

Increasing Vegan Awareness

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 25.2.2021

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That although Strath Union shared a post during Veganuary to raise awareness of veganism¹, there is more that can be done to provide students with more information about veganism, including the benefits to individuals and the environment.
2. That sustainability is a key issue for Strath Union; there have been campaigns for divestment from fossil fuels and lobbying the University to become carbon neutral. However, there has been little information provided about the impact of animal agriculture on the environment.
3. That animal agriculture produces more emissions than the whole transport sector combined.²
4. That scientific research states that a plant-based diet is “probably the biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth,”³ and that the UN has been pushing for a transition to a plant-based diet for over 10 years.⁴
5. That moving to a plant-based diet is less resource intensive than diets which include animal products.
6. That factory farming is unjust and inherently cruel to animals.
7. That factory farming can be a breeding ground for infectious diseases due to unsanitary living conditions for animals. There are also significant negative impacts on workers in this sector, for example the impact on workers’ mental health.⁵
8. That affordable plant-based alternatives (for example, plant-based milk) are widely available.
9. That several Universities and Students’ Unions, including Oxford, Cambridge, Goldsmiths and Edinburgh, have taken initiatives to spread vegan and animal awareness to try to combat climate change.⁶

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That Strath Union works towards a better, fairer world with a stronger, healthier economy that relies on strong morals and an environmentally sustainable approach in all aspect of life, and that we take steps to achieve this goal through informative action.
2. This Union already recognises the issues of sustainability and encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour, and this attitude should be applied to all devastating problems that affect our planet, including animal farming.
3. The Union works towards combatting injustice and campaigning for positive change. As such, the issues raised through animal farming must also be addressed and campaigned on.

¹ <https://www.strathunion.com/festivecalendar/day33/>

² http://www.fao.org/3/a0701e/a0701e00.htm?fbclid=IwAR0inH4KvCJy_CTH4Bd-DYCKPbMFvh10FXVbHn40iSCgufvlfboCZ8b0lqY

³ Dr Joseph Poore (Oxford Graduate, Dep. of Zoology), <https://www.zoo.ox.ac.uk/people/joseph-poore>

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/02/un-report-meat-free-diet>

⁵ <https://greenstarsproject.org/2020/05/04/social-impact-meat-industry-slaughterhouse-conditions-ptsd/>

⁶ <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/university-uk-vegan-ban-meat-climate-change-environment-a9347256.html>

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. That Strath Union will promote vegan/plant-based alternatives as a way of reducing carbon emissions, including by promoting articles and research which evidences this.
2. That Strath Union shall create a campaigns section on the website dedicated to ending the cruelty of factory farming of animals, which also recognises the impact of factory farming on workers' rights and the climate.
3. That Strath Union should dedicate more resources to the promotion of Veganuary throughout January, including sharing information on veganism and the philosophy behind it, as well as sharing advice on plant-based recipes, health, and combatting factory farming.
4. That Strath Union will promote information about the injustice of factory farming, including information on the conditions factory farmed-animals are living in, how it impacts climate change and the spread of infectious diseases, throughout the year.
5. That Strath Union should provide more information about the health benefits of moving to a plant-based diet and support to people who are interested trying veganism, which includes supporting plant-based alternatives through food bank and food sharing initiatives.
6. The Strath Union will campaign the University to reduce the sale of animal products across campus and to provide healthy, affordable plant-based alternatives, including within the Students' Union.

Useful Links:

1. Comprehensive lists of all reasons to go vegan, including a TLDR section <https://katch4n.github.io/>
2. A Documentary about standard factory farm practices. NOTE: This video has graphic content <https://youtu.be/LQRAfJyEsko>
3. A concise TED talk about veganism - <https://youtu.be/byTxzzztRBU>
4. The inspirational vegan speech <https://youtu.be/a22XxXP3nU8>
5. The response to 'vegans are extreme' <https://youtu.be/OA55IVeY22Y>
6. Veganism related to COVID-19 and zoonotic diseases <https://youtu.be/aloBAS6bLy8>
7. The quickest rundown of environmental disasters caused by animal products - https://youtu.be/dSjE8xw_-Dg