

Advocating Meat Reduction and Vegetarianism to Adults in the U.S.



Report in Brief

This report covers two phases of research representing a comprehensive study of meat consumption in the United States, with a focus on meat reducers and semi-vegetarians. It addresses in detail the behavior, motivations, and barriers of consumer segments that are of particular interest to vegetarian advocates. These results may help advocates more effectively persuade U.S. adults to reduce and eventually eliminate meat from their diets.



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I. Study Background and Methodology

In early 2005, the Humane Research Council (HRC) formed a nonprofit research syndicate to study meat reduction and “semi-vegetarianism” among adults in the United States. This collaborative study involved several prominent animal advocacy groups and consisted of two primary phases of research. HRC used both quantitative (Phase One) and qualitative (Phase Two) research techniques to obtain a well-rounded understanding of the trends, motivations, and barriers to meat reduction, vegetarianism, and veganism in the U.S. This project represents one of the most comprehensive research studies ever conducted about the attitudes and behavior of U.S. adult consumers regarding meat consumption and reduction.

Phase One of the study involved the design, execution, and analysis of a quantitative survey of a large sample of U.S. adults age 18 and over. HRC worked with Survey Sampling, Inc. and its online research panel of more than 2.5 million U.S. adults to field the survey in February 2005. We employed “census balanced” sampling techniques to ensure, as much as possible, representation of the adult U.S. population. Online sampling based on a panel of participants (who have opted in) cannot be considered truly “random,” although we sampled from one of the largest and most respected consumer panels available. Using online research methods also results in some limitations given that some groups are not fully represented online; this typically results in under-representation of non-white, lower-income, and elderly individuals. In total, more than 3,200 adults completed the Phase One survey. Assuming results are truly representative of U.S. adults, then the maximum margin of error for the entire sample is +/- 1.7% (higher for subgroups).

Following the initial quantitative research phase, HRC conducted a qualitative second phase, including nine in-person focus groups to further explore the survey findings. Focus groups were held in late 2005 in various cities around the United States, including Washington, D.C.; Minneapolis, MN; Houston, TX; Louisville, KY; and Portland, OR. Each focus group included 6-10 paid participants and lasted about 90-120 minutes per session (for all groups combined, there were a total of 73 focus group participants). All groups included participants who were screened according to their past, current, and future (intended) meat consumption behavior, with focus on actual meat reducers and semi-vegetarians. These focus groups were also supplemented with findings from a 2002 HRC study of four focus groups conducted in Seattle, including two groups of actual vegetarians and vegans (veg*ns).

The 2005 Phase Two focused on meat reducers (actual and intended) and semi-vegetarians to help fulfill the overall objectives of the study, including:

- ❖ Understand the geographic, demographic, and psychographic differences among meat consumers segmented by past, current, and intended future levels of meat consumption.
- ❖ *Qualitatively* increase the general understanding of semi-vegetarians, including current and intended eating behaviors, primary motivations and barriers to further meat reduction, and sources of influence, to support analysis of different approaches to vegetarian advocacy.
- ❖ *Quantitatively* validate and expand vegetarian advocates’ understanding of semi-vegetarians and other meat consumption groups, including their current and future eating behaviors, motivations, barriers, and sources of influence.
- ❖ Begin to identify messages and approaches that effectively persuade current semi-vegetarians (and other meat consumer groups) to further reduce their meat consumption.



An important objective of this foundational research study was to segment current meat consumers according to their recent and intended behaviors. Using the detailed quantitative data from Phase One, HRC categorized meat consumption behavior into several key consumer segments based on respondents' self-reported changes in meat consumption from previous year and their intended changes over upcoming year. Please note that the survey defined the term "meat" comprehensively by asking respondents to provide answers regarding "any type of meat, including chicken, turkey, fish/shellfish, beef, pork, veal, or lamb." The resulting consumer segments serve as the underlying bases for the observations and conclusions provided in this report, and the groups are used to analyze and recommend strategies targeted at specific behaviors and motivations.

It is important to note that the findings presented in this report are subject to several caveats and limitations, most notably the reliance on self-reported data. Respondents' answers may differ from their actual opinions or behavior for a variety of reasons, particularly for questions involving predictions of the respondents' own changes in the future. Some participants may intentionally misrepresent their own behavior and opinions about an issue in an effort to please the researcher and/or avoid social stigma; others may do so inadvertently. For instance, a participant may actually intend to decrease their meat consumption for personal health reasons, but then say something else in a focus group to avoid the perception that they are currently unhealthy. This may also occur when asking research participants to describe their own motivations and barriers to change, including cases in which participants may not be aware of their own motivations.

Despite these limitations, however, self-reported intentions and predictions of change can provide a very useful starting point for advocates to evaluate the true intentions and potential changes for different respondent groups. Several of the key consumer segments identified in this report are based on respondents' intentions and/or willingness to reduce their meat consumption. These responses may not align perfectly with participants' true feelings or intentions, but these segments of consumers are nonetheless different from the rest of the adult population in ways that are meaningful to vegetarian advocates. The segmentation approach used throughout this study is helpful to identify groups of consumers who are relatively open to meat reduction and vegetarianism. Consumers who state that they intend to (or are willing to) reduce their meat consumption, for instance, arguably represent the target audiences that are most open to meat reduction and vegetarianism.

As mentioned previously, the participants involved in this research were all U.S.-based adults age 18 and over. While some of the findings are likely transferable to younger audiences, it is important to mention that this analysis and our conclusions may not apply to children and others under the age of 18. In fact, it is quite possible that the state of meat consumption is different for U.S. youths, including their past and future (intended) changes as well as the drivers of those changes. Future HRC research will include a parallel study of meat consumption among U.S. youth audiences to assess the key differences between youths and adults, and the implications for vegetarian advocacy. For the purpose of this report, references to "younger" groups or segments are references to young adults and not meant to include those under age 18.

Finally, please note that use of some terms in this report, such as "meat," "beef," and "seafood," is only for the sake of convenience and because these terms are commonly used by and familiar to non-vegetarian respondents. HRC understands the inherently misleading or even speciesist nature of such terms and we take care to avoid using them except when necessary to correctly describe the actual "language of the consumer," according to comments from research participants.

II. Summary of Key Findings

1. This research examined the meat consumption habits of U.S. adults based on current, past, and future (intended) meat consumption behavior. The descriptions and sizes of these important consumer segments are summarized in the following table:

	Percentage of Adults
Groups Based on Current Behavior	
Avid Meat Consumers	14%
Regular Meat Consumers	47%
Moderate Meat Consumers	25%
Semi-Vegetarians	13%
Vegetarians and Vegans	1%
Groups Based on Recent Changes	
Actual Meat Reducers	26%
Static Meat Consumers	62%
Actual Meat Increases	9%
Groups Based on Intended Changes	
Intended Meat Reducers	18%
Continuing Meat Consumers	71%
Intended Meat Increases	6%
Potential Semi-Vegetarians	24%
Potential Vegetarians	7%

2. The vast majority of U.S. adults (72%) are “regular” or “moderate” meat consumers. The percentage of actual vegetarians is very low (1%), but the number of semi-vegetarians (13%) and actual meat reducers (26%) is also substantial (note that these groups overlap). Moreover, in each case the number of actual and intended meat *reducers* is about three times greater than the number of meat *increasers*.
3. Nearly one-fourth (24%) of the adult population say they are likely to reduce their meat consumption by half (“potential semi-vegetarians”), which is more than three times the number who are likely to eliminate meat entirely (7%).
4. The meat reducing (actual and intended) segments of the population are significant and driven primarily by the pursuit of a healthier diet, or by specific health issues. Actual veg*ns appear to be equally motivated by health concerns and farmed animal suffering.
5. Healthier eating is a primary goal among all segments of the U.S. adult population. Research participants most frequently mentioned that they strive to eat healthier by incorporating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and organic foods, and by reducing processed foods. However, perceptions of healthier eating also include consuming more chicken and seafood in lieu of red meat, and specifically including dairy in the diet for its perceived health benefits.

6. The principle *barriers* to meat reduction are a preference for the taste of meat and the perception that meat is essential for good health. Other barriers include social and cultural influences, cost, and some trepidation about trying meat alternatives.
7. Participants feel that academic, research, and other independent organizations provide the most unbiased information about proper food choices. There is some skepticism among the public with regard to any information or message sponsored by an organization, including the government, which may be perceived to have ulterior motives.
8. Several demographic variables appeared to relate to frequency of meat consumption, as described below:
 - ❖ Females are the majority of all key meat reduction segments identified in this report.
 - ❖ Older people are less frequent consumers of meat than younger people for all levels of current meat consumption except the vegetarian group.
 - ❖ The South and Midwest regions of the U.S. include more frequent meat consumers compared with those living in the West and Northeast.

Percentage of each consumer segment according to the survey who are...	ALL ADULTS	Veg*ns	Semi-Veg*ns	Actual Reducers	Intended Reducers	Potential Semi-Veg*ns	Potential Veg*ns
Female	54%	63%	70%	61%	61%	66%	66%
Age 18 to 34	36%	53%	29%	26%	28%	38%	38%
Age 35 to 54	37%	28%	34%	38%	41%	39%	41%
Age 55+	29%	21%	35%	36%	31%	33%	21%
Willing to pay more for “humane” products	41%	63%	52%	51%	57%	56%	59%
Wanting a healthier diet than they have now	77%	66%	77%	83%	90%	88%	82%
Frequently/occasionally buying meat alternatives	23%	83%	43%	33%	36%	40%	58%
Frequently/occasionally buying dairy alternatives	22%	68%	34%	30%	35%	34%	52%

9. The public perception of vegetarianism or veganism can affect one’s willingness to consider adopting these diets. Non-vegetarians seem to perceive the health motivation to be the more credible reason for vegetarian or semi-vegetarian behavior. Some non-vegetarians appear to associate most claims of farmed animal suffering with sensationalism, which can have negative implications for their acceptance of the message.
10. The majority of U.S. adults appear to be unfamiliar with meat and dairy alternatives, but many say that they would at least try these products if they were provided at no added cost or inconvenience. Actual experiences with alternatives have been very mixed.

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Bottom Line

The vast majority of U.S. adults (~70%) show no inclination to reduce or eliminate meat from their diets, with taste and health reasons as their primary barriers. A smaller, but still significant, 20-25% of the population show some inclination to reduce meat consumption and are motivated primarily by health reasons. These people skew female and older and arguably represent the most attractive target audience (among adults) for vegetarian advocates. To be most effective, advocates should identify the current attitudes and behavior of their target audiences to persuade and assist them to make incremental, but sustained change toward a plant-based diet.

REPORT CONCLUSIONS

It should come as no surprise to most people that U.S. adults are frequent meat consumers. In the United States, meat consumption is ubiquitous, while actual vegetarians and vegans are too few in number to even measure accurately with public opinion surveys. Additionally, more than two-thirds of adult meat consumers show little to no interest in meat reduction, let alone veg*ism. In summary, this comprehensive HRC study shows that vegetarian and vegan advocacy in the U.S. is a difficult task facing significant challenges, including:

- ❖ The “critical mass” advocates sometimes speak of remains well out of reach—so far, only about 1% of adults currently say they are actual vegetarians or vegans¹.
- ❖ The vast majority of adults are resistant to the idea of vegetarianism and say it is unlikely they would ever adopt a vegetarian diet, let alone a *vegan* diet.
- ❖ Adults who show an interest in reducing or eliminating meat are motivated primarily by health reasons, a topic on which most veg*n advocates are perceived to have little credibility.
- ❖ Research findings suggest a more modest or incremental approach to advocacy would be more effective, but this may conflict with advocates’ ideals, such as the pursuit of long-term goals (e.g., animal liberation) over short-term goals (such as meat reduction).

Despite these challenges, however, HRC believes there is strong potential for strategies that advocate meat reduction (rather than elimination), and that such an approach may end up producing more veg*ns. Note that HRC does not recommend dropping veg*n advocacy entirely, but instead appropriately targeting the level of behavior change to the perceived readiness of one’s target audience. However, we do believe advocates must also recognize that, for most U.S. adults, this means initially advocating for something less than full veg*ism, however unappealing that may be for some advocates. For an adult audience, meat reduction is clearly more acceptable than complete veg*ism, and there is strong evidence that this approach to veg*n advocacy would persuade more people. Moreover, there is evidence that those who start to reduce their meat consumption become more open to both further reduction and possible elimination of meat from their diet.

¹ Other studies have shown slightly higher numbers of veg*ns; see <http://www.vrg.org/nutshell/faq.htm#poll>



There are several specific conclusions that lead us to believe the greatest opportunities are in advocating for reduction rather than elimination of meat, including:

- ❖ Most social marketing and other research studies show people are most likely to change their behaviors incrementally rather than making large, abrupt changes.
- ❖ A significant number of adults show some inclination to reduce their meat consumption, including up to 20-25% of the population, or about 45-55 million adults. This is about three times those who show any inclination to *eliminate* meat.
- ❖ The motivations that cause people to reduce their meat consumption are generally more diverse and multi-faceted than they are for those who eliminate meat. This presents more potential “trigger points” for advocates to use when promoting meat reduction.

Analyzing this study in light of these conclusions, HRC identifies several important implications for vegetarian and vegan advocates, as well as specific recommendations for future veg*n advocacy.

IMPLICATIONS FOR VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN ADVOCATES

The findings in this report include many important implications for veg*n advocates, the most significant of which address incremental advocacy, messaging and positioning, the health paradox, and social relationships. These issues will impact different advocacy organizations in various ways, depending on the groups' goals and target audiences, as well as the specific strategies and tactics that they use. However, each of these issues also has significant overarching implications for veg*n advocacy and the long-term adoption of veg*n diets.

INCREMENTAL ADVOCACY

Long-time animal advocate Henry Spira once said in an interview with *Satya Magazine* that “progress is made stepwise, incrementally.” In no area of animal advocacy is this truer than for the advocacy of vegetarianism and farmed animals, particularly because meat consumption is so firmly entrenched in human society and habits. This incremental approach is also consistent with social science research showing that radical behavior change is a rarity, and that most people instead change slowly or incrementally. The challenge for veg*n advocates is to find ways to encourage people to make small changes relative to where they are now, and then to continue encouraging additional small changes over time. Currently, however, most approaches to veg*n advocacy appear to involve trying to persuade people to adopt vegetarian or vegan diets directly, without identifying interim steps to achieve that desired end goal.

One of the most important strategic decisions facing veg*n advocates is whether to emphasize meat reduction or the complete elimination of meat or other animal products. Veg*n advocates' goals are, arguably, best served by seeking out and pursuing approaches that most quickly and sustainably lower U.S. adult demand for meat products. The survey results strongly suggest a meat reduction strategy would be effective, although even with this comprehensive research, it is impossible to pinpoint any one most effective strategy. There are about three times as many people willing to reduce their meat consumption by half as those who are willing to become vegetarians. Assuming each group is equally likely to change, if there are 1,000 adults in the target audience, advocates might be able to persuade 240 of them to reduce their meat consumption by half (24% of adults are potential semi-vegetarians), but only about 70 of them to eliminate meat from their diets (7% are potential vegetarians). In this example, advocating semi-vegetarianism would yield the largest reduction in meat consumed.

In addition to curbing overall meat consumption, an incremental approach spurs more people to change their behavior in some meaningful way. This study and other research shows that getting people started on the path toward a desired change is itself a major breakthrough, and these people would then be significantly more susceptible to considering full vegetarianism. An incremental approach therefore has an important two-pronged effect: by itself it can result in a greater overall reduction in meat consumed, and it also creates a larger pool of people with significant potential for further change. Table 1 identifies some of the segments (and additional sub-segments) discussed in this report whom such a stepwise approach might persuade, including the potential size of each segment.

Table 1. Consumer Sub-Segments Based on Potential Changes

Definition of Sub-Segment	Percentage of U.S. Adults	Number of U.S. Adults
ALL U.S. ADULTS ²	100%	222 million
All adults who are potential semi-vegetarians	24%	54 million
Actual meat reducers who are also intended meat reducers	17%	38 million
Regular meat consumers who are potential semi-vegetarians	9%	21 million
Moderate meat consumers who are potential semi-vegetarians	7%	16 million
All adults who are potential vegetarians	7%	16 million
Semi-vegetarians who are intended meat reducers	4%	10 million
Semi-vegetarians who are also potential vegetarians	3%	7 million
Moderate meat consumers who are potential vegetarians	2%	5 million
Regular meat consumers who are potential vegetarians	2%	4 million

For vegetarian and vegan advocates, these segments represent potential audiences who are significantly more likely to change their behaviors than the rest of the adult population. However, the definitions of these segments also underscore the much greater number of adults who may become semi-vegetarians and meat reducers rather than full vegetarians, at least on a self-reported basis. Again, the key is to first understand the current behavior, attitudes, and predispositions of their target audience, and then find a meaningful, but incremental step to encourage them to make.

MESSAGING AND POSITIONING

In our research with a range of meat consumers, HRC found within all potential audiences a consistent desire for carefully positioned messages. In addition to being generally resistant to change, most people strongly prefer to be presented with options rather than being told what to do, and some are very sensitive to what they feel is “preaching” from some diet advocates. Moreover, most U.S. adults specifically resist what they consider “extreme” diets, such as those that *include* large quantities of meat as well as diets that *exclude* meat entirely. Entreaties to eliminate meat or other animal products are alarming for many meat consumers and often not considered credible due to the widely perceived importance of eating a “balanced diet.” The research data suggest a shift in language and tone to get past the first major barrier for most potential vegetarians, namely that such a diet seems unnecessarily extreme and personally unobtainable or unsustainable.

² US Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2006.



Many motivations appear to influence a shift to vegetarian or vegan diets, though health-related issues topped the list for respondents in the Phase One survey. This suggests that vegetarian advocates must also be multifaceted in their approaches by using different messages with different audiences, and “layering” messages where appropriate. By “layering,” we refer to using multiple messages, either in combination with each other or in sequence, to give the target audience multiple reasons to consider changing. Again, we do not suggest that any one approach is most effective, and it is essential for advocates to recognize that a single message will not work for all audiences. It is paramount that veg*n advocates target the right messages to the right audience.

THE HEALTH PARADOX

One particularly challenging issue for veg*n advocates is the use of the “health argument,” historically a subject of some debate, to promote meat reduction and veg*ism. Advocating veganism or even vegetarianism based solely on health-related reasons may not be the most effective path, but health is clearly the biggest motive for *reducing* meat consumption. Following from HRC’s suggestion that meat reduction has more potential for widespread adoption than complete veg*ism, it seems logical that vegetarian advocates should strive to incorporate more health arguments.

However, one issue with using health as a motivation is that many animal rights advocates are not likely to be considered credible sources of health information. One notable exception is the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM); however even this health-oriented organization advocates purely veg*n diets and also concerns itself with issues of “compassion” for farmed animals. Effectively promoting meat reduction remains a significant challenge for veg*n advocates, and may necessitate partnering with health-related organizations and institutions to be credible.

Another issue facing veg*n and/or animal advocates who promote the health argument is the perception that a focus on health feels disingenuous or counter to the ideal of vegan advocacy. It may be difficult for some to see how advocating for meat reduction for human health serves the long-term goal of “animal liberation.” However, behavior changes can sometimes precede attitudinal shifts, so by encouraging someone to reduce their meat consumption, even for health reasons, advocates can effect positive change, including opening people’s minds to the concept of further meat reduction for other reasons, including compassion for farmed animals.

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

This research clearly demonstrates the significance of one’s friends and family as sources of dietary influence, including childhood experiences and current relationships. In particular, the food-related habits taught by parents are a major influence on their children’s diets, and there is evidence that young people are more easily persuaded to change their diets than adults (although this research focused on adults). The general impressionability of children suggests that veg*n advocacy directed at youth audiences (and their parents) may be more effective than attempting to persuade adults directly. Additionally, the ongoing influence of one’s family, friends, roommates, and significant others throughout adulthood has significant implications for veg*n advocates. Particularly as the cacophony of mainstream advertising and other marketing messages becomes ever more deafening, the relative impact of personal messages and recommendations is increasing. Simply put, people generally listen to their friends and family more than they listen to advertisers or other third parties, which underscores the importance of positive interactions and generating word-of-mouth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following HRC recommendations include high-level ideas and specific suggestions based on the two phases of research conducted for this study. They follow from the previous discussion about meat reduction as a potentially more effective strategy for promoting both semi-vegetarianism and eventually complete vegetarianism among adult audiences. Once again, not all of these recommendations will be suitable for all veg*n advocacy organizations, but they should provide useful ideas for anyone involved in promoting plant-based diets.

START SMALL TO BUILD CRITICAL MASS

Animal and veg*n advocates often talk about building “critical mass” or reaching a “tipping point” at which large numbers of people will begin to adopt vegetarian diets. While there may be some truth to such theoretical thresholds, this research shows that veg*n advocates still have a long road ahead of them. According to the Diffusions of Innovations theory³ (also the innovation-adoption curve), “innovators” of any new idea typically represent about 2.5% of the population. However, current veg*ns represent only about 1% of the adult population, suggesting that veg*ism has yet to reach even the initial “innovation” stage of adoption. HRC’s primary recommendation to veg*n advocates is to start on a small scale by identifying narrow segments of the population that are more predisposed toward meat reduction than others. We identified several such groups in the Phase One survey, some of which are shown in Table 1. Related HRC recommendations include:

- ❖ Focus advocacy on one narrow segment of the population and make every effort to understand their attitudes and behavior before choosing tactics and messages.
- ❖ Think creatively about unique types of consumers who may be more open to meat reduction or vegetarianism than other adults, such as people with a family history of diet-related illness.
- ❖ Avoid “mass advocacy” approaches that ignore the unique perceptions, motivations and barriers of different consumer segments. All types of meat consumers will be more responsive to tailored messages than to mass marketing.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MESSAGE FOR THE RIGHT AUDIENCE

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of vegetarian and vegan advocacy is determining the most effective message or message(s) to use with a chosen target audience. Because most veg*n advocates themselves are vegan or vegetarian, it may be especially difficult for them to identify the most persuasive arguments for meat consumers. Marketing research such as HRC’s Phase One survey and Phase Two focus groups can help advocates learn about their target audiences and test potential messages. In the end, there is no single best message for veg*n advocacy, and in fact most people will need to hear multiple reasons for reducing meat consumption before they will try it themselves. However, this does not mean that all arguments for veg*ism should be used in combination, and there is some evidence that people are overwhelmed when presented with all reasons at once. Instead, veg*n advocates should choose their messages strategically, including using health-based arguments to encourage initial meat reduction, and then follow up with animal suffering issues and other reasons to encourage complete veg*ism. Specifically:

- ❖ The **health argument** will likely be most effective when pursuing a meat reduction strategy, but perhaps not when advocating complete vegetarianism. There seems to be a limit on how much

³ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diffusion_of_innovations.

people will reduce meat consumption based on a health argument, and in the short term it is likely to result in more meat reducers and semi-vegetarians rather than more veg*ns.

- ❖ The **animal suffering argument** is likely to be more effective in persuading people to become complete veg*ns and remain that way, rather than reduce their meat consumption. However, because most people are so resistant to “radical” dietary change, this argument may be best targeted at current semi-vegetarians or current veg*ns to reinforce their decision. The animal argument seems less effective than the health argument for advocating meat reduction, and may have less long-term impact on lowering the demand for meat products.
- ❖ The **environmental argument** appears to be gaining traction in consumer awareness, but there is little evidence that it results in behavior change. People who are open to an environmental argument may be most responsive to meat reduction as a way to minimize their footprint, but this motive may not necessarily lead to complete veg*ism.
- ❖ In summary, HRC considers both health- and animal-related arguments important for advocating veg*ism. Leading with health has the greatest potential to encourage meat reduction, which in turn creates a pool of people who are more open to complete veg*ism to reduce animal suffering. However, the timing and targeting of these messages may be crucial to having an impact and are difficult for advocates to control with any precision. Moreover, different organizations may be most effective at different points, with some groups working to persuade people to reduce meat consumption for health reasons, and others moving people toward veg*ism based on animal concerns.

BECOME PERSONAL CHANGE AGENTS

As noted previously, personal relationships and influences are important for shaping dietary choices. Although such influences can work in both directions, they clearly represent an opportunity for veg*n advocates to better use existing social networks for more one-on-one persuasion. Using techniques such as viral marketing and word-of-mouth campaigns to get current veg*ns talking to their families and friends in positive and non-judgmental language, advocates may be able to multiply their efforts. This could involve seeking out current vegetarians and vegans and “training” them to effectively persuade meat eaters to limit or eliminate animal products without disrupting their personal relationships in the process. Similarly, veg*n advocates themselves should become more involved in community activities and social groups. By simply having an active presence in the community, veg*n advocates can break stereotypes and also position themselves to have meaningful one-on-one interactions with would-be meat reducers and potential vegetarians.

DON'T JUST PERSUADE PEOPLE, ENABLE THEM

Two issues that came up frequently in both the survey and the focus groups as barriers to meat reduction and vegetarianism were convenience and cost. Specifically, many people find meat alternatives too expensive, and some households with potential vegetarians say it would be too inconvenient to cook multiple meals. In general, these barriers suggest that veg*n advocates should shift slightly away from focusing on *why* people should reduce their meat consumption to put greater emphasis on *how* they can go about doing so. In particular, advocates should include “how-to” elements in all of their literature and other advocacy materials, with specific tools and resources to help people achieve the next logical step in personal meat reduction. Equally important, veg*n advocates should provide ongoing support of meat reducers and veg*ns to help them sustain those behaviors and keep them moving in the direction of complete veg*ism. Finally, advocates should also work to increase the demand for meat alternatives, which in turn should lead to greater availability and long-term price reductions as alternative producers improve their economies of scale.



IV. Additional Information

REPORT SHARING AND DISTRIBUTION

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to this main report, purchasers of a “full report” license are also provided two separate appendix files that give detailed “cross-tab” results from the Phase One survey. Those who purchased a “base report” license must upgrade to a full report license to obtain the appendix files and the detailed discussion of results. All licensees are also welcome to request a copy of HRC’s 2002 study of four focus groups in Seattle, Washington. If you need additional copies of any of the documents or have any questions about this report, the terms of its use, or the availability of additional information, please contact HRC at info@humanersearch.org or 206-852-4848. You may also write to Humane Research Council, P.O. Box 70180, Seattle, WA 98127-0179.

HRC BACKGROUND

The Humane Research Council (HRC) was founded in early 2002 with the mission of empowering animal advocates with access to the information they need to maximize their effectiveness. We provide our clients and constituents with inexpensive and highly relevant research services, as well as centralized access to secondary and primary research data. HRC has managed major research studies on behalf of several national animal protection organizations. We are fortunate to count as our clients some of the largest and most successful animal protection groups in the United States.

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