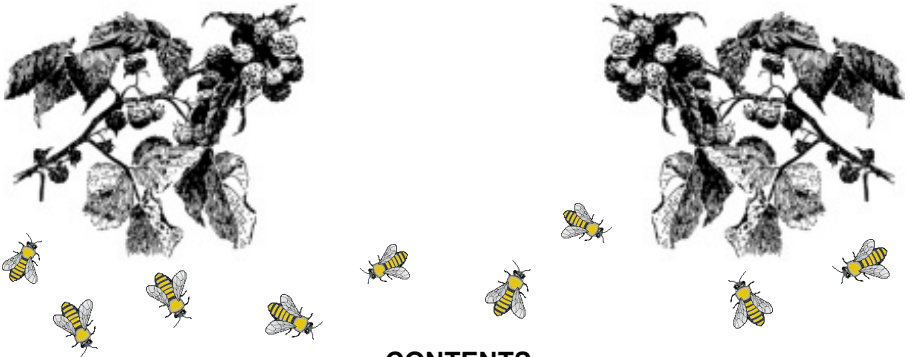


The Movement for Compassionate Living

# New Leaves

No.93 July-August-September 2009



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**The Movement for Compassionate Living**  
**105 Cyfyng Road, Ystalyfera, Swansea SA9 2BT, UK**

**Tel.: 01639 841223**

***e-mail: [mcl.ystalyfera@googlemail.com](mailto:mcl.ystalyfera@googlemail.com)***

**[www.mclveganway.org.uk](http://www.mclveganway.org.uk)**

**The Movement for Compassionate Living - the Vegan Way  
founded in 1985 by Kathleen and Jack Jannaway**

## **New Leaves**

NEW LEAVES is the quarterly journal of the Movement for Compassionate Living (MCL).

MCL promotes:

- a way of life that is free of the exploitation and slaughter of sentient beings, that is possible for all the world's people and that is sustainable within the resources of the planet.
- lifestyles that depend as much as possible on locally produced goods, thus avoiding the resource wastage and pollution of unnecessary transport and packaging.
- Vegan-organic methods of horticulture and agriculture that use no animals or animal by-products and are free from artificial fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides.
- the planting of trees, especially on the land freed from livestock farming.

*Trees absorb CO<sub>2</sub> and store the carbon as wood, thus checking global warming; ruminant livestock (cattle, sheep, goats) emit methane, a far more powerful greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>.*

*Mature trees of appropriate species produce maximum food per acre.*

*Wood from trees can be used for many constructive and productive purposes.*

*Woodland industries can provide livestock farmers with alternative sustainable incomes.*

Global warming and nuclear war threaten the survival of all life. Politicians may have the sense to avoid nuclear war but they cannot stop global warming unless people change their lifestyles.

Our herbivorous ancestors turned predators aeons ago when the forests dried up and they lost their food supply. The forests grew again but humans remained victims of their killing habits. Now vegans have proved that we do not need to kill animals for food. Land should go back to the trees.

**New Leaves is produced quarterly and distributed in January, April, July and October. The Editors do not necessarily agree with articles published.**

## BREWAGE

The storm woke me up this morning before five o'clock. Looking out of the window I saw the trees bending in the wind, the waterfalls over the valley running full, and the rain pelting down on the roof. So ... our third burst of summer has ended, and I had to put on my warm dressing gown. With my drink in hand I sat in the living room watching nature playing outside while I was trying to think what to write here.

On the following pages you can read the notes on the AGM. It was good to see three new people I had never seen there before. Also good to see one member I had not seen for many years. All the others were the usual attendees, met again with pleasure. Some were missing and missed.

The idea of a social weekend next May or June here in Wales, incorporating the AGM, was considered. Unless there are strong objections from members, we, the editorial collective, would like to go ahead with this plan. We have discussed the following as a possible programme: arrival on Friday late afternoon/evening or on Saturday morning; the AGM on Saturday afternoon; outing possibly to Tony Martin's forest garden (yet to be confirmed) on Sunday; outing to a beach on the Gower on Monday for those who can/want to stay one more day.

My house has beds (including a double sofa bed and a double inflatable mattress) for eight people, and some floor space for people with their own bedding. Christina Palfrey and Malcolm Horne have space for some more people at their houses. So altogether we can accommodate more than the usual number of attendees at the AGM. Of course members are also very welcome to come simply for the Saturday AGM.

I want to give advance notice of the possibility of funding for vegan projects "which clearly demonstrate that they will contribute to the promotion of MCL's objectives as stated inside the front cover" of New Leaves. See the item on p.7 of New Leaves No.91. The new legacies can fund a few small projects or a couple of slightly bigger ones, say anything from a few hundred to a few thousand pounds. The applications will be considered at the AGM, and they should be received in time for publication in the January or April issues of New Leaves.

This year's AGM had one application for funding which arrived just before the meeting. As there was no previous mention in New Leaves, we have an introduction and report on the project in this issue - see Bangor Forest Garden on p.6-8.

What a day: pounding rain, thunder and lightning (providing me with a welcome break for coffee, vegan blueberry ice cream, and strawberries) and now bright sunshine. Perhaps we'll have another burst of summer before long.

*Ireene-Sointu*



## **Report from the Annual General Meeting held in London on 9th May 2009**

Ten members attended the meeting. It was agreed Elaine Garrett would chair.



Ireene-Sointu's annual Secretary/Treasurer's report had been sent out with the April edition of *New Leaves*. There had been some recent legacies which had helped contribute to MCL's current good financial position. Some further legacies and instalments were expected.

MCL membership numbers were more or less static, with the number of new members enrolling balancing out those who had passed on or left. *New Leaves* was currently mailed to 514 addresses in the UK and 55 overseas.

It was asked if MCL had considered advertising to gain members. This had been discussed at previous AGMs. Several views were expressed and it was noted that since the advent of the internet, most groups were finding that membership numbers were difficult to sustain.

*New Leaves* was now compiled and edited by an editorial collective, coordinated by Ireene-Sointu. Ireene reported that they had been working together well but are still finding out the best way to do some things. There were favourable comments about the April edition. A new company, which is a workers' co-operative, had been found to print *New Leaves*. They use recycled paper and card and environmentally-friendly inks.

It was commented that the magazine used to be more light-hearted, for example having recipes and children's items. Ireene said that such items had not recently been submitted but would be welcomed, as would more practical reports and news from members about their own projects and lifestyles.

Patrick Smith, who was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments, had written in to say that he is happy to continue producing and distributing MCL literature and supplying stock for stalls at events.

Bronwen Lee updated the meeting on the Contact Scheme and the current list of Contacts. Bronwen was hoping to pass on the co-ordinating of the Scheme to another MCL member, but there were no immediate volunteers at the meeting.

Alan Garrett explained that, as previously agreed, the MCL website is due to be passed into the care of another member in due course. In the meantime, the content of the website remains fairly static, with MCL's information and all the leaflets available there.

Elaine Garrett outlined the history of, and current situation with, MCL's £70,000 legacy funds. The Vegan-Organic Network has held the funds for several years whilst plans for a Vegan-Organic Centre were pursued. Latterly, the interest derived from investment of the funds has been used to help VON provide bursaries for selected students on the Stockfree-Organic course at the Welsh College of Horticulture.

After reviewing this situation at last year's AGM, MCL decided that, if they were not used by VON for a specific centre project by the end of 2008, the funds should be returned to MCL so that other options could be considered. Applications were invited from appropriate projects and two had been received asking for the full amount, with some others seeking a comparatively smaller amount of funding.

The two main applications from the Arc Project (see *New Leaves* No.91) and from the Vegan-Organic Network (see *New Leaves* No.92) were discussed and considered. Following this, the consensus of the meeting was that the VON proposal was the preferred option and should therefore be granted the full amount of funding.

VON will be required to present a progress report to each MCL AGM from 2010 to 2014. Additionally, a brief written quarterly update will be submitted for *New Leaves*.

MCL could still grant funds to the smaller applications as some recent legacies had been received. The two applications from the Creating Welhealth Co-op (totalling £2600) were discussed and approved. An application from Bangor Forest Garden (£1000) was approved on condition that confirmation could first be given that the project concurred with vegan principles – it was agreed the current grant steering group would oversee this process.

Ireene suggested that the 2010 AGM could be held with a social weekend in Wales. This was generally thought to be a good idea and an attractive proposal. Some concerns were raised regarding travel problems for some members, but it was noted that wherever a national meeting is held there are always some members who would have difficulty attending or who would be unable to attend. Ireene will develop the idea further and put it to members via *New Leaves*. It was agreed that the meeting could be held in May or June 2010.

Thanks were expressed during the meeting to all those who were giving their time and energy to administer, support and maintain MCL.

### **MCL ENVELOPE STICKERS**

Global warming can be checked and people better supplied with food and other necessities if we use land for trees that absorb CO2 not for livestock that emit methane a much more powerful green house gas.

Details from  
MCL, 105 Cyfyng Road  
Ystalyfera, Swansea SA9 2BT  
[www.mclveganway.org.uk](http://www.mclveganway.org.uk)

Available for £1 per 100  
or 1p each from  
MCL, 105 Cyfyng Road  
Ystalyfera  
Swansea SA9 2BT

Cheques payable to MCL  
and send s.a.e.

### **UPDATES FROM THE PROJECTS**

#### **VON LATEST**

The Vegan-Organic Network's proposal for a Network of Stockfree Organic Centres was outlined briefly in the last issue of *New Leaves*. VON wishes to thank MCL members for their unanimous AGM vote for VON to receive the Alec Spring legacy to further promote its work for a non-violent vegan-organic system of farming and growing.

VON's proposal and its Directory of Stockfree Organic Farmers and Growers is available from David at [david.graham330@googlemail.com](mailto:david.graham330@googlemail.com).

The VON/MCL Student Bursary Fund continues to promote animal-free commercial growing. Now that interest rates have fallen the fund is very dependent on individual contributions; please consider making a donation of any size, payable to VON, and send to David Graham c/o the address on the back cover, thank you.

## **WELHEALTH PROGRESS REPORT ON MCL FUNDED PROJECTS (Forest garden nursery, House renovation, and Polytunnel)**

Forest garden nursery budget £1000, costs so far (hammer, plastic) £47.74

Our plan is to create two areas: (1) An enclosed sheltered area for germinating, and potting on, and laying out plants and trees propagated outside. A large potting shed greenhouse-style, made out of thrown-away good fibre glass will be built in this area. (2) Next to the first area we'll create a flat field, big enough to graft 1000+ trees per year, mulched in.

Area 1: Three of us worked on this, starting May11th this year, and we cleared the area of water butts, compost bins, old propagating tables, old pots of seed-grown apples, and ground plastic. Then we levelled the ground area by hand, and moved composting butts, and made a new pallet compost bin. After that we laid the existing nursery plants on to the new laid area, and have been doing more propagating and potting there. One new seed propagating cloche box has been made for germinating 200 monkey puzzles, using brand new thrown-away plywood, and brand new no-cost conservatory laminated plastic. We have a lot more to make, and need to make them quickly, for 1500+ seeds. (Help wanted? Yes! Please contact us. Plenty of room to stay and camp.)

Area 2: We mowed an area of land, and bought silage bay black plastic (this plastic is marvellous for longevity, lasting more than nine years fully outside, though we use it only for mulching, two months say, and then take it up to store). We will cover the area until autumn, when we will remove and replace it with deep hay mulch for the grafted trees, which we plan to do in late autumn, in winter, and in early spring during the no-growth period.



Frank Bowman (June 2009)

Tel.: 07980 158661

*E-mail:*  
[frank\\_bowman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:frank_bowman@yahoo.co.uk)



## **BANGOR FOREST GARDEN**

### **MCL GRANT AND VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES**

The BFG is a non-hierarchical, not-for-profit co-operative with the aim of promoting Forest Gardens as a sustainable lifestyle solution in the NW Wales region. It has developed one of the foremost forest gardens in the UK, and it was inspired by Robert Hart's original garden design. It is run by members who have paid an annual fee of £5 to join the co-operative. It has a committee of directors made up of paid members of the co-operative who want to volunteer for it. All work is done on a voluntary basis by volunteers from wide-ranging backgrounds.

In a global environment of inequality, declining biodiversity, increasing food and energy prices and environmental costs, forest gardening is the ideal tree-based solution for sustainable development, as promoted by MCL. Forest gardening uses few resources and provides an opportunity to re-use and recycle materials. It has a zero carbon, indeed a negative carbon, budget. It cycles nutrients effectively and reduces the need for packaging and transport. Forest gardening provides a fulfilling and active lifestyle that facilitates physical and mental well-being.

We promote forest gardening by running courses, holding open days, giving guided tours, and working with the socially excluded. We have been working with adults with special learning needs, probationers, young offenders and family groups. These individuals learn skills and develop personally through therapeutic horticulture and green woodworking activities. The BFG is a social enterprise with the ability to train, educate and act in many cross-cutting themes relating to food, the environment, sustainability and health.

A project that we are currently working on is a DIY, learning self-guided tour, enabling visitors and learners to walk around the garden with a laminated garden plan, from which one can see where all the trees and plants are located in relation to each other, what they are and what their uses are. Additionally Dr Sarah Kemmitt, our founder, has made a half hour recorded (pod cast) garden tour, where visitors can be guided around the garden.



## **Volunteering Opportunities**

### **Gardeners, office work, education, and publicity**

We are very flexible, and it depends on what kind of work you would like to do - what kinds of skills you have and what you would like to develop. There is the possibility of doing gardening work at the monthly workdays on the second Sunday of every month from about 11am, or more frequently, if you have the time, on our fortnightly Wednesday workdays. We could also do with people to do things like publicity (posters, flyers etc), produce a newsletter (collate info on featured plants, recipes, project news etc), organise events (help with open days etc), or help to compile funding applications with the team.

Basically it's very flexible for volunteers to do as much or as little as they like. You can join the Forest Garden Group and if you enjoy the project you could join the committee.

### **Directors**

We require directors to determine the strategic direction of the project, decide what we should aim for and how to achieve it. Being a director would require you to attend quarterly meetings that last a few hours. At these meetings, you may take on some tasks to undertake between meetings. Some directors have a particular area of responsibility, for example: chairing meetings, funding, or health and safety. Produce from the garden is shared among group members.

### **Finances**

Over the last ten years we've been quite successful in getting project funding and we've done lots of good work with groups such as probationers, adults with learning difficulties, single parents, and environmental art with kids.

We have two categories of project costs:

(1) Core fixed costs include insurance, telephone, company returns and accounts. These must be paid for the BFG project to continue as a limited not-for-profit company. (2) Project costs include volunteer expenses, courses, development, gardening materials and plants etc.

Unfortunately, we currently have no grant funding, and the MCL grant of £1,000 has been invaluable in enabling us to continue. This grant will enable us to continue paying our fixed costs and a small amount of project

costs for a period of two years. This has allowed us to continue as a project through this difficult patch, allowing us time to develop an income stream from plant sales, courses and grants, and to pay for other project costs.

Sincerest thanks to MCL for supporting us.

### **Vegan condition**

The core activities of forest gardening are inherently vegan, although some practitioners may keep bees for honey, have ducks in a pond, or keep other poultry or penned livestock. The BFG committee has agreed that for the duration of the grant (two years from June 2009) we will not keep any animals. We have never had any intention to keep mammals or poultry on the site. If we keep bees, we will do so only for the purposes of pollination and biodiversity enhancement, and the bees will not be exploited for honey. We kept bees for a short time about eight years ago on this basis; we were trying to help in efforts to conserve the native Welsh Black Honey Bee.



### **A note on forest gardens and Permaculture**

Although Permaculture often uses animals as an integral part of the system, forest gardening is a distinct practice and does not require an animal component to work. Sometimes forest gardens are incorporated as units within a wider permaculture system. Nutrient cycling within a forest garden is not dependent on keeping animals or exploiting them for food or other purposes. Nutrients are cycled via the action of biological fixation, mycorrhizae, accumulation within plant tissues, and the recycling of plant residues by the soil microbial community. Forest gardening also involves techniques that encourage natural assemblages of animals and enhance biodiversity.

Enquiries for volunteering are very welcome.

Bangor Forest Garden, Henfaes Research Centre, Abergwyngregyn, Gwynedd LL33 0LB

For further information, please

call: 0845 345 77 16 or email: [contact@thebfg.org.uk](mailto:contact@thebfg.org.uk)

The BFG is a cooperative not-for-profit company limited by guarantee no. 5610343



## ARE GM CROPS ANOTHER REASON TO WORRY ABOUT HONEY BEES?



Last year a court in Bavaria ruled that local honey contaminated with GM maize pollen could not be sold to the public.

Although maize is pollinated by the wind and not by insects, the flowering plants are visited by honey bees to collect pollen - a vital source of protein. Seven percent of the pollen in the Bavarian beekeeper's honey came from a commercially grown GM maize called Mon810. This maize was developed by Monsanto to resist an insect pest called the corn borer. It is the only GM crop that can be legally grown commercially in the EU.

Mon810 has been genetically engineered using genes from a soil bacterium to make the whole plant produce a toxin called Bt which kills the pest. Bt toxins were discovered in the early part of the last century and organic farmers use Bt sprays to kill insect pests - this decomposes rapidly once it has been sprayed. In contrast, Bt crops manufacture the toxin throughout the plant as it grows, and any species feeding on the plant can be exposed to fresh toxin.

Monsanto say Mon810 is perfectly safe for everything but the corn borer. However, doubts about the safety of this maize to health and the environment have led six EU states to ban it. Fortunately for Bavarian beekeepers, Germany joined the list this year along with France, Austria, Greece, Hungary and Luxembourg. Poland is also trying to prevent Mon810 being grown.

Attempts by the European Commission to overturn the national bans in Austria and Hungary were defeated when the EU council of Ministers voted to support the bans earlier this year.

One concern about Bt toxins (there are many which are now being used in combinations by the biotech companies to try and prevent pest resistance building up) is that they may also affect non-target insects such as honey bees and the important pest predators such as lacewings and ladybirds. Whilst not killing them outright, the toxin may impact on their behaviour or reproduction.

Recent research has shown that one Bt toxin produced by GM maize plants, and present in pollen, may impact on the behaviour and feeding of

honey bees, including possible disorientation. The authors called for more research. (ref Ramirez-Romero R et al. (2008). Does Cry1Ab protein affect learning performances of the honey bee *Apis mellifera* L. (Hymenoptera, Apidae)? *Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety* 70: 327–333)

Tests on GM potatoes in the late 1990s found that GM toxin produced by genetically engineering genes from snowdrops had a significant effect on the breeding and life expectancy of ladybirds feeding on aphids which had fed on the potatoes. In this case, the development of the GM potatoes has been halted. Not so for Bt crops which continue to be grown in the USA and smaller areas elsewhere.

Another major concern is the impact on health, particularly the allergenicity of the many different GM Bt proteins in humans. This is a long running concern, and has already caused a number of food scares around the world. In 2000 a Bt maize called Starlink (which was only approved for feeding to animals because of concerns that the Bt protein in it, known as Cry9c, might be allergenic in people) found its way into human foods, resulting in a massive and costly clean-up. In 2007 illegal growing of Bt63 rice (containing the Cry1Ac protein) in China resulted in exported products being withdrawn right around the planet again because of uncertainty about allergies.

Honey bees are taking a battering at the moment with the development of the mysterious Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) in the USA which causes hives to experience catastrophic collapse in bee numbers. So far researchers have failed to come up with an adequate explanation of why this is happening. It may be a combination of factors working against the health of bees.

Pesticides, such as the family of insecticides called nicotinoids, have been linked with bee deaths in France and Germany in the recent past. The widespread presence of the varroa mite in hives across the world has caused much destruction because of the diseases it spreads. In the USA pollination is a huge business, and honey bee colonies are trucked from one side of the continent to the other. This is to ensure that high-value crops like citrus fruits in Florida and almonds in California are all fertilized. Honey bees are not naturally migratory species and some people have suggested that long-distance haulage may not be good for them. Some have even pointed the finger at mobile phone signals for disorientating bees foraging away from the hive.

It's the latest in a long series of threats to honey bees which we simply cannot afford to lose because of the pollination of vital crops such as legumes and apples. Crops such as oilseed rape also benefit from foraging honey bees which will travel at least three miles to collect pollen and nectar from the crop. Wild bees also play an important role in pollinating crops, and wild plants and their populations are also under threat. Two bumble bee species are believed to have become extinct in the UK in the recent past probably due to the loss of wild habitats.

Crops only flower for short periods so all bee species need a succession of flowers producing nectar and pollen to feed their larvae and build up reserves to survive through the winter. The presence of uncultivated wild areas for maintaining healthy bee populations cannot be underestimated. Farmers can benefit too. One study in Canada found that the optimum crop of oilseed rape was produced if there was 30% uncultivated land within 750 metres of the crop, because this maintained a high population of pollinators to work on the crop at the vital time of year.

GM crops have been developed for large scale agriculture in which monocultures of single varieties covering huge areas are common. The majority of GM crops in commercial use around the world are either tolerant to a particular weed killer, such as Monsanto's Roundup, or to Bt.

Being able to control weeds in a growing crop enables farmers to reduce them much more effectively than before. The problem is that a landscape without weeds will soon become a landscape without bees because weeds provide nectar and pollen throughout the spring, summer and early autumn.

A well fed population of bees stands the best chance of warding off disease. Farming around the world needs to change to give bees a chance. The use of toxic chemicals should end and the re-creation of a biodiverse landscape, where flowering plants are allowed to flourish needs to accelerate. The march of GM crops needs to be checked to ensure that they do not downgrade habitats even further and introduce yet more potential risks for honey and wild bees in the form of novel toxins.

For more information about GM Freeze see [www.gmfreeze.org](http://www.gmfreeze.org)



*Pete Riley, Campaign Director, GM Freeze*



## **GROW VEGAN!**



In Summer 2009 The Vegan Society launches a new project “Grow Vegan!” to explore and explain how vegan diets and vegan agriculture can help to overcome world hunger and provide future food security. In this article, Amanda Baker, Media and PR Officer at The Vegan Society, looks at the underlying evidence, and outlines a plan of action.

**Nearly one billion people are currently under-nourished.**

**Future food security is threatened by increasing human and farmed animal populations, decreasing fresh water and fertile soil resources, and also the uncertain impacts of global crises such as climate change.**

**By choosing vegan farming and diets, we can make best use of scarce land, water and energy resources, for the benefit of people, animals and the planet.**

### **Undernourishment around the world**

Over 900 million under-nourished people live in developing countries.[1] This includes around 75 million people who were pushed into hunger between 2005 and 2007 by high food prices.[2] Global climate change will cause further localised food shortages, due to phenomena such as drought, flood and sea level rise.

People who already live in poverty usually lack the resources to protect their own food supply.[2] Those in poverty in the developed world - including some 56 million under-nourished people[1] - are also vulnerable. These people could secure their own food supply if they can gain access to land, and the skills and other resources to grow a balanced diet.

The crops which are grown to feed farmed animals worldwide are sufficient in quantity[3], and often also in quality, to feed all the humans – if we choose to stop artificially breeding animals to farm them.

## **Animal farming and global climate change**

The United Nations (UN) have concluded, in their *Livestock's Long Shadow* report, that:

“The livestock sector emerges as one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global.”[4]

In particular, the UN concluded that human farming of animals is a significant driver of catastrophic climate change on the global scale:

“The livestock sector is a major player, responsible for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions measured in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. This is a higher share than transport.”[5]

(The UN estimate that 13.5% of global human greenhouse gas emissions are due to transport.[6])

Human farming of animals is therefore also decreasing local food security indirectly, by contributing to global climate change.

The Vegan Society estimate that well-planned plant-based diets can cut the personal carbon footprint for a UK resident by the equivalent of around 0.8 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per person per year.[7]

## **Limits on agricultural land**

The projected world population of humans in 2050 is nine billion.[8] The UN predicts that there will be 0.15 hectares (ha) of arable land per person by 2050 (one hectare is about the size of an international rugby union pitch, about 2.5 acres).[9] Some seven billion hectares of land worldwide is considered suitable for current intensive crop and animal farming techniques.[10]

Therefore there will be a total of around 0.8 ha per person for all intensive agricultural products in 2050. Some of that 0.8 ha of land will be needed for non-food intensive crops, such as fibre and oil crops. A further two billion hectares is suitable for current forestry techniques but represents the last remaining vegetated natural areas on Earth.[9]

Diets which meet nutritional needs require an estimated 0.2–0.9 ha per person. The land required depends upon a number of factors, but increases as people choose to eat more things taken from animals.[11]

The Vegan Society estimate that well-planned plant-based diets for UK residents will use only one third of the fertile land currently needed for the typical British diet.[7]

Stock-free farming can give food security to the entire projected human population of the world in 2050. But the lifestyles which depend most heavily on human farming of animals cannot be extended to nine billion people.

### **Scarcity of fresh water**

Supplies of fresh water are critical in food production. Irrigation enables greater crop yields than rain-fed growing. Some 70% of all abstracted fresh water is used for agriculture.[12] Freshwater resources, such as river flow and groundwater, can become depleted if they are used faster than they are replenished through the natural water cycle.

Human farming of animals both uses, and pollutes, great volumes of fresh water. The UN concluded:

“Overall ... the livestock sector has an enormous impact on water use, water quality, hydrology and aquatic ecosystems. The water used by the sector exceeds 8% of the global human water use.”[13]

The UN was unable to fully quantify the water depletion due to human farming of animals. They could only quantify the water lost from soil and plants during animal feed crop growing:

“Evaluating the role of the livestock sector on water depletion is a far more complex process. The volume of water depleted is only assessable for water evapotranspired by feed crops during feed production. This represents a significant share of 15% of the water depleted every year.”[13]

The Vegan Society estimate that well-planned plant-based diets for UK residents use only one third of the fresh water currently needed for the typical British diet.[7]



## **The Majority World**

Vegan agriculture can help small farmers to secure the food supply for their own communities. A balanced diet can be grown in developing countries without relying upon farmed animals, nor upon expensive agricultural inputs such as agrochemicals. The people will however need a reliable source of vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, such as supplements or fortified foods.[14]

Draught animals are widely used on small farms in the majority world at present. However, integrated farming systems such as those developed by permaculture designers can supply plentiful nutritious plant-based food without the need to rely upon draught animals, expensive fossil fuels or exhausting human effort.[15]



Stock-free techniques also reduce the risks and costs associated with diseases such as avian influenza and ovine bluetongue.

## **The United Kingdom**

The UK needs a secure food supply which cuts greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050[16], for a projected human UK population of 75 million.[17]

Switching to vegan agriculture can make it easier for the UK to meet our food security and greenhouse gas emission goals. Relying on the open world market for staple foods is likely to become significantly more risky in the coming decades, due to factors such as global climate change. Sufficient land will be released by no longer growing fodder crops for farmed animals so that there will be no need to plough former pastures.[18]

We can import luxury plant crops such as tea, coffee and dried tropical fruit. Conducted fairly, such trade can provide significant cash income to farmers worldwide, whilst leaving them with sufficient natural resources to feed their own communities.

Vegan agriculture can support a healthy UK population. Well-planned plant-based diets, based on staple crops which grow well in the UK, can support healthy lifestyles at every age, at every stage of our development from

planning parenthood, through conception, pregnancy and breast-feeding, childhood and all ages of adulthood. Vegan diets can help people to meet Government healthy eating targets, such as cutting saturated fat intake, and increasing consumption of fruit and vegetables.[19]

Stock-free farming methods are proven to be effective in the UK, producing good yields of nutritious food. Stock-free farms also support viable UK rural livelihoods.[20]

It is often wrongly claimed that land which is 'marginal' for current industrial arable farming 'must' be used for animal farming. In reality, it is possible on such land to grow, with stock-free farming methods, annual[21], shrub and tree[22] crops for food, fuel, fibre, construction materials and other uses. Stock-free farming therefore also allows us to leave more land for the habitats of other species.

Animal farmers will however need financial support to enable them to re-train and re-equip for stock-free methods. By adapting in this way, former animal farmers can reduce their future risks.

It is for these reasons that The Vegan Society says 'Grow Vegan!' so that all people everywhere in the future can have secure access to nutritious food.

The Vegan Society will be working with those who influence primary food production, such as UK farmers, the UK Government and international development organisations. We aim to demonstrate that vegan agricultural systems are viable, and have real economic, environmental and food security benefits.

We are compiling new information on practical vegan agriculture for farmers and international development workers. We will address 'frequently asked questions', such as alternatives to both chemical fertilizers and animal manures, and what would happen to so-called 'marginal' land.

Please watch [www.vegansociety.com](http://www.vegansociety.com) or contact Amanda Baker at The Vegan Society to find out more, and how you could get involved. Email: [media@vegansociety.com](mailto:media@vegansociety.com) or telephone 0121 523 1737 during office hours. We would be delighted to hear from people with relevant technical knowledge.

## **References**

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## FROM PERMACULTURE TO VEGACULTURE



Having read with interest your excellent article on Permaculture by Christina Palfrey in issue No 92, I feel compelled to write a few words regarding what I call Vegaculture.

Whereas the above article mentions a basic application of three important ethics; Earth Care, People Care, and Fair Shares, as MCL readers know a fourth can be readily added. This is Animal Care - in the broadest sense animal care applies to all sentient beings.

The application of Vegaculture is essentially the same as for Permaculture except for the addition of an ethic directly associated with the Care of Animals.

Your article states: "Earth Care encompasses the need to care for what still remains of natural eco-systems, to regenerate areas destroyed by humankind and to create havens for species, both animal and plant, which are in danger of extinction from our actions". (Danger of extinction, rather than timely action, seems to be becoming more accepted now as the catalyst for action.)

Also: "The need to co-operate with nature is stressed, and to provide for all life systems, which should be seen as having intrinsic value, regardless of whether they are 'useful to humankind' or not. Anthropocentrism may be discouraged, and human beings seen as part of the web of life."

Permaculture may be one of our best friends, but the 'Earth Care' statement can be seen to project:

- (1)The need to utilize systems which are useful to humankind (no distinction being made with respect to rights), and
- (2)If systems are part of the 'web of life', then they also have a possible part to play in human utilization.

These issues have always concerned me, as I believe they may well concern many others; and that is because protection for sentient beings

has NOT really been advocated in traditional cultures, which underlie the ethical basis and means of sustainability implicit in permanent agriculture.

Permaculture notes that the wealth of countries and individuals has been synonymous with animal ownership and access. It also documents the successes of 'sustainable living' traditionally in a rural context, usually with the integration of animals, for food and work in that setting.

The unfortunate fact is that the history of 'Earth Care' HAS often placed anthropocentrism at the basis of agriculture. The history of human endeavour rides on the back of animals, by design.

A return to lower population scales, and rural settings, would undoubtedly redress the present trends. In fact one of the four 'future scenarios' which David Holmgren purports, as a result of the combined effects of peak oil and climate change, suggests this event. (Reference 1)

In the present global condition, the level of welfare protection, let alone rights, is not guaranteed. There is a continuing debate between policy makers and their adherents, and the Animal Rights and Welfare groups, in many developed communities who adopt a more particular view.

The scale of animal food chain contribution to problems of Earth Care is well-known. Here in Australia, over the next twenty years, methane production alone will actually outweigh the total pollution from all of our coal-fired power stations! (Reference 2) Stock-free farming methods stand out as a sensible and obvious alternative; perhaps as one of the solutions Permaculture is looking for, not one of the problems.

Organic food production is not stock-free. Many vegan gardeners try to be 'organic stock-free' not just organic, thereby protecting the animals.

Animal farming has to be viewed as a system, a very important part of the 'web of life' for many people. However, with UN estimates at 48.5 billion farm animal deaths each year, this could equally be described as a 'web of death'.

The principal point I am seeking to make, in the current context and debate surrounding the seeking of a permanent or sustainable culture, is that a balanced view needs to recognize animal rights. It is essential, considering the past habits of using and exploiting animal (for both human and web of life reasons), and the situation of animal abuse still so prevalent today.

Both the concerned observer, and the pragmatist, can see the influential positions of interest groups, the many and varied cultural lifestyles and diets, and a myriad of other issues, which impact on a movement towards compassionate living. However, the potential for change is enormous. What I have seen evolve is globalisation, while a younger generation sees 'one world'.

When seeking to redress entrenched 'traditional' cultural positions, especially given the nature of the integration of animal and human behaviour, both in and outside agricultural participation, we need a powerful and integrated model; a philosophy and practice, for something other than past habits. This is where Vegaculture evolves and diverges from Permaculture.

I would like to see Vegaculture growing from Permaculture in the same way that Veganism separated itself from Vegetarianism all those years ago; to further refine the design principles necessary in an approach toward a sustainable world. Then Vegaculture will express not just veganism per se, but the broad spectrum of cultural inputs, a basis in stock-free agriculture and horticulture, the movement for compassionate living, animal liberation and rights, essential and embedded infrastructures. Other attributes such as natural energy systems, slow food, localisation and numerous sensible living methods may well become attracted to Vegaculture as they have to Permaculture.

What we need is a view to a 'sustainable present', not just a sustainable future.

By all means enrol in a Permaculture course, this is a wonderful education. But ensure that vegan food is integrated into the program and question the dominant paradigm which draws its experience from cultivation of animals as part of the food chain in traditional cultures, as well as being members of the web of life.

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*Zalan Glen (Australia)*

## GLEANING

### Ghent goes veggie to lose weight and save planet

Ghent embarks on a radical experiment today, seeking to make every Thursday a day free of meat and of the fish and shellfish for which the city is renowned.

Every restaurant in the city is to guarantee a vegetarian dish on the menu, with some going fully vegetarian every Thursday. From September, the city's schools are to make a meat-free meal the "default" option every Thursday, although parents can insist on meat for their children. At least one hospital wants to join in.

"We hope that the university, other institutions, enterprises and other towns will jump on the train," said Tobias Leenaert, director of the local branch of Flanders' Ethical Vegetarian Association (EVA).

The organisers cite UN data arguing that meat production and consumption are to blame for 18% of greenhouse gases – more than cars. "If everyone in Flanders does not eat meat one day a week, we will save as much CO2 in a year as taking half a million cars off the road," said the EVA.

*The Guardian, Thursday 14 May 2009*



There they stand - the animals  
Fixing us with their stares  
Are they accusing us  
Or pleading for our compassion



*Christina Palfrey*

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## MCL ADDRESSES

### General Contact - Membership - Treasurer - Editorial Collective

Ireene-Sointu, MCL, 105 Cyfyng Road, Ystalyfera, Swansea SA9 2BT, UK

Tel: 01639 841223, e-mail: [mcl.ystalyfera@googlemail.com](mailto:mcl.ystalyfera@googlemail.com)

### Publications

MCL c/o The Sumac Centre, 245 Gladstone St., Nottingham NG7 6HX, UK

Tel: 0845 458 9595, e-mail: [mcl@veggies.org.uk](mailto:mcl@veggies.org.uk)

### Contact Scheme

Bronwen Lee, 54 Albert Street, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1LX, UK

Tel: 0845 345 5314 or 01296 422008, e-mail: [bron@places-to-be.com](mailto:bron@places-to-be.com)

The Contact Scheme aims to provide opportunities for mutual support, co-operation and friendship, and/or to further the aims of MCL locally and regionally. Details of contacts are only provided to those participating in it.

The Contact Scheme offers a great opportunity to get in touch with other MCL members who are following or working towards compassionate, cruelty-free living.

At present we have contacts in Antrim, Bedfordshire, Belfast, Birmingham, Buckinghamshire, Cheshire, Clwyd, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Devon, Dorset, Essex, Gwynedd, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Leicestershire, London, Middlesex, Norfolk, North Yorkshire, Northumberland, Nottingham, Powys, Shropshire, Tyne & Wear, West Glamorgan, York, Co. Galway (Eire), Goult (France).

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT NEW LEAVES TO BE RECEIVED BY 21ST SEPTEMBER

should be typed or clearly hand-written and marked 'for New Leaves'. Any press cuttings/references should be recent and identified with name and date of the source publication. Food items promoted in articles and recipes should be appropriate to MCL's policy of encouraging use of produce that can be grown in the writer's local region, rather than imported crops.

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**Wales Vegan/Y Figan Cymreig**, bilingual (Welsh-English) magazine, £3 for 3 copies per year. Bron Yr Ysgol, Montpellier Park, Llandrindod, Powys.

**Veggies and Sumac Centre:** Catering for animal and social justice campaigns. Vegan cafe (Fri, Sat, Sun); vegan-organic demonstration garden; distribution of MCL booklets & leaflets; publishers of the Animal Contacts Directory (£5.80 incl. p&p / £5 unwaged). 245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX. Tel: 0845 458 9595. [www.veggies.org.uk](http://www.veggies.org.uk)

**The Vegan Society**, inventors of the word and established since 1944. 'The Animal-Free Shopper', our comprehensive guidebook of vegan products, just £4.99 + £1.50 p&p. Donald Watson House, 21 Hylton Street, Hockley, Birmingham B18 6HJ. See [www.vegansociety.com](http://www.vegansociety.com). Email: [info@vegansociety.com](mailto:info@vegansociety.com) or phone 0845 458 8244. For help writing to local newspapers etc. please email Amanda: [media@vegansociety.com](mailto:media@vegansociety.com)

**Sarah Two:** well I moved 8 years ago but women still welcome & anyone interested in growing fruit (field turning slowly into orchard) & vegan permaculture. I still live at: le village, 09600 Dun, France  
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For those who can afford it, we suggest an annual subscription of £5.00 for UK residents (*overseas subscribers – please add a further donation to cover extra postage costs*). Less will be accepted, however, and more will be welcomed – this will help us to send *New Leaves* to those who will read it and hand on the ideas but who cannot themselves afford a subscription. Such donations also help with the costs of stalls and meetings.

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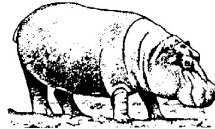
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