

Compassionate Action

The Magazine of Compassion Over Killing

SUMMER 2012 • Issue 25

**Campaign Update: Subway Tests
Vegan Options!**

**Lawsuit Settled & California
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COMPASSION OVER KILLING

SUMMER 2012 • Issue 25

Compassion Over Killing (COK) is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) animal advocacy organization based in Washington, D.C. Working to end animal abuse since 1995, COK exposes cruelty to farmed animals and promotes vegetarian eating as way to build a kinder world.

COK is a powerful voice for farmed animals relying on a wide range of strategies — including undercover investigations, public advocacy campaigns, corporate outreach, and litigation — to educate and empower others to stand up for animals every time they sit down to eat.

Join our efforts. Visit **COK.net** now to:

- Get updates on our campaigns
- Make a secure online donation
- Sign up for COK's eNewsletter
- Find recipes, events, and more

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Dear Friend,



Erica and friend at
Poplar Spring Animal
Sanctuary

Thanks to you and your generous support, the first half of 2012 has been very successful for COK — and for animals. Together, we're making incredible strides, paving the way for a kinder world.

In this issue of Compassionate Action, you'll see **your donation dollars in action**: from an important update on our campaign urging Subway, the world's largest restaurant chain, to offer vegan options (page 3) to settling our animal cruelty lawsuit against a California chicken and duck hatchery that is now closed (page 6) to running eye-opening pro-vegetarian commercials on HULU.com (page 10)!

Whether we're **pulling back the curtains on animal agribusiness and challenging the status quo or mainstreaming the idea of not eating animals** through effective advertising campaigns and strategic corporate outreach, we know you're right there with us, lending your voice to each animal suffering behind the closed doors of the meat, milk, and egg industries.

"We need to keep the momentum moving forward and demonstrate the power of compassion."

Please know that it's because of your kindness that we are able to bring about so many important and lasting changes for animals. Imagine what we can accomplish with more funding and more staff working around the clock!

I hope you'll consider making a special donation today, using the enclosed envelope, to **help us become an even stronger voice for animals**. With so much progress being made for animals, now is the time to act! We need to keep the momentum moving forward and demonstrate the power of compassion.

Sincerely,



Erica Meier, Executive Director

VISIT US ONLINE!

- **COK.net**
- **TryVeg.com**
- **EggIndustry.com**
- **ChickenIndustry.com**
- **VegAustin.com**
- **VegBaltimore.com**
- **VegDC.com**
- **DunkinCruelty.com**
- **WeLoveSubway.com**



Voices of **Compassion** at cok.net/blog



[facebook.com/CompassionOverKilling](https://www.facebook.com/CompassionOverKilling)



[@TryVeg](https://twitter.com/TryVeg)

Subway Tested — and Sold Out of — Vegan Sandwiches in Select Stores!

After successfully persuading companies including Morningstar Farms, Lightlife, BOCA Foods, and Quorn (see page 9) to reduce or eliminate their use of eggs and offer more vegan options, COK has been reaching out to Subway, urging the world's largest restaurant chain to offer more substantial protein-packed vegan meals on its menus.

Thousands of consumers from coast to coast are also letting the company know, through our campaign website, WeLoveSubway.com, that the interest in healthier and more humane vegan options is on the rise — and Subway is listening!

Late last year Subway stores across Canada introduced a new “Totally Vegged” vegan patty — and now we, along with The Humane League, are excited to announce this past June, **several Subway Cafés in Maryland, DC, and Virginia started offering three new all-vegan savory sandwiches: Sweet Riblet, Malibu Greek, and Italian Black Bean!**

These sandwiches debuted to rave reviews and sold out within weeks! The debut also garnered extensive praise in the media, including in *The New York Times*, ABC News, Fox News, Huffington Post, MSN now, *Miami New Times*, NBC4-DC, and many more outlets.

TAKE ACTION: Please encourage Subway to permanently add vegan options to its menus nationwide! Send the company a message via our website WeLoveSubway.com or call the headquarters at 203-877-4281. ■

WELOVESUBWAY.COM

and want to make it better!

Here's some feedback from Subway customers as posted on WeLoveSubway.com:

“I had the riblet sandwich for lunch yesterday and it was delicious! Even a non-vegetarian would love this sandwich.”

— Jonathan, Washington, DC

“The vegan riblet sandwich is incredible. Can't wait for it to be available to the rest of America and the world!”

— Alex, Washington, DC

“OMG — your new all-vegan riblet sandwich is AMAZING! I've been going there for lunch all week, but the store just ran out. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE get more. Thank you SO much, Subway!”

— Beth, Washington, DC

“I recently ate your Italian Black Bean sandwich at your Ellicott City location. It was AWESOME!”

— Justin, Fort Meade, MD

“Just tried your new vegan riblet sandwich for lunch — it was SO good! My non-vegan co-workers were impressed by it, too. Thanks for expanding your menu.”

— Nancy, Alexandria, VA



SUBWAY



COK INVESTIGATES:

Cruelty Exposed at Iowa Factory Farm that Supplies Hormel

In late 2011, a Compassion Over Killing investigator worked inside Hawkeye Sow Centers (HSC), a pig breeding factory farm in Iowa, the largest pork-producing state in the US. Wearing a hidden camera, COK's investigator documented the day-to-day miseries forced upon thousands of mother pigs nearly immobilized in gestation crates and their piglets, who endure painful mutilations without any relief.

Our investigator was told that the meat from some of the piglets born at this facility is marketed under the brand name Hormel.

Gestation Crates: Mother Pigs Treated as Mere Piglet-Producing Machines

As is industry norm, breeding sows are artificially inseminated, spend months inside a narrow gestation crate where they can't even turn around during pregnancy and are then moved to an equally restrictive farrowing crate where they'll give birth and nurse their young through metal bars. After a few weeks, their piglets will be taken away and the process will start all over again. See opposite page for more information about gestation crates.



Piglets Endure Painful Mutilations without Relief

As our investigator caught on film, piglets are routinely mutilated — workers cut off their tails and rip out the males' genitals — without any painkillers. These painful procedures are performed directly in front of their mothers who, unable to help the screaming piglets, repeatedly grunt in obvious distress. The severed testicles and tails are left on the floor of the sows' crates. Non-surgical castration alternatives are approved and available in the US and have already been widely implemented in other countries due to welfare concerns. See opposite page for more information.

Animal cruelty is standard practice in the industry. More than 100 million pigs are raised and killed for food each year in the US. The most effective way each of us can help end this abuse is to simply leave pigs, and all animals, off our plates. Start today: Visit COK's TryVeg.com. ■

"Not Abusive"- National Pork Board

That's right. After watching COK's undercover footage (available online at COK.net) taken inside a pig breeding factory farm in Iowa, the National Pork Board proclaimed: "The practices shown in the video are not abusive."

Who watches a piglet screaming as his genitals are cut off without painkillers and declares it "not abusive?" Who sees animals permanently locked in cages where they can barely move an inch their whole lives and thinks such treatment isn't abuse?

This is the mentality of an industry that is just simply out of step with how Americans know animals ought to be treated. Instead of acknowledging that these standard industry practices are cruel — so cruel that they've been banned or are being phased out in several other countries — agribusiness interests are instead trying to prevent Americans from finding out about them.

This is why COK's work combating this abusive — yes, abusive — industry is so vital. And this is why your support for COK is so vital.

Visit COK.net now to join our efforts in shining a spotlight on the horrors kept hidden behind the closed doors of animal agribusiness.



Poorly performed castrations resulted in herniated intestines.



Workers pushed the herniated intestines back inside the piglets and wrapped the area with masking tape.



Many sick or injured piglets died after being denied veterinary care.

Gestation Crates for Pregnant Pigs

More than 80 percent of the nearly six million female pigs raised for breeding in the US are kept virtually immobilized for months on end inside narrow metal gestation crates that are barely wider than their bodies. These smart and social animals are so intensively confined, they can't even turn around, and they suffer both physically and mentally.

Welfare concerns have already prompted the entire European Union (effective 2013) and nine US states to phase out this barbaric system of confinement. Several major US companies are also moving away from the use of gestation crates, including Smithfield Foods and Cargill.

While Hormel recently issued a statement that its company-owned facilities will be phasing out gestation crates, it did not commit to extending this new policy to the hundreds of independently-run facilities, like HSC, that ultimately supply Hormel with a majority of its pork.

The writing is on the wall for this inhumane practice. It's time for Hormel to extend its gestation crate-free policy to all of its suppliers.

Visit COK.net today to find out how you can help.



Castration of Male Piglets

According to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), 100 percent of male piglets raised for food in the US are castrated, and the most common procedure is cutting and ripping out their genitals without any painkillers. There is no dispute that piglets endure immense pain during this process. In fact, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the USDA, and even the National Pork Board all agree that castration is a painful procedure and alternatives should be sought.

Due to welfare concerns, some countries, including the UK and Australia, are shifting away from castration of unanaesthetized piglets. And the procedure is considered so cruel, it's been banned in Switzerland and Norway.

The US Food and Drug Administration recently approved Improvest, an injectable protein compound that the industry publication National Hog Farmer says provides "the same effect of surgical castration" and eliminates "the risk of infection or death."

Improvest is now available in the US and has been used internationally for ten years. It's time for the US pig industry to stop the barbaric practice of ripping piglets' testicles out of their bodies.

Visit COK.net now to find out how you can help.





COK Co-Files Lawsuit Against the USDA to **STOP THE SALE OF DISEASED POULTRY PRODUCTS**

Earlier this year, COK joined forces with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, Farm Sanctuary, and the Animal Protection & Rescue League to file a lawsuit against the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for allowing the sale of a diseased poultry product commonly known as foie gras.

Foie gras is French for “fatty liver,” and in order to produce this so-called “delicacy,” ducks and geese are force-fed large quantities of food, causing their livers to become diseased and swell up to 10 times the normal size. This induces a condition known as “hepatic lipidosis” or fatty liver disease. In other words, foie gras is, by definition, the product of a diseased animal.

The USDA, however, is required through the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) to condemn as adulterated all diseased poultry. According to our lawsuit, the USDA is allegedly violating the PPIA by failing to condemn the sale of foie gras.

Foie gras production not only induces a disease in birds, but it's considered so cruel that it's been banned in several countries and the state of California (see below).

Undercover videos from COK and other organizations taken inside foie gras factory farms have documented what can only be described as a torture chamber for birds: from being grabbed by their necks or wings, to having pipes shoved down their throats and food pumped into them to being shackled upside down and having their throats slit.

Compassionate people everywhere agree that there is nothing refined about eating the grossly fattened liver of a tortured bird, and experts from around the world have concluded that the practice of force-feeding ducks and geese for foie gras is inhumane.

Visit COK.net to read more, watch our video, and get the latest updates on this case. ■



California Says Au Revoir to Foie Gras

On July 1, a California law banning the force-feeding of ducks and geese for foie gras — and the sale of products from force-fed birds — went into effect, making the Golden State the first in the US to join the ranks of over a dozen nations that have banned this cruel practice, including Germany, Israel, Italy, Argentina, and the United Kingdom.



COK Recipe: Faux Gras

Dozens of California restaurants — and hundreds more nationwide — have already stopped serving foie gras. And while it's hard to imagine how anyone could justify the act of torturing birds simply to please our palates, there are indeed a handful of chefs and gourmands childishly whining and rising in defense of foie gras.

« That's why we've created a faux gras recipe so diners can indulge in the delights of foie gras without the cruelty. Visit VegRecipes.org today!

Photo Credits: Foie gras factory farm and rescued ducks
– GourmetCruelty.com

Animal Cruelty Lawsuit is Settled

COK VICTORY: CAL-CRUZ HATCHERIES IS CLOSED



In January 2012, COK filed a lawsuit against Cal-Cruz Hatcheries, a chicken and duck hatchery in California that brought millions of birds into the world each year, destined for the meat industry. Represented by the Animal Legal Defense Fund, the complaint was aimed at stopping the alleged ongoing abuse of baby birds as documented by a COK undercover investigator and exposed in the media in 2010.

As alleged in the lawsuit, COK's video footage uncovered shocking abuses — including acts amounting to criminal animal cruelty — that violate California law, which, in turn, constitute unlawful and unfair business practices under the California Business and Professions Code.

This June, the lawsuit was settled out of court, marking the first time allegations of animal cruelty were successfully

resolved using this civil law. As part of the agreement, a joint statement between both parties reveals: “**Cal-Cruz Hatcheries is no longer in operation.**”

The defendants also agreed to pay a portion of the plaintiff's attorneys' fees, and, according to a court order, hatchery owner Brian Collins is permanently banned from treating animals as depicted in COK's video and from owning animals for commercial purposes for five years.

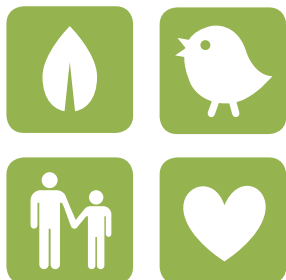
This groundbreaking case paves a new way to seek — and achieve — justice for abused farmed animals. While our work is never done, we can breathe a sigh of relief knowing this definitively ensures the end of animal suffering at this hatching factory. ■

The Investigation and Rescue

In 2009, while working inside Cal-Cruz Hatcheries, a COK investigator documented horrific abuses forced upon newly-hatched birds, including chicks mutilated on machinery, severely injured hatchlings left to suffer for hours and unwanted baby birds sprayed with a high-power hose down an egg shell disposal chute.

COK's evidence was immediately turned over to local authorities, which prompted a follow-up investigation by the Santa Cruz Animal Services Authorities that found even more evidence of animal abuse and resulted in the impoundment of 88 hatchlings. While several of these newly-hatched birds were too sick or injured to survive, more than two dozen were given a second chance at life at a nearby sanctuary (pictured on right).





COK'S VEGWEEK A NATIONWIDE SUCCESS!



Vegan Grilled Cheese Wins Award

As part of the VegWeek fun, COK competed in the 10th Annual Grilled Cheese Invitational — and **won!** COK's Los Angeles Outreach Director Gwendolyn Mathers (aka Miss Kitchen Witch) took home a trophy for winning third place in a professional category, marking the first time a vegan entry has been given any award at this event, the largest sandwich cooking contest in the country. The prized Aurora Borealis features sourdough bread fried in vegan butter and maple syrup, filled with Daiya Mozzarella, Tofutti Cream Cheese, and brandy-soaked peaches; topped with berry reductions. Want this award-winning recipe? Visit VegRecipes.org.

What started as a city-wide celebration in Takoma Park, Md. in 2009, thanks to the inspiration of Maryland Senator Jamie Raskin, has now grown into a nationwide COK campaign celebrating the many benefits and flavors of choosing meat-free foods.

VegWeek 2012 took place from April 23-29 with thousands of people from coast to coast signing up to take our 7-day VegPledge, including nearly 30 elected representatives. Dozens of restaurants — from Veggie Grill in California to Sticky Fingers Sweets & Eats in DC — offered VegWeek specials and hundreds of people joined us at several events, from a free screening of Vegucated in Florida to a vegan bake sale in Texas.

VegWeek was officially recognized with Proclamations and Resolutions in several cities and counties, including Takoma Park, Md., Montgomery County, Md., and Santa Cruz and Marin Counties in Calif.

This year's celebration was also highlighted in *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Miami Herald*, *The Huffington Post*, *Washington City Paper*, and *VegNews*, among other publications and blogs, and inspired phenomenal feedback from participants:

"Thanks so much for the support during VegWeek. You have opened my eyes and helped me decide to go vegetarian."
— Michelle McPartland

"I never thought I would go vegetarian in my life — yet once my week was up I decided to continue. Thank you for helping me and for helping animals!"

— Erin Forward

To get involved in VegWeek 2013, visit COK's site: USVegWeek.com. ■



COK SUCCESS:

QUORN FOODS PLANS TO LAUNCH NEW VEGAN OPTION IN THE UK

In the last issue of *Compassionate Action*, we announced that after working with COK, Quorn Foods, one of the top-selling frozen vegetarian brands, created its first-ever all-vegan product that launched in the US. The Quorn Vegan Burger debuted to rave reviews and strong sales, and it's currently available in over 1,000 stores nationwide.

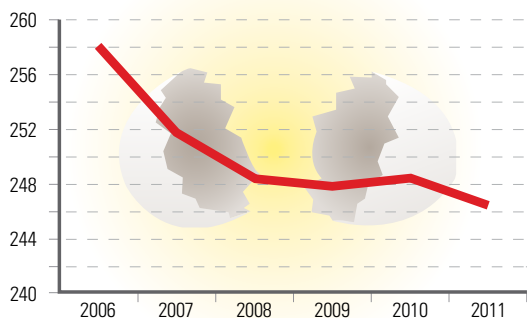
Inspired by the tremendous success of the US vegan burger and in response to increasing customer demand in the UK, Quorn is actively working to expand its vegan line.

According to Chris Wragg, Quorn Foods UK Marketing Director: "We have had a lot of consumers contacting us regarding a potential Vegan line and we're now developing and testing products for the UK market."

This is good news for customers and hens! And the good news doesn't stop there. Since 2010, **Quorn has used at least 3.5 million fewer eggs each year, which means that 14,000 fewer laying hens have suffered on factory farms as a result.** ■

Photo credit: Gretchen Tseng of VeggieGrettie.com

Per Capita Egg Consumption in the U.S.*



* Based on USDA statistics published on the United Egg Producers' website.

INDUSTRY NEWS:

EGG CONSUMPTION DROPPING

Here's some encouraging news from the egg industry with a sunny side for hens: per capita egg consumption in the US has been steadily declining for the past six years!

As highlighted in the graph above, in 2006 the average American ate 258.1 eggs while the estimate for 2011 drops down to 246.3. That's nearly a dozen fewer eggs per person a year.

In the past several years the egg industry's reputation has been cracking as undercover investigations expose the miserable and unsanitary conditions forced upon hundreds of millions of laying hens confined in tiny wire battery cages for their entire lives.

With so many wonderful vegan cookbooks and products available today, it's never been easier to crack the cruelty and choose egg-free foods. Start now: visit **EggFreeLiving.com.** ■



EGGS-CITING NEW PRODUCT

Why is everyone scrambling to order The Vegg? Because this new all-vegan product looks, smells, and tastes like an egg yolk — but it's 100% plant-based and cholesterol-free!

Prepare it for breakfast scrambles, baking recipes, dressings, custard, ice cream or as a yolk for dipping bread.

What makes this product even more animal-friendly? Every time you buy The Vegg, 10% of the sales will be donated to Compassion Over Killing.

Visit **TheVegg.com** today to find out where to buy this new product. ■



COK's Pro-Veg Commercial Campaign Serves HULU Viewers "A Side of Truth"

Earlier this year, we took our powerful and award-winning Pro-Vegetarian Commercial campaign to the next level: from blanketing the national airwaves on three stations (MTV, Animal Planet, and Comedy Central) last fall to running our ads online, where a growing number of today's youth are turning to watch their favorite TV shows and movies.

One of the most popular online and on-demand video streaming services is HULU.com, and during January 2012, while in the middle of watching hit TV shows, movies, or documentaries, **over one million HULU viewers** saw our 30-second commercial, "A Side of Truth."

This eye-opening ad, which shows a young girl pulling up to a drive-through window to order a bacon-egg-and-cheese sandwich, exposes the shocking and painful realities kept hidden behind the closed

doors of the meat, egg, and dairy industries. And since this ad is viewed online, with just a click of a button, viewers are immediately and conveniently re-directed to our resourceful website **TryVeg.com** to request a free *Vegetarian Starter Guide*.

The response exceeded all expectations: Visits to TryVeg.com nearly quadrupled and requests for our *Vegetarian Starter Guide* more than doubled!

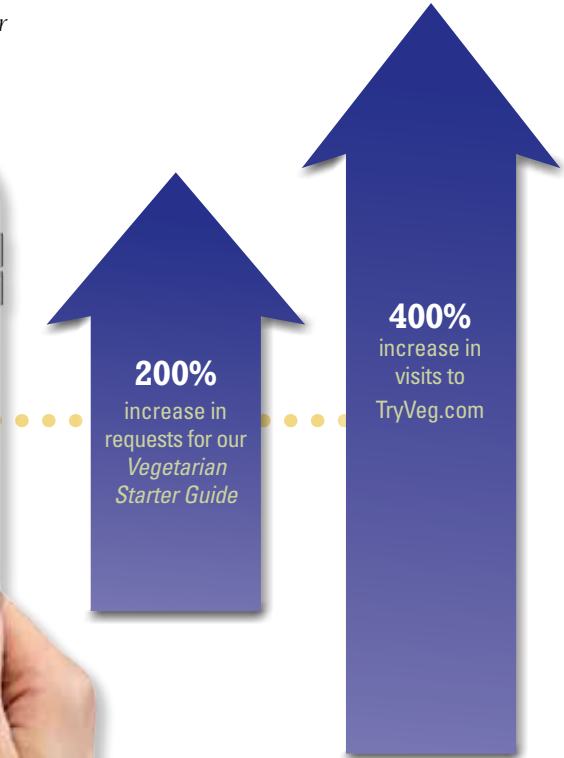
We also know this strategic campaign is working because of the tremendously positive feedback we receive from viewers:

"I saw your drive-thru window advertisement on Hulu, and I have been consciously eating less meat since watching it. I appreciate the truth and I encourage you to continue posting your Hulu ads."

"Your ad on HULU really caught my attention. I never thought much about my food before, but now I see meat very differently and can't stop thinking about how the animals are treated. I guess you could say I'm a vegetarian now but I haven't told my parents yet."

With your help, our pro-vegetarian commercials are changing minds and saving lives — at just pennies per view. Our ability to continually push this successful and cost-effective campaign forward is only made possible thanks to the generosity of supporters, like you.

Please visit **COK.net** to watch our ad — and make a donation today to help us continue serving a side of truth. ■



Compassionate Cuisine

Grilling Vegan Style with cookbook author John Schlimm



Become a master vegan griller by following recipes from *Grilling Vegan Style*, by John Schlimm. Whether you prefer hot and spicy, like the Seitan Flares, or something a little milder, like his Italian Herb Burgers, you're bound to find several recipes that will entice your taste buds.

From the book Grilling Vegan Style, by John Schlimm. Reprinted by arrangement with Da Capo Lifelong, a member of the Perseus Books Group. Copyright © 2012. Photo credit: Amy Beadle Roth

Italian Herb Burgers on Focaccia

3 to 4 servings

- 1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans
- 1 to 2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats, as needed
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup vegan egg substitute
- ½ cup roughly chopped white mushrooms (*optional*)
- ½ cup roughly chopped red onion
- 1 carrot, shredded
- ½ cup roughly chopped red bell pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and pressed
- 4 fresh basil leaves, chopped roughly
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves
- ¼ cup well-chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce

1. Combine all the ingredients above in a food processor, pulse until coarsely chopped. Add more oatmeal as needed (start with 1 cup) until the mixture holds together when you make a patty.
2. Chill the mixture for an hour. Shape into patties about 1/2 inch thick & 4 inches in diameter. Place on a platter, cover in plastic wrap, chill for 3 hours.
3. Heat the broiler and grill to med.-high. Broil the patties about 5 inches from the heat for 4-6 min. or until lightly browned (this helps prevent the patties from falling apart on the grill). Using a grilling screen if desired, move the patties to the heated grill for 2-3 min., turning once. Serve right away on focaccia (or wheat pita bread).

Seitan Flares

4 servings

- 1 pound seitan, torn or cut into chunks large enough to fit loosely on the grill grate, or skewered
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup of your favorite hot sauce (Frank's Red Hot Cayenne Pepper Sauce preferred)
- 3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Ground cayenne pepper (the more, the hotter!)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano (*optional*)

1. Heat the grill to medium-high
2. Prepare the seitan: Marinate the seitan in the olive oil to cover for 1 hour. Grill the seitan until lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes or longer, turning often. Transfer to a bowl.
3. Prepare the sauce: In a glass measure, whisk together the hot sauce, maple syrup, lime juice, salt, and cayenne pepper to taste. Microwave the mixture for 1 minute until fairly hot or whisk the mixture in a small saucepan and place over direct heat on the grill until hot. Add the mixture to the seitan bowl and stir gently to combine or coat the seitan if skewered. Finish with the optional oregano.
4. Or, marinate the seitan in the sauce for several hours to overnight. Arrange the seitan on skewers, if desired, and place it on the grill for 6 to 8 minutes, turning often, or until browned. Continue to brush on the hot sauce. Serve with extra sauce and celery sticks.

Finding Ultra: An Interview with Rich Roll



Rich Roll is a 45-year-old vegan ultra-endurance athlete who also happens to be a devoted husband and father of four. His journey to world-renowned athletic success is inspirational and described at length in his new book, *Finding Ultra*. At age 40, Rich decided to revamp his sedentary lifestyle that had led to him being overweight and unhealthy. He went vegan, and needing a place to expend his extra energy, took up long distance running. Just a few years later, Rich finished the Ultraman World Championships and completed the EPIC5 — five Ironman races on 5 Hawaiian islands in less than a week.

Q: Prior to becoming vegan, you struggled with drug and alcohol addiction and your weight. Describe how eating vegan changed your health as well as your overall outlook on life.

A: As I describe in the book, I have been blessed with two moments of clarity. The first was bottoming out on my addiction to drugs and alcohol that precipitated my sobriety. The second was health-related. It was the precipice of my fortieth birthday when I found myself defeated by a mere flight of stairs — buckled over and breath labored, I felt my chest tighten. My grandfather was an Olympic hopeful swimmer in the late 1920s and remained active throughout his adulthood. And yet he was felled by a heart attack at a very young age. I knew if I didn't implement some pretty radical changes that I would likely suffer the same fate. I foresaw my future, and the immediacy of my situation was palpable. Taking matters into my own hands, I adopted a plant-based diet. My expectations were low. I had no interest in returning to athletics

— I simply wanted to live, maybe lose a little weight, and experience my children at their energy level.

But as I began to pursue this vegan diet and lifestyle, I was rewarded with such an increase in vitality, I needed an outlet just to burn off the extra energy. This fueled an interest in returning to fitness — not to compete but rather just as an outlet to enjoy my body's resiliency and rejuvenation resulting from my adoption of a vegan diet. The athletic accomplishments that followed — and essentially everything that has positively transpired in my life the last few years begins and ends with my vegan diet. It is not an understatement, therefore, to say that it has completely overhauled my outlook on life.

Q: In 2010, you completed the EPIC5 CHALLENGE, completing 5 ironman-distance triathlons in under a week. Which posed more of a challenge: physically completing the race or having the mental stamina to get through it?

A: Certainly a combination of both. Physically, it was the most demanding thing I have ever attempted. But I could not have completed the adventure without extreme mental focus. When you are dealing with these incredible distances, sleep deprivation and extraordinary fatigue, it's the mind that will bury you long before the body will actually give out. Lose faith, and it's over. So, maintaining a positive outlook and focus on the task at hand was thus primary to seeing the event through to its conclusion.

Q: What vegan foods do you enjoy when not training for a specific competition?

A: I prefer plant-based whole foods close to their natural state, and I am a big fan of keeping my dishes simple. Large salads, quinoa, lentils, veggie burritos and chili and of course lots of vegetable and fruit based smoothies in the Vitamix. I try to avoid too many vegan “junk foods”, but I will occasionally splurge on

Uncle Eddie's vegan cookies and coconut milk ice cream.

Q: What's the most common question you get asked as a vegan athlete, and how do you respond?

A: "Where do you get your protein?" There are a lot of misconceptions out there about the role protein plays in health and fitness. To be sure, ensuring you get the proper amount of essential amino acids in your diet to repair the body in the wake of exercise-induced stress is very important. But what most people don't realize is that it simply isn't that difficult to meet your protein needs on a plant-based diet, no matter how hard you are training.

I discuss this important issue at length in my book, and have written extensively on the subject online.

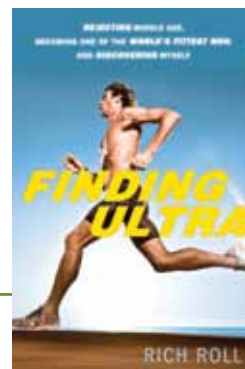
Q: In your decision to remain vegan, how important of a factor is the treatment of animals in food production?



A: I freely admit that my journey began from a health perspective. But as I travel this road, I have come to more fully understand the mechanical processes involved in factory farming incident to delivering the standard American diet to the dinner table. And it's appalling. When you actually look at how the animals are treated in this process, it's impossible not to be emotionally impacted. And so I have become much more aware, educated, and vocal on this issue, not to mention the impact it has had upon my consumer habits beyond the plate — from the clothes I wear to the furnishings we purchase for our home.

Q: What does it take for someone to make a considerable lifestyle change like you did? What helped you stay motivated?

A: It just takes one thing: a decision. We want to make things complicated. Cloak choices that challenge us in mystery, bolstered by excuses. But the bottom line



Visit FindingUltra.com to order your copy of Rich Roll's compelling book.

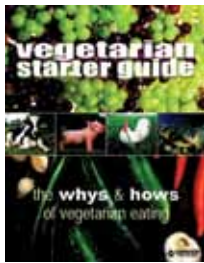
is that the power to change rests within all of us, and need not be precipitated by pain. Mood follows action, so my best advice is, don't overthink it. Just begin. Then back that decision up with consistent small actions, which over time move mountains.

To stay motivated, I try to mix things up with flexibility in my workouts and my meals. And I try to stay rooted in the present, focused on whatever I am doing in a given moment rather than pondering what tomorrow may bring. The greatest motivation? My children. I think about them every time I'm tempted to make an unhealthy choice. ■

"As I began to pursue this vegan diet and lifestyle, I was rewarded with such an increase in vitality, I needed an outlet just to burn off the extra energy."

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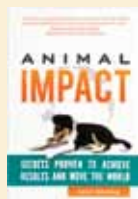
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Change of Heart: What Psychology Can Teach Us About Spreading Social Change by Nick Cooney

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