use to describe John -- inspirational, real, a leader, warm, kind, generous -- those are all words that came to mind.

And John is a speaker of the truth, someone who does so without fearing consequences, whether speaking the truth loses him a Baskin Robbins fortune, or whether it means he's targeted by

the meat and dairy industries, and some very powerful people in those industries who's job it is to hide truth from people. John's way is to expose the lies and at times the liars, but always in an honest and compassionate way, without judgement.

It is because of John's compassion and non-judgemental way that John "got" me, and so many others.

I also really admire John and Deo's special relationship with Ocean. They get to have their children and grandchildren living with them, involved in their lives every day. It's very neat; it's something I'd like to have with my own kids when they get older.

There's so much love in the Robbins household - their son wanted to stay and bring up his own family there, too. When you see the way they live as a family - well, that's the way things should be.

John founded and built EarthSave because of the tremendous outpouring of love for his work and for him personally. He built it into an organization with a unique position in the activist community, because John is unique.

John is the first person to tie it all together - the health, environment and ethical reasons for living a vegetarian life. He's the first person who connected the dots.

Chapters practically appeared spontaneously around the country wherever John would speak. People would hear him and say, "WOW! I must be part of this!"

But John and Deo didn't build EarthSave all by themselves. Alongside them have been many incredible people who put in enormous amounts of time, energy, spirit and in many cases money. A number of the original team of the EarthSave board is here tonight, and I just want to specifically introduce:

Ian and Terry Thiermann
Richard Glantz
Shams Kairys and
Eleanor Wasson

Each of these people gave enormous amounts of time and energy, without being paid, for many years. They were the heartbeat of the organization from 1989 to 1997. On behalf of the current board and the entire organization, we thank you for your immense contributions.

Under their creative stewardship, EarthSave has done a tremendous amount of good. They have done a huge amount of good and EarthSave has made a major contribution to the awareness and lives of millions of people.

Thanks to EarthSave, tens of thousands of heart attacks have been prevented, cancers prevented, cases of diabetes prevented.

Thanks to EarthSave, there are thousands of acres of rainforest standing that would otherwise have been destroyed for cattle grazing.

Thanks to EarthSave, our water is cleaner and more plentiful, our air is healthier, and our climate more stable than it would have otherwise been.



Amazing gourmet raw cuisine from Roxanne's Restaurant



Host Michael Klein chats with



Ian Thiermann



Jamba Juice founder Kirk Pe



Fritz Kieckhefer



Evening hosts Alex Mehran and Carolyn Davis

choose to eat or not eat. Among those who might be uncharitable about vegetarianism could be my grandparents and their parents, if they were alive today. The reason is that my great-great-grandfather started with Armour Meat Company, along with his brothers. And they were responsible for such industrial "breakthroughs" as the "kill floor," the refrigerated train car, and ultimately the meat-centered basis of the modern American diet.

If they were alive today and had the same sensibilities as the time in which they lived, they would prob-

Sabrina read the book, but didn't have to read as far into it before she decided to go veg. She had raised chickens as little girl, and each of them had their own unique personality. They were members of her family, and they even waited each day until Sabrina came home from school before laying their eggs. They wouldn't lay them for anyone else.

Sabrina had always felt the chickens she was raised with were different from the chickens we ate. But reading *Diet for a New America* opened her eyes, and made her realize the chickens we



Inan Thiermann, Richard Glantz



John Robbins



John Shay, and Nancy Jovanovic



Patti Breitman

Thanks to EarthSave, millions of animals have been spared the torture of factory farm conditions, and millions of people helped to awaken to the beauty of the human-animal bond.

Thanks to EarthSave, the understanding of the interconnectedness of life is far more advanced and closer to realization than it would otherwise have been.

EarthSave -- led by the people sitting with us here tonight and others -- has done good.

The current board is looking to build on the successes of those who came before us.

One of the benefits of serving on the Board of ESI is that you get to meet and work with very special people -- board members like EarthSave Chair John Borders, who lives in Louisville, Kentucky. John is a brilliant, kind, hardworking and incredibly dedicated person, a lawyer by day and a cooking instructor by night. He and his wife, Cindy, are relentless about getting the message out.

Mark Epstein here is another terrific team member. He's a third generation vegetarian, and serves on the board of a number of other very worthy non-profit organizations. Currently he's also president of the National Health Association, formerly Natural Hygiene Association.

Mark's a guy who makes a lot of money using computers and the stock market, and if I could figure out what he's doing, I'd be doing it too!

Caryn Hartglass is a board member who became our Executive Director. She is highly capable and works her tail off for EarthSave.

We have board members in Florida, Chicago, Seattle, New York, Kentucky, and it's a collection of driven, committed people.

We also have fabulous people working in our local chapters. Here with us tonight is Patti Breitman of EarthSave Marin. Patti is a longtime EarthSave supporter, and has been the agent on many of John's books, as well as a lot of other major books you've heard of.

EarthSave is always looking to evolve and find new ways to reach people. One of EarthSave's most successful publications is "Realities," done more than 10 years ago and updated from time to time. We're updating it again and it's called, "Our Food Our Future," which draws from John's *The Food Revolution*.

Of course, today is a different time from when EarthSave was founded. Today we have the Internet. We still need printed material, but people can now log onto the net and do searches and find a great deal of the work of John and EarthSave in all corners.

How do we reach new people who aren't necessarily open to EarthSave's message?

EarthSave doesn't do stunts, we don't throw pies or do animal rights street theater. That's not us.

But we're looking for ways to attract new attention, and we're looking to do it by putting out positive energy and work into our communities.

One example is Project Garden. Project Garden is an investment in the future of our planet.

My son who is in 2nd grade brought home nutrition homework. At bottom of the page of Nutrition Facts was a credit noting that it was provided by "Kraft Foods." Kraft donated the nutrition facts sheets to the school, it's making an investment in school children. It's spending money to get their particular notion of "nutrition" into schools, and they're doing it in a way that

many schools perceive as helpful. Are they doing it because they care about the health of all those sweet little kids? Or is it because they care about their pocketbook, and they see the kids as future customers?

At EarthSave, we need to see children as future EarthSavers. Our strategy is to go in and give organic gardens to a place where it's going to help and be seen as helpful. During the course of helping put an organic garden in a school, we supply useful literature, things like "Our Food Our Future," copies of EarthSave News, pamphlets and other materials specially done for the Project Garden program -- the same kind of reliable, foot-noted, straightforward information that EarthSave is famous for producing.

We don't hand out our materials on first day, mind you. But our experience is that if you give someone something useful and desirable like a garden, and later you give them something to read, they're going to look at it at a minimum out of respect and gratitude. And some of these people will take to that message to heart today; and with others you will have planted a seed that maybe 10 years later, bears fruit when they may be moved to evaluate their eating choices.

And those kids working in a Project Garden will always remember their connection with the earth. People are getting more and more disconnected from the earth, that's why it's easy to feed people processed foods and things that a hundred years ago people probably wouldn't have touched.

I want to show a short video now about an EarthSave garden my wife and I got started this year. (Video can be viewed online at: projectgarden.com/video.htm)

It only takes a couple of enthusiastic people to plant the seeds to grown an EarthSave organic garden in their community. What the video doesn't show is what the garden looked like by August, when it was enormous and fruitful.

You know, EarthSave goes to the vegetarian conferences or the animal rights conferences, and everyone says, "Yay EarthSave! We love you! We love John Robbins!"

But if EarthSave goes to the local school or the community center or the church in our areas, most people say, "What's EarthSave?"

It's important for EarthSave and our members to go to the veg conferences and to do that if they wish -- that can nourish and recharge people.

But we want to encourage our organization more to move out of our comfort zones and step out of the vegetarian-friendly world to outreach and to help do good, and to do it with our message.

No one can argue with trying to do good and improve your community. And sometimes people question whether vegetarians have an agenda. Well, Earthsave *does* have an agenda - we want to do good. We want to help build positive things in the community. "And by the way, have you tried my vegetarian black bean chili?"

I've been reading a lot lately about the "law of unintended consequences" as it applies to Iraq. The idea was to stem terrorism by invading, but it seems to be having the opposite effect.

Well in terms of "unintended consequences," John Robbins never knew that he would write a book that would result in the creation of EarthSave, or that 15 years later there would still be thousands of EarthSave soldiers ready to march to do his bidding.

In the same way, we don't know that by creating community gardens or feeding programs or other outreach programs with our EarthSave spin, we don't know exactly what



Shams Kairys and Eleanor Wasson



Elson Hass and Ellen Cutler



Mohsen Hourmanesh and Nora Clow



Sabrina Nelson, John & Renee Liviakis

the ultimate positive contribution in the world will be over the long run. But I know that when you're working for good, something good will happen.

John Robbins doesn't know which of the people reading his books will save the world, but one

of them will, and probably many.

I consider it an honor to be among those helping shepherd EarthSave into the 21st Century.

And I want to thank John and Deo for the gift of love and light that they give to all of us.

Thank you.

Millennium Restaurant -- 21st century dining

By Sabrina Nelson

When my husband, Jeff, suggested we celebrate our 11th wedding anniversary at San Francisco's Millennium restaurant, I joyfully accepted. Jeff had eaten at Millennium a few times, usually with a group of EarthSave board members (and he was kind enough to rave to me how fantastic the food was), and I was dying to go, too.

When you first walk into Millennium, which is off the lobby of the swank Savoy Hotel, you're immediately struck by the sensual beauty of the surroundings...tall



From left, Ann Wheat, Jeff & Sabrina Nelson and Larry Wheat

columns, rich, draped fabrics, exotic lighting, elegant woodwork and marble - this is not your parent's vegan restaurant, but a five-star, first class gourmet phenomenon. You expect that the food will be as enjoyable as the surroundings.

We were joined by friends and Millennium owners Ann and Larry Wheat. Ann and Larry could be called accidental restaurateurs - they had never intended to get into the restaurant business. A managing partner with KPMG for 30 years, in the late 70's Larry found himself running the Hawaii branch of the giant accounting firm. There, he and Ann met John McDougall, MD, and were inspired to adopt a vegan diet. When they retired to the San Francisco Bay Area during the 1980s, they sought out and regularly patronized a number of vegan haunts. One of them was Milly's, in San Rafael, where the owners dreamed of opening a gourmet vegan restaurant in San Francisco - all they lacked was a business plan and investment capital. Larry said he'd be happy to offer advice; he ended up writing the plan and ultimately investing his own money (on the condition that chef Eric Tucker of Milly's would become the chef of the new Millennium).

Shortly after opening in 1994, Ann and Larry became more than investors when a management crisis pulled them out of peaceful retirement and thrust them into the operation of the restaurant. It took about nine months to get the restaurant on track, and Larry and Ann have never looked back.

As a vegan, it can occasionally be difficult to find anything appealing or edible in a restaurant - perhaps there is one entrée, perhaps none. At Millennium, you face an unusual dilemma: which appealing menu item will I select? Everything looks so incredible! Luckily our gracious hosts were kind enough to guide us through the process, and recommended the following dishes:

Salad:

Raw Asian "Noodle" Salad - Julienne root vegetables, creamy tahini-ginger dressing, marinated Portobello mushroom, spicy Fugu persimmon chile

sambal, asian aromatics

Warm King Trumpet & Honshimeji Mushroom Spinach-Frisee Salad - *sesame-grain mustard vinaigrette, sautéed red onion, smoked tofu, Asian pear*

The smoked tofu in the spinach salad was so delectable that on the day we returned home from San Francisco, I ordered a stovetop smoker from amazon.com. It arrived only two days later, and I immediately smoked my first batch of tofu, using Millennium's very own recipe (it's featured in *The Artful Vegan*, the Millennium Restaurant's fabulous new cook-

book). I hadn't ever thought of smoking anything, but I will say that smoked mushrooms, tofu, potatoes, onions, eggplant (I've been busy!) are extraordinary, and so easy and cheap to produce!

Appetizer:

Plantain Torte - *whole wheat tortilla, sweet plantain, creamy cilantro-tofu, tropical fruit & tomato salsa fresca, ancho chili & lime aioli*

Cornmeal Crusted Oyster Mushrooms - *Satsuma mandarin-jicama salad, garlic-herb remoulade, spicy house made chile jam*

Entrée:

Porcini Purse - *porcini-portobello mushroom ragout, barley-farro pilaf, Italian greens with currants and capers, celery root veloute, Himalayan black truffle-mushroom syrup, smoked paprika oil*

Seitan Marsala - *seitan medallions, marsala mushroom sauce, mashed potatoes, market vegetables, rosemary almond cream*

The Wheats must have thought that our stomachs weren't extended quite enough, as they insisted that we try dessert. We put up a good fight ("Oh PLEASE, don't force us to eat any gourmet vegan desserts!"), but eventually relented.

Dessert:

Chocolate Amond Midnight - *almond cashew crust, bittersweet chocolate filling, raspberry sauce, almond "milk" chocolate mousse*

Apple-Huckleberry Bread Pudding - *caramel sauce, huckleberry sorbet*

Dining at Millennium is truly a unique, special, delicious experience, and one that can only be achieved at - well, Millennium! I can hardly wait for my next trip to San Francisco. (Believe me, it's worth flying to there just to eat at this exceptional restaurant.) But until then, I will have to content myself with experimenting with the exquisite recipes from *The Artful Vegan* (November 2003, Ten Speed Press). I'm smoking something right now! (tofu, that is).

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Dr. Fuhrman on weighty matters

Dr. Joel Fuhrman, a leading expert on nutritional and natural healing, answers questions on obesity and weight issues.

Dr. Fuhrman is a former member of the United States World Figure Skating Team and placed third in the world in pairs figure skating, so naturally he has an interest in sports medicine, fitness and preventive medicine. His latest book, *Eat to Live, The Revolutionary Formula for Fast and Sustained Weight Loss*, (reviewed in our last issue) details his methods, results and the science behind his health and weight-loss recommendations.

Q: A lot of people say they smoke because they're worried if they stop smoking they'll gain weight. Is there any truth to that?

A: When you stop smoking, it may slow your metabolic rate down a little bit and make you gain a little weight. However, that's because you're eating the American diet, which leads to most Americans becoming overweight. If you go on a very healthy diet, then you'll lose weight no matter what you do, whether you're smoking or not. In other words, a diet comprised of the healthiest foods is not a weight-promoting diet.

Q: There are some health foods, like avocados, that have lots of fat in them. Can you gain weight from those?

A: I divide foods into various categories based on nutrient to calorie density. You can eat as much as you want of the foods that have the highest nutrients and are low in calories because they're all less than 200 calories per pound. So the stomach, which only holds a liter of food, gets filled up really easily.

Raw nuts and seeds and avocados are very nutritious foods that have powerful effects to protect against heart disease and cancer. And we want to eat them. But we can't eat them in unlimited quantities, because they're more calorically dense.

So the answer to your question is, avocado is a healthy food (as are raw nuts and seeds). You can eat them, but within a certain limit. I would say that a person looking to lose weight shouldn't eat more than a half an avocado a day. A person looking to lose weight shouldn't eat more than one or two ounces of nuts and seeds a day. But if you're an athlete, you can eat more nuts or seeds or avocado because you're burning those calories off.

Q: There are many popular diets like the Atkins diet or the Zone diet or the Sugarbusters diet that people can lose weight on. Is that an acceptable solution?

A: There are many diets that result in short-term weight loss. Recent studies have validated that the Atkins diet can result in weight loss to the same degree as the American Heart Association diet. But remember that you can snort cocaine or smoke cigarettes to lose weight. The key question is whether these are safe diets to lose weight.

For example, in the medical journal *Angiology*, there was a recent study of people on the Atkins diet for one year who decreased the blood flow to their heart by 40 percent and increased the inflammatory markers. Ketogenic diets like these can also cause dilation of the heart, or cardio-myopathy. The high saturated-fat levels in those high-protein diets are linked to certain cancers. Some cancers are exquisitely sensitive to levels of saturated fat. So much so, that there's a six-fold increase in certain cancers in the saturated fat ranges that you see in some of those diets you mentioned.

I tell people that dieting is not a good idea anyway, because the concept of "diet" has to do with eating less calories and following some plan for a time to lose weight. Temporarily losing weight is of no benefit. The only advantage is in a diet style, a way you can eat for the rest of your life, not a diet. It's giving people the information they need to pick the healthiest foods in the world (the foods with the most nutrients), how to make those foods taste good and how they can stay with this diet. They can learn to make their families eat this way, and serve dinner parties this way. In other words, how can we live the rest of our lives eating healthier, leading to overall better health, and as a result lose weight from the long-term effects of being on a very healthy diet? (And, of course, a good exercise program.)

Q: There are some athletes, like power lifters, who, if you look at the body's mass index, seem overweight, obese. Yet they seem fairly fit. Do they

pay a health price for being overweight?

A: You know, people aren't going to like the answer to this question, but the answer is yes, they definitely do. If we look at studies on, for example, football players down the road - the linebackers, who are bigger, compared to the wide receivers - the linebackers have double the risk of heart attack in their later years, at an earlier age. We see the same thing with power lifters. They don't have the longevity potential that the thinner endurance athletes do.

Eating a diet to maximize muscular growth with more meals with saturated fat and cheese and meats is just not a healthy diet. So even if you don't have a lot of fat on your body, and you're much bigger, you're still in a sense shortening your life span, decreasing your chance for longevity by increasing your cancer and heart attack risk. It's better to be leaner.

Q: There are some people who are lean who have terrible diets. Are they at increased risk?

A: That's a complicated question. We think that the leanness may protect them against heart disease to a degree. They can actually eat more food because they have faster metabolic rates, but that type of genetic profile may increase the risk for certain cancers. So, in other words, there's no person that can completely escape the biological laws of cause and effect; you're going to pay some price.

We can't eat an unhealthy diet and expect not to pay a price down the road. We have to eat a diet that has an abundance of these plant foods that have high levels of nutrients in them, like fresh fruits, berries, eggplants, mushrooms, tomatoes, beans and green vegetables like string beans, broccoli, artichokes, asparagus, kale and salads. Those foods have the most powerful nutrients per calorie and are linked to lower rates of cancer, lower rates of heart disease, longevity and the most success in the weight-loss arena as well.

My patients find that when they move their diet to a healthier diet style, they lose spectacular amounts of weight as their blood pressure drops, and as their cholesterol drops. So the bottom line is that the healthiest way to eat is also the best weight-loss method for the long term.

Q: What about the people who watch everything they eat, but they're still big? They have the "obesity gene." What is that?

A: Well, keep in mind, there are no obese people in rural China. There are no obese people in Laos. It's almost unheard of. When these people move to America, 40 percent of them develop heart disease and become overweight. The "obesity gene" only has a chance to express itself in the toxic food environment we have in America. We have a diet where 50 percent of the calories come from processed foods, oils and white flour. Americans consume 32 teaspoons of sugars a day. Plus, our diet is very high in animal products, especially cheese, butter and oils. The point is that these are concentrated calories. Only in America can we shove so many calories in a small space (meaning our stomach).

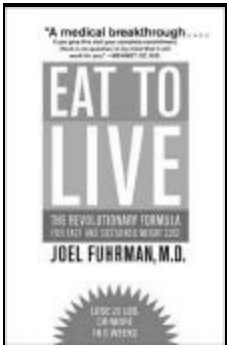
That obesity gene may have been an advantage in the past. That person may have outlived all of us. Of the people who came here on the Mayflower, 70 percent of them died in the first year because they couldn't find enough food to eat. If that person with a slower metabolic rate lived back then, they would have outlived everybody, and it would have been a genetic survival advantage. Throughout genetic history, the people with the obesity gene, with a slower metabolic rate, had the chance to survive when food was scarce.

Now in this toxic food environment, when food is ultra abundant and the food is so calorically dense, those people are at higher risk of heart disease and cancer. Put those people back into an environment where we're eating natural foods that nature made, that are not so calorically dense, and those people will have a chance to live a long and normal life span.

Learn more from Dr. Fuhrman's book, *Eat to Live*, and his website, DrFuhrman.com



Joel Fuhrman, M.D.



"Why do people panic over the rare cases of mad cow but accept coronary heart disease, various cancers, obesity, diabetes and several other more common conditions as a natural part of life, when they too are also related to meat consumption?" - William Harris, M.D.

What Do Vegans Eat? Two New Cookbooks Provide 1,000 answers

Reviewed by Dan Balogh

I lost track of how many times the following exchange has occurred.

Me: I'm a VEE-gan, not VEH-jin. My uni-verse of food choices is huge because I eat every food on planet Earth except animals and animal products.
Them: Uh, so that means you don't eat meat?
Me: That's right.
Them: But you eat fish, right?
Me: No, fish are animals. I don't eat ani-mals.
Them: Then what DO you eat ... [gasp] ... just vegetables?!

While this exchange sounds like something you might hear on a TV sit-com, I can fully understand why folks ask these sorts of ques-tions. Consider standard American cuisine: a hunk of animal flesh (sometimes covered with some type of ani-mal product like cheese) occu-pies half of the plate, while two overcooked and unseasoned veg-etables occupy the other half. We eat the obligatory vegetables only because we have to. If we remove the animal from the plate, how does one fill the remaining void? You guessed it - with more overcooked unsea-soned vegetables! Does that sound appetizing? Can we blame this apprehension regarding veg-anism?

Two recent cookbooks pro-vide many answers to the question "So what DO vegans eat?" When combined, Robin Robertson's "Vegan Planet: 400 Irresistible Recipes With Fantastic Flavors from Home and Around the World" and Gentle World's "Incredibly Delicious: Recipes for a New Paradigm" contain nearly 1,000 innovative, tasty vegan recipes. No, I didn't type an extra 0 by mistake - there are over 900 vegan recipes between them! If you bought these two cook-books on New Year's Day 2004, and prepared one new recipe per day, you would run out of recipes in the second half of 2006!

At first glance the two books look quite different. "Vegan Planet" is shorter and fatter, with no photos, written by one author. "Incredibly Delicious", on the other hand, is taller and thinner, with color photos and is comprised of recipes from multiple sources. But after preparing about twenty dishes from each, what they share is much more obvious: both books contain some awesome dishes. Over half the recipes that I tried are absolute winners.

From "Vegan Planet," the Ultimate Shepherd's Pie is the best vegan Shepherd's Pie I've ever eaten, perhaps because it uses crum-bled vegan burgers. I used Boca's vegan burger, but I'm anxious to see how different varieties yield different results. Part of this recipe uses another recipe, the Mashed Potatoes & Company. If you're tired of the same old mashed potatoes, then try this amazingly tasty concoction of Yukon gold, sweet potatoes, parsnips, garlic and olive oil. This one was so good on top of the Shepherd's Pie, I ended up making it as a side for a different dish just days later. Other outstanding entrées include vegan variations of dishes from around the world. The Tofu and Kale Spanikopita is much easier to prepare than other spanikopita I've encountered (but just as tasty). The Fusilli with Roasted Asparagus, Sun-Dried Tomatoes and Pine Nuts is very easy to prepare and loaded with flavor. The Belgian-Style Seitan Stew with Dark Beer involves seitan simmered in a mixture of won-derful flavors and served on noodles. From Morocco, there's the Moroccan-Spiced Fava Bean Stew. From Lebanon, the Chickpea Eggplant Kibbeh, comprised of alternating lay-ers of bulgur-chickpea and eggplant mixtures baked in a casserole.

Another of the book's strengths is its lunch fare. The Chickpea and Avocado Muffaletta is absolutely decadent. A hard, crusty round loaf is sliced in half from the side, hollowed out and filled with (among other things) a cup of green

olives, a cup of black olives, olive oil, two avo-cados, garlic, a chickpea-roasted bell pepper paste, tomatoes and several spices. You'll think you died and went to Heaven while eating this creation. But don't eat it too often or you actu-ally will die and go to heaven. Based on its list of ingredients it's loaded with fat. (Unfortunately, neither book provides nutrition-al information for the recipes, so you'll never know exactly how much of what you're eating.) Equally tasty are the Three-Nut Burgers. They don't taste like hamburgers (they're not sup-posed to), but that won't matter when you bite into one of these bad boys. Speaking of bad boys, the Fried Green Tomato Po'Boy is now another of my lunch favorites. Sub rolls are loaded with green tomatoes coated and fried, tempeh bacon, soy mayonnaise, romaine lettuce and Tabasco sauce. It's a bit messy (like all great sandwiches), but it's worth it.

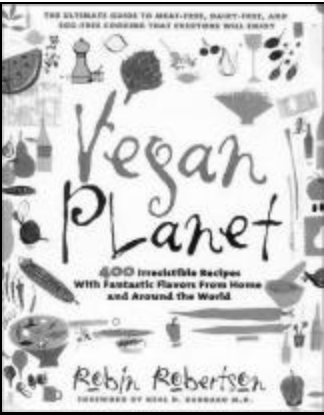
"Incredibly Delicious" is a collection of recipes from various sources. Like all recipe compilations, while there are many wonderful recipes from many different folks, it inevitably lacks an overall, con-sistent style. For instance, many of the recipes contain very explicit directions while others assume a greater kitchen expe-rience. Also, some of the recipes might be a bit bland for some taste buds, while other recipes should be eaten with a fire extinguisher on the side. Summer's Split Pea Soup (which is, incidentally, the best split pea soup I've ever pre-pared) calls for two tablespoons of Tabasco sauce! Isn't that about half a bottle? I don't know Summer, but I know that she likes her soup extremely spicy! I used one teaspoon and found it just fine!

This book is also filled with terrific dishes. For breakfast, try Mom's Pancakes, probably the best vegan pancakes I've prepared. The dif-ference here is the use of yeast, which is placed in warm water and left to rise. Its froth is added to the batter causing the fried pancakes to rise very nicely.

For dinner, the Eggplant Parmesan-less, while a bit messy to prepare, is incredibly tasty. Eggplant slices, dipped in tahini and then a seasoned breading mixture, are pan-fried, stacked with raw onion slices in a casserole, layered with toma-to sauce and faux cheese, and baked in the oven. Delicious! Somewhat similar is the Eggplant Tomato Tahini Bake, though here the eggplant isn't fried beforehand, and the casserole is topped with scallions and garlic-fried mushrooms. Are you drooling yet? The Homemade Chili, one of the best I've pre-pared, contains beans, garlic, onion, bell pep-per, cilantro, jalapenos and TVP as well as an assortment of spices. Good stuff!

What's for dessert? The Cinnamon Rolls are amazing! Set aside an afternoon for this one (you'll end up waiting 2 ½ hours for the dough to rise at various stages) but you definitely won't regret it. My father-in-law, who is a sticky bun connoisseur, adored these (and he's tough to please). The twenty buns that this recipe yielded were history in a matter of days. The Apple Turnovers were also delectable; though I had lots of trouble working with the dough and ended using a dough recipe from another cook-book instead.

I could go on and on, but space won't allow me to discuss all the wonderful recipes that I prepared from these two books. "Incredibly Delicious" even has section of raw recipes, but I haven't yet tried any! Suffice it to say, from the forty or so recipes I prepared (a mere 4% of the total), both books are worth purchasing. If you're toying with the idea of becoming a vegan, but you're not sure what to eat, these two books will provide hundreds and hundreds of wonderful ideas. On the other hand, if you're already a vegan, the next time someone engages you in a conversation that ends with the ques-tion "So what DO you eat?" plo-plop into their out-stretched arms these two books: 900 pages worth of vegan recipes - total weight of about four pounds. Perhaps then will they discover the amazing world that they've been missing.



Smile and Say Cheez!

Joanne Stepaniak's *The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook*

Reviewed by Dan Balogh

I have visions of Joanne Stepaniak in a laboratory smock with a clipboard in her hand, surrounded by mason jars filled with nutritional yeast and agar flakes. Beakers boil aromatic concoc-tions of spices and herbs while whirring food processors liquify roasted red pep-pers and raw cashews.

It has to be this way. Only through coordinated trial-and-error can a person come up with such amazing formula-tions that mimic cheeses so well you wonder whether someone exchanged your soy milk for cow's milk when you were too busy stirring that boiling arrowroot mixture. "The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook" is the result of Stepaniak's years of cheez experimenta-tion, an update to her classic "Uncheese Cookbook" that first introduced the world to the possibilities of cheeses totally bereft of dairy products (and all their dastardly "ingredients") in 1994. One can assume that in the 10 years

since, Stepaniak has honed the recipes to perfection. As they say, the proof is in the pud-ding – dairy-free pud-ding, of course.

Cheeses often fig-ure prominently in comfort foods so it's no surprise that this book is filled with comfort-ing recipes. Take the Baked Macaroni and Cheez, just like the "real thing" but without the cholesterol, saturat-ed fat, antibiotics, growth hormones (I'll stop). The melted cheez coats the macaroni, filling its crevices; the baking makes the edges crunchy and crisp. There's even a sec-ond version, the Traditional Macaroni and Cheez, which doesn't require bak-ing for those with less time. For grilled cheese sandwiches, there's the All American version and the Gooney ver-sion. Both are wonderful – in appear-ance, texture, and taste. In the Gooney version the cheez even seeps from between the bread slices onto the frying pan. Here, pickle relish can be added to the cheez mixture before spreading it. This is just one advantage of making your own cheez – you have complete control. If you prefer more tang, try adding a bit more mustard, or garlic powder, or whatever else you may want. You can't do that with store-bought cheeses, vegan or otherwise.

In the section on Cheezy Soups, Stews, and Chowders, you'll find (among others) Zucchini Chedda Soup which contains six diced zucchinis, one large chopped onion and a load of fake cheez (made from a mixture of nutri-tional yeast, tahini, roasted red peppers, raw cashews and various spices). It's a nice, comforting soup rich enough to be an entrée. A vegan friend who misses cheese liked this soup so much she ran out and purchased this book. From the same section, the Eggplant Parmagianio Stew (which is more like a soup) is even creamier, made with puréed white beans and vegetable broth, along with the ubiquitous nutritional yeast. Good stuff!

For pasta lovers there's Baked Stuffed Shells, one of the best vegan stuffed shell recipes I've encountered. Here the "ricotta" is comprised of soy parmesan, mashed tofu and vegan may-onnaise, a unique concoction that I haven't seen elsewhere. The fake ricotta is wonderful – not too lumpy, not too smooth, and spiced with parsley flakes, basil, onion powder and garlic powder. The Broccoli Pesto Pasta, on the other hand, was a bit bland for me, with the soy parmesan and puréed broccoli a bit too thick for my tastes (next time I'll use less broccoli and parmesan and more liquid). For egg lovers, the Classic Quiche with Bacon (fake bacon bits) is the lightest vegan quiche I've tried – but

keep it in the oven long enough to pre-vent it from being too watery.

Some of my favorites from the book have nothing to do with uncheeses, but are included presumably because they're the types of recipes that are asso-ciated with cheese. I've already eaten the Pickle, Tahini, and Tomato Sandwich at least five times for lunch. Here the tahini takes the place of the cheese, with the length-wise sliced dill pickles adding crunch and punch. Likewise, the Guacamole Grillers have mashed avocado acting as the cheese, with lemon juice and pinches of garlic powder, chili powder and cayenne adding flavor. The 20-Minute Bean Pizzas are so easy to make it's embar-rassing! You mash white beans with some pizza sauce, soy parmesan, olive oil, and a few spices. Spread it on a cou-ple of corn tortillas and pop them in the oven for 20 minutes for a quick lunch or snack.

There's even a section on Block Uncheeses. Even I have my limits, so when I saw this sec-tion my initial thought was – no way. I gave it a try without expect-ing much. Was I sur-prised! The Olive Cheez is unbeliev-able! It looks like dairy cheese, slices like dairy cheese and tastes like dairy cheese (it's delec-table on crackers). And yet the entire list

of ingredients is thus: water, agar flakes, roasted red peppers, raw cashews, nutri-tional yeast, lemon juice, tahini, onion power, salt, garlic powder, mustard and olives. How the heck does one get a block cheese from that? Don't ask, just make it. Visions of Joanne in her lab smock are sure to follow.

There were many other recipes I wanted to try before writing this review, but I felt compelled to get this out as soon as possible – like health studies that are often stopped early so that the control group has the opportunity to benefit from compelling preliminary results, I wanted cheese lovers to bene-fit from these findings. Consequently, I have yet to explore the sections on Spreads and Dips, Fondues, Salads & Dressings. And from the Desserts sec-tion, I made only the Peanut Butter Fudge Pie which was a bit too firm out of the refrigerator, though I discovered that popping a slice in the microwave improves the texture very nicely (per-haps next time I'll use less agar flakes).

The bottom line is this. If you're a vegan who misses dairy cheese, a cheese-lover who is lactose-intolerant, or just someone who loves cheese and wants to vastly improve their diet, get this book. Nearly every recipe I tried was relatively simple and yet very rewarding. In some cases, like the Olive Block Cheez, the results were amazing (and there are at least a dozen other block uncheeses left to try). As a bonus, by purchasing this book you'll help fund future research at the Stepaniak Cheez Institute. Joanne is probably firing up the bunsen burner right now, smiling as she says, “cheez”.

Dan Balogh is a member of EarthSave New York City and a fre-quent contributor to EarthSave News. In April of 2001, he and his wife Laura pledged to become vegans if they could find a dozen recipes that they could live with. Unable to prepare toast without burning it, Dan decided to learn as much about vegan cooking as was humanly possible. Since then he has amassed a huge collection of vegan and vegetarian cookbooks and has pre-pared many hundreds of recipes -- and most they can live with! Today he can make a mean toast.

Mad Cow/FROM PAGE 1

their cattle slaughterhouse waste in the form of blood, fat and rendered meat and bone meal. In fact, calves in North America are literally weaned on milk formula containing "raw spray dried cattle blood plasma," even though scientists have known for many years that blood can transmit mad cow type diseases.

(This is why if you try to donate your blood to the Red Cross, you will be rejected if you spent significant time in Britain during the height of its mad cow epidemic. Britain is afraid that humans with mad cow disease may have contaminated the British blood supply, and they do not use its own blood plasma since as yet no test can adequately screen blood for mad cow disease.)

The United States has spent millions of dollars on PR convincing Americans that mad cow could never happen here, and now the USDA is engaged in a crisis management plan that has federal and state officials, livestock industry flacks, scientists and other trusted experts assuring the public that this is no big deal.

Their litany of falsehoods include statements that a "firewall" feed ban has been in place in the United States since 1997, that muscle meat is not infective, that no slaughterhouse waste is fed to cows, that the United States tests adequate numbers of cattle for mad cow disease, that quarantines and meat recalls are just an added measure of safety, that the risks of this mysterious killer are minuscule, that no one in the United States has ever died of any such disease, and on and on.

It's no secret that the USDA is currently populated by former meat industry operatives. For example, Alisa Harrison, spokeswoman for Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, is the former director of public relations for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), the beef industry's largest trade group. Harrison's experience with NCBA included attempts to thwart government food safety efforts and relentless attacks on Oprah Winfrey for having the nerve to permit a discussion on beef safety. She also put out NCBA press releases assuring U.S. beef was safe from mad cow due to an impenetrable "firewall" of measures. Under the current administration, federal agencies are being run by the industries they were created to regulate, and to put it bluntly, the USDA is ruled by the meat industry. Veneman's chief of staff, Dale

Moore, left his job as chief lobbyist for the cattlemen's association to come take over the USDA. Other former cattlemen's association employees and lobbyists now have high-ranking jobs at the department, as do former meat-packing executives and a former president of the National Pork Producers Council.

The latest spin in the USDA's mad cow PR gambit is to blame the United States mad cow crisis on Canada since the cow in question appears to have been born in Alberta. But numerous questions remain:

How many other infected cows have crossed our porous borders and been processed into human and animal food? (After all, each year the U.S. imports over a million head of cattle and billions of pounds of beef from Canada; over three quarters of Canadian cattle exports end up in the United States.)

Why are America's slaughterhouse regulations so lax that a visibly sick cow was sent into the human food chain weeks before tests came back with the mad cow findings?

Where did the infected byproduct feed that this animal ate come from, and how many hundreds of thousands -- if not millions -- of other animals now in the US have eaten similar feed?

Since the announcement of mad cow disease in the United States our phones have rung off the hook with interview requests. The *New York Times* noted that "The 1997 book 'Mad Cow USA,' by Sheldon Rampton and John C. Stauber, made the case that the disease could enter the United States from Europe in contaminated feed."

Articles in the *New York Times* also cited other warnings from Consumer Union's Michael Hansen, and Stanley Prusiner, the Nobel Prize-winning researcher who this week called the current United States practice of weaning calves on cattle blood protein "stupid."

All of this would be very vindicating, except for one problem: the millions of dollars that the government and industry are spending on PR to pull the wool over the public's eyes might just succeed in forestalling the necessary steps that now,

at this late date, must still be taken to adequately deal with this crisis.

The good news is that those steps are rather simple and understandable. We should ship Ann Veneman and her smartest advisers to Britain, where they can copy the successful feed and testing regulations that have solved the mad cow problem in Europe.

Veneman and her advisers should institute a ban on feeding any slaughterhouse waste to livestock. You may think this is already the case because that's what

industry and government said they did back in the summer of 1997. But besides the cattle blood being legally fed back to cattle, billions of pounds of rendered fat, blood meal, meat and bone meal from pigs and poultry are rendered and fed to cattle, and cattle are rendered and fed to other food species, a perfect environment for spreading and amplifying mad cow disease and even for creating new strains of the disease.

The feed rules that the United States must adopt can be summarized this way: You might not be a vegetarian, but the animals you eat must be.

The United States must also institute an immediate testing regime that will test millions of cattle, not the 20,000 tested out of 35 million slaughtered in the past year in the United States. Japan now tests all cattle before consumption, and disease experts like Prusiner recommend this goal for the United States.

And of course, no sick "downer" cows, barely able to move, should be fed to any human. These are the type of animals most likely to be infected with mad cow and other ailments - although mad cows can also seem completely healthy at the time of slaughter, which is why testing all animals must be the goal.

Veneman and the Bush administration, unfortunately, currently have no plans to do the right thing. The U.S. meat industry still believes that the millions of dollars in campaign contributions over the years will continue to forestall the necessary regulations, and that soothing PR assurances will convince the consuming public that this is just some vegetarian fear-mon-

gering conspiracy concocted by the media to sell organic food.

Will the American public buy this bull? It has in the past. Much depends on journalists and what they are willing to swallow. It looks to me as if papers such as the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* are finally putting some good investigative reporting teams onto this issue, and that may undercut and expose PR ruses such as the "blame Canada campaign."

What I can predict is that the international boycott of U.S. beef, rendered byproducts, animals and animal products will continue, and this will apply a major economic hurt to meat producers big and small across the country.

Will their anger turn against the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the Animal Feed Industry Association and other lobbies that have prevented the United States from doing the right thing in the past?

Or will this become some sort of nationalistic food culture issue, with confused consumers and family farmers blaming everyone but the real culprits in industry and government?

We must continue to advocate for the United States to do the right thing: Follow the lead of the European Union nations, ban all "animal cannibalism," and test many more or all animals.

Mad Cow USA is temporarily unavailable until a paperback copy is released later in 2004. However, you can get the book in its entirety for free through the Web site of our Center for Media and Democracy. Simply go to www.prwatch.org and click on the cover of *Mad Cow USA*. You'll be taken to www.prwatch.org/books/mcusa.pdf, where you can download for free the entire book - and read the warnings that went unheeded then, and are still being ignored by government regulators and industry.

John Stauber lives in Madison, Wisconsin, and is executive director of the Center for Media and Democracy -- www.prwatch.org



John Stauber

ACNE/FROM PAGE 4

Acne is completely absent - not a single sufferer - in these two populations living primarily on unprocessed, low-fat plant-foods.

People living in Africa on plant-food-based diets show similar freedom from acne. Southern African Bantu adolescents have an incidence of acne of 16%, compared to the whites in Africa with a 45% incidence.⁴ Zulu have been reported to develop acne only after they move from the villages to the cities and learn a Western diet.⁵ People in both Kenya and Zambia have far less acne than do blacks in the USA.⁵ People from Malaysia living on rice-based diets have been reported to have no acne problems.⁶ A rice-centered diet is also the reason people in rural Japan have very few skin troubles. Even those Europeans on lower-fat diets (Crete, Southern Italy) have less acne compared to those in Western Europe on higher fat diets.⁶ The Yemenite Jews following a healthier, lower-fat diet than European Jews report less

acne, too.⁶ The picture is clear to me: switch from a plant-based-diet to a high fat Western diet centered on meat and dairy, and your face lights up.

Undoubtedly, there are components of the Western diet that cause the skin to become unsightly - this is not a normal, natural condition - this is a disease.

Ways Diet Causes Acne



John McDougall, M.D.

1) A high-fat diet increases the amounts of fats in and on the skin (sebum). With extreme changes in food intake such as almost total avoidance of fat (like the McDougall diet) or inclusion of fat as the sole source of food the amount of sebum production has been found to be greatly altered.³ Please note that it does not take much fat on the skin to plug the pores, feed the bacteria, and cause acne in susceptible people. Also note the bacteria eat vegetable oil as well as animal fats.

2) The rich Western diet increases sex hormones causing precocious puberty (girls mature

at 12 rather than 16 - boys mature earlier too). Earlier maturation of women is known to be associated with more severe acne.⁷ Excess male hormones (androgens) in men and women are well known to cause acne and increase production of sebum.

3) Growth hormones adversely affect the sebaceous glands causing them to become easily plugged. Insulin-like growth hormone-1 (IGF-1) is known to be increased by dietary protein (meat, poultry, etc.), and especially by dairy products. Research shows elevated IGF-1 levels are associated with more acne.⁴

Other factors that may play a lesser role are:

4) Acne is promoted by lack of antioxidants and other plant-derived nutrients that keep the skin healthy.⁸

5) Poor circulation to the skin from a high-fat diet allows the skin to be more susceptible to acne.^{9,10}

6) Fat and oils, brought to the skin by hands picking up greasy French fries and burgers, cause acne - this directly-applied grease plugs the pores and feeds the bacteria.

Preventing and Curing Acne

Everyone knows that acne is related to surging hormones during adolescence, but to blame acne

on puberty is like blaming heart disease on old age. People get more heart disease as they get older, but only when they eat the wrong diet. Heart disease does not exist where people eat healthy, such as in rural Africa and Asia. Heart disease is also cured when sick people change to a healthy diet. Same story with acne.

Acne may be the best angle you will ever use to sell a healthy diet to your teenage children. After changing to plant-based, low-fat foods you (and they) should expect to experience a noticeable reduction in the oiliness of your face and hair within about 4 to 7 days. The pimples start to resolve shortly after that, but sometimes it takes as long as a month to start to show improvement. Strict adherence to the diet is absolutely essential, because I have found that small indiscretions result in a crop of pimples within a day or two. One night out to the pizza parlor will mean a face-full of flare-ups before you can say, "I shouldn't have ordered the extra cheese and pepperoni." This means you must follow a diet based on starches with fruits and vegetables - strictly avoiding all added fats, including nuts, seeds, avocados, olives, soybeans, and vegetable oils - even the so-called "good" fats. Wash all oils from

your hands before touching your face, shampoo the oil from your hair daily, and use a "buff pad" to help open your pores and thoroughly clean your skin. If your skin is not improving, then my first guess is you are not adhering strictly enough to your diet and skin care. After all, millions of people living in Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, rural Africa and Asia who eat a plant-based diet are acne-free throughout their lives - so why can't you also be acne-free, if you behave like they do?

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GREGER/FROM PAGE 5

indeed be harboring Mad Cow disease and passing it on to humans, adding that pigs are especially sensitive to the disease. "It's speculation," he says, "but I am perfectly serious."

The recent exclusion of most cow brains, eyes, spinal cords, and intestines from the human food supply may make beef safer, but where are those tissues going? These potentially infectious tissues continue to go into animal feed for chickens, other poultry, pigs, and pets (as well as being rendered into products like tallow for use in cosmetics, the safety of which is currently under review). Until the federal government stops the feeding of slaughterhouse waste, manure, and blood to all farm animals, the safety of meat in America cannot be guaranteed.

The hundreds of American families stricken by sporadic CJD every year have been told that it just occurs by random chance. Professor Collinge, the head of the University College of London lab, noted "When you counsel those who have the classical sporadic disease, you tell them that it arises spontaneously out of the blue. I guess we can no longer say that."

"We are not saying that all or even most cases of sporadic CJD are as a result of BSE exposure," Professor Collinge continued, "but some more recent cases may be — the incidence of sporadic CJD has shown an upward trend in the UK over the last decade... serious consideration should be given to a proportion of this rise being BSE-related. Switzerland, which has had a substantial BSE epidemic, has noted a sharp recent increase in sporadic CJD." In the nineties, Switzerland had the highest rate of Mad Cow disease in continental Europe, and their rate of sporadic CJD doubled.

We don't know exactly what's happening to the rate of CJD in this country, in part because CJD is not an officially notifiable illness. Currently only a few states have such a requirement. Because the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) does not actively monitor the disease on a national level, a rise similar to the one in Europe could be missed. In spite of this, a number of U.S. CJD clusters have already been found. In the largest known U.S. outbreak of sporadic cases to date, five times the expected rate was found to be associated with cheese consumption in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley. A striking increase in CJD over

expected levels was also reported in Florida and New York (Nassau County) with anecdotal reports of clusters of deaths in Oregon and New Jersey.

Perhaps particularly worrisome is the seeming increase in CJD deaths among young people in this country. In the 18 years between 1979 and 1996, only a single case of sporadic CJD was found in someone under 30. Whereas between 1997 and 2001, five people under 30 died of sporadic CJD. The true prevalence of CJD among any age group in this country remains a mystery, though, in part because it is so commonly misdiagnosed.

The most frequent misdiagnosis of CJD among the elderly is Alzheimer's disease. Neither CJD nor Alzheimer's can be conclusively diagnosed without a brain biopsy, and the symptoms and pathology of both diseases overlap. There can be spongy changes in Alzheimer's, for example, and senile Alzheimer's plaques in CJD. Stanley Prusiner, the scientist who won the Nobel Prize for his discovery of prions, speculates that Alzheimer's may even turn out to be a prion disease as well. In younger victims, CJD is more often misdiagnosed as multiple sclerosis or as a severe viral infection.

Over the last 20 years the rates of Alzheimer's disease in the United States have skyrocketed. According to the CDC, Alzheimer's Disease is now the eighth leading cause of death in the United States, afflicting an estimated 4 million Americans. Twenty percent or more of people clinically diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, though, are found at autopsy not to have had Alzheimer's at all. A number of autopsy studies have shown that a small percent of Alzheimer's deaths may in fact be CJD. Given the new research showing that infected beef may be responsible for some sporadic CJD, thousands of Americans may already be dying because of Mad Cow disease every year.

Prion disease expert Gajdusek, for example, estimates that 1% of people showing up in Alzheimer clinics actually have CJD. At Yale, out of a series of 46 patients clinically diagnosed with Alzheimer's, six were proven to have CJD at autopsy. In another study of brain biopsies, out of a dozen patients diagnosed with Alzheimer's according to established criteria, three of them were actually dying from CJD. An informal survey of neuropathologists registered a suspicion that CJD accounts for 2-12% of all dementias in general.

Two autopsy studies showed a CJD rate among dementia deaths of about 3%. A third study, at the University of Pennsylvania, showed that 5% of patients diagnosed with dementia had CJD. Although only a few hundred cases of sporadic CJD are officially reported in the U.S. annually, hundreds of thousands of Americans die with dementia every year. Thousands of these deaths may actually be from CJD caused by eating infected meat.

The incubation period for human spongiform encephalopathies such as CJD can be decades. This means it can be years between eating infected meat and being diagnosed with CJD. Although only about 150 people have so far been diagnosed with variant CJD worldwide, it will be many years before the final death toll is known.

Five years ago this week, the Center for Food Safety, the Humane Farming Association, the Center for Media & Democracy, and ten families of CJD victims petitioned the FDA and the CDC to immediately enact a national CJD monitoring system, including the mandatory reporting of CJD in all 50 states. The petition was denied. The CDC argued that their passive surveillance system tracking death certificate diagnoses was adequate. Their analysis of death certificates in three states and two cities, for example, showed an overall stable and typical one in a million CJD incidence rate from 1979 to 1993. But CJD is so often misdiagnosed, and autopsies are so infrequently done, that this system may not provide an accurate assessment.

In 1997, the CDC set up the National Prion Disease Pathology Surveillance Center at Case Western Reserve University to analyze brain tissue from CJD victims in the U.S. in hopes of tracking any new developments. In Europe, surveillance centers have been seeing most, if not all, cases of CJD. The U.S. center sees less than half. "I'm very unhappy with the numbers," laments Pierluigi Gambetti, the director of the Center. "The British and Germans politely smile when they see we examine 30% or 40% of the cases," he says. "They know unless you examine 80% or more, you are not in touch. The chance of losing an important case is high."

One problem is that many doctors don't even know the Center exists. And neither the CDC nor the Center are evidently authorized to reach out to them directly to bolster surveil-

lance efforts, because it's currently up to each state individually to determine how — or even whether — they will track the disease. In Europe, in contrast, the national centers work directly with each affected family and their physicians. In the U.S., most CJD cases — even the confirmed ones — seem to just fall through the cracks. In fact, based on the autopsy studies at Yale and elsewhere, it seems most CJD cases in the U.S. aren't even picked up in the first place.

Autopsy rates have dropped in the U.S. from 50% in the sixties to less than 10% at present. Although one reason autopsies are rarely performed on atypical dementia cases is that medical professionals are afraid of catching the disease, the primary reason for the decline in autopsy rates in general appears to be financial. There is currently no direct reimbursement to doctors or hospitals for doing autopsies, which often forces the family to absorb the cost of transporting the body to an autopsy center and having the brain samples taken, a tab that can run upwards of \$1500.

Another problem is that the National Prion Disease Pathology Surveillance Center itself remains underfunded. Paul Brown, medical director for the National Institutes of Health, has described the Center's budget as "pitiful," complaining that "there isn't any budget for CJD surveillance." To adequately survey America's 290 million residents, "you need a lot of money." UK CJD expert Robert Will explains, "There was a CJD meeting of families in America in which... [the CDC] got attacked fairly vigorously because there wasn't proper surveillance. You could only do proper surveillance if you have adequate resources."

"I compare this to the early days of AIDS," says protein chemist Shu Chen, who directs the Center's lab, "when no one wanted to deal with the crisis."

Andrew Kimbrell, the director of the Center for Food Safety, a D.C.-based public interest group, writes, "Given what we know now, it is unconscionable that the CDC is not strictly monitoring these diseases." Given the presence of Mad Cow disease in the U.S., we need to immediately enact uniform active CJD surveillance on a national level, provide adequate funding not only for autopsies but also for the shipment of bodies, and require mandatory reporting of the disease in all 50 states. In Britain, even feline spongiform encephalopathy, the cat version

of Mad Cow disease, is an officially notifiable illness. "No one has looked for CJD systematically in the U.S.," notes NIH medical director Paul Brown. "Ever."

The animal agriculture industries continue to risk public safety, and the government seems to protect the industries' narrow business interests more than it protects its own citizens. Internal USDA documents retrieved through the Freedom of Information Act show that our government did indeed consider a number of precautionary measures as far back as 1991 to protect the American public from Mad Cow disease. According to one such document, however, the USDA explained that the "disadvantage" of these measures was that "the cost to the livestock and rendering industries would be substantial."

Plant sources of protein for farm animals can cost up to 30% more than cattle remains. The Cattlemen's Association admitted a decade ago that animal agribusiness could indeed find economically feasible alternatives to feeding slaughterhouse waste to other animals, but that the they did not want to set a precedent of being ruled by "activists."

Is it a coincidence that USDA Secretary Veneman chose Dale Moore, former chief lobbyist for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, as her chief of staff? Or Alison Harrison, former director of public relations for the Cattlemen's Association, as her official spokeswoman? Or that one of the new Mad Cow committee appointees is William Hueston, who was paid by the beef industry to testify against Oprah Winfrey in hopes of convicting her of beef "disparagement"? After a similar conflict of interest unfolded in Britain, their entire Ministry of Agriculture was dissolved and an independent Food Safety Agency was created, whose sole responsibility is to protect the public's health. Until we learn from Britain's lesson, and until the USDA stops treating this as a PR problem to be managed instead of a serious global threat, millions of Americans will remain at risk.

Michael Greger, M.D., has been the Chief BSE Investigator for Farm Sanctuary since 1993 and the Mad Cow Coordinator for the Organic Consumers Association since 2001.

Farmed salmon loaded with chemicals, study finds

Farmed salmon contains far more toxic chemicals than wild salmon -- high enough to suggest that fish-eaters limit how much they eat, according to U.S. researchers. The culprit is "salmon chow" -- the feed given to the captive fish, the researchers report in the January 5, 2004 issue of the journal *Science*.

Some health experts urge people to eat fish such as salmon because it contains healthy fats, especially the omega-3 fatty acids that can lower the risk of heart disease and perhaps have other health benefits, too. But the researchers said the findings in *Science* indicate that people should choose their fish carefully. They should also demand that salmon be clearly labeled to indicate whether it is farmed or wild so they can make informed choices about which fish to eat.

The team at Indiana University, University at Albany, Cornell University and elsewhere analyzed toxic contaminants in 700 farmed and wild salmon taken from markets



in 16 cities in Europe and North America.

They looked for 13 different chemicals known to build up in the flesh of fish, including polychlorinated biphenyls or PCBs, dioxins, toxaphene, dieldrin, hexachlorobenzene, lindane, heptachlor epoxide, cis-nonachlor, trans-nonachlor, gamma-chlordane, alpha-chlordane, Mirex, endrin and DDT. Some are pesticides, others are industrial by-products, and many are known or suspected cancer-causing agents. Farmed salmon taken from markets in Frankfurt, Edinburgh, Paris, London, Oslo, Boston, San Francisco, and Toronto had the highest levels, and the researchers said consumers should eat no more than one-half to one meal of salmon per month. A meal was eight ounces (one-quarter of a kg) of uncooked meat.

The study fits in with other research on chemicals in salmon. Two studies published in the journal *Chemosphere* last year found elevated levels of PCBs, certain pesticides, and flame retardants in farmed salmon.

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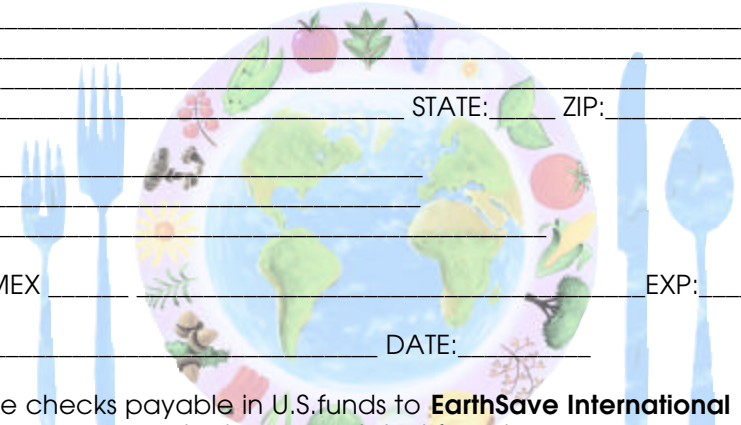
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