

Vegetarianism

A Persuasive Essay by [a Fifth Grade Student at HDS] 2005

When Albert Einstein said, “Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet,” he was right! Being vegetarian is much better for both your body AND the environment. It is also better morally.

Being vegetarian is good for your body in many ways. One way it’s good for you is that it supplies you with all of the nutrients you need, even protein. Vegetarians have much less of a chance of being obese or getting high blood pressure or diseases such as coronary heart disease or type II diabetes. As well as consisting of more vegetables, vegetarian diets usually have less fatty foods. It is 40% less likely that vegetarians will die of cancer, and 20% less likely that they will die of heart disease. The facts come down to this: a vegetarian diet is a better health choice than eating meat.

Being vegetarian is not only better for you, it is also better for the environment. There is a lot of land used for cattle to graze on that farmers can’t grow vegetables on because of the cattle. One acre of land is capable of producing 250 pounds of beef, but it could instead have been used to grow 10,000 pounds of green beans, or 30,000 pounds of carrots, or 50,000 pounds of tomatoes! In other words, the land that we now use for cattle could feed many more people if it was used to grow vegetables. In addition, while it takes only 900 liters of water to produce 1 kilo of wheat, it takes 100,000 liters of water to produce a mere 1 kilo of meat. Finally, using soil to grow vegetables rather than meat is a better choice for the land itself. Cows and sheep have to do so much grazing around large areas of land that over time soil starts to erode and there are fewer and fewer nutrients and vitamins. The facts come down to this: being vegetarian is MUCH better for the environment than eating meat.

Usually, people think of animals as being “things” that are not as smart as us and can therefore be killed for whatever purpose we want. It is true that we have more brain power than they do, but the rest is not true. Animals are not as smart as we are, but they still have awareness and the desire to be free and certainly not to be killed. They can feel

pain, and they too would like to be free of coops or fences or boxes or whatever they are kept in. They are forced to live horrible lives, and just like us they have a sense of unhappiness. Just because we think of ourselves as superior beings doesn't mean that we have the right to kill animals and use them for whatever purpose we want. As Linda McCartney said, "If slaughterhouses had glass walls everyone would be vegetarian." The things that go on inside a slaughterhouse are excruciatingly terrible. Humans on earth nowadays are trying to act better, have better behavior towards other people and other beings, and most of all are trying to be moral. The slaughtering and killing of animals every day is definitely not helping people act morally towards other people and beings. These animals are forced to live tortured, horrible lives and then they are taken to the slaughterhouse to be killed. What could be a worse life? No life could be worse. The facts come down to this: eating meat makes us much less moral.

Some people may say, "Animals are usually killed by predators early in their life. The slaughterhouses generally kill the animals in a quick and painless way." This is definitely not true. The ways that animals are killed in slaughterhouses are TERRIBLE!! I will not go into WHAT happens inside. Other people may say, "Sometimes animals graze on land that cannot be used for farming, and they eat foods that humans can't eat." In fact, a huge amount of rainforest land is destroyed every year to make grazing land for cattle, and in the last 300 years, we have cut down OVER HALF of the trees that are in the United States to make room for cattle to graze. Still others may say, "How do I get my protein if I'm vegetarian?" You get protein from eating leafy greens, cheese, and drinking milk. All three of these things are good for you, whereas meat is not. A lot of people have different thoughts about why being vegetarian is bad, but the facts come down to this: being vegetarian is much better for you, the environment, for the way people behave, and many other things.

So, as you can see, eating meat is actively bad for many things. You can help yourself, the environment, and you can improve the way people behave by not eating meat, convincing your friends and family not to eat meat, and by boycotting meat markets. So, go vegetarians!