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Veganism

Didactic Material nr. 4



Food Care

Introduction

Veganism avoids all animal products, promoting ethics, health, and sustainability through plant-based living. It supports animal welfare, reduces environmental impact, and encourages a compassionate lifestyle based on fairness and respect for all living beings.

It is important because it directly helps fight climate change, reduces deforestation, saves water, and protects biodiversity, making it one of the most impactful choices for creating a sustainable and just future. By adopting a vegan lifestyle, individuals not only care for their own health but also contribute to positive global change. Learn more about veganism [here](#).

What is Veganism?

Veganism is more than a diet; it is a lifestyle that reduces harm to animals and minimizes the environmental impact of food production. By choosing plant-based foods instead of animal products, people help conserve water, lower greenhouse gas emissions, protect habitats, and reduce deforestation. Veganism also promotes ethical living, encouraging compassion, fairness, and respect for all living beings.

Unlike vegetarianism, which may allow some animal products like dairy or eggs, veganism excludes all foods derived from animals. To better understand the difference, watch this video: [Veganism vs Vegetarianism](#).

Adopting a vegan lifestyle can be practical and enjoyable. Fresh ingredients from local markets and apps like [HappyCow](#) make it easier to eat healthy and sustainably. By integrating vegan practices into daily life, you support the environment, promote animal welfare, and encourage more responsible consumption.

Veganism is not just a personal choice—it's a way to contribute to a more sustainable and compassionate world, one meal at a time.

Why is it important?

1. Creating Long-Term Impact

- Adopting veganism helps establish sustainable habits that can last a lifetime, reducing your environmental footprint over time.

2. Leading the Fight Against Climate Change

- Veganism is one of the most impactful personal actions to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Watch this short video about diet and climate change: [YouTube - The Impact of Veganism on the Environment](#)

3. Protecting the Planet

- Avoiding animal products helps preserve water, forests, and ecosystems for everyone.

Explore interactive data on food and environmental impact: [Our World in Data – Food and Environment](#)

4. Inspiring Social Change

- Your choices influence family, friends, and your community. Choosing veganism encourages others to consider plant-based diets.

5. Aligning with Modern Values

- Veganism reflects compassion, fairness, and sustainability, promoting ethical living.

Discover ethical reasons for going vegan: [Vegan Society – Ethics](#)

6. Supporting Innovation

- Plant-based diets foster sustainable food innovations, such as lab-grown meat and alternative proteins, shaping a greener future.

What are the benefits?

1. Ethical and Compassionate Living:

Veganism is rooted in compassion, as it avoids the use of animal products and supports cruelty-free practices. By choosing vegan alternatives, individuals actively promote animal welfare and challenge industries that exploit animals for food, clothing, or other products.

2. Environmental Sustainability:

Adopting a vegan lifestyle directly benefits the planet. Reducing the demand for animal farming helps lower greenhouse gas emissions, decreases land and water use, and minimizes pollution. Every plant-based meal is a small step toward mitigating climate change and protecting ecosystems.

3. Health Benefits:

A well-planned vegan diet can support overall health, providing essential nutrients while reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. It can also improve digestion, enhance energy levels, and support long-term wellness when balanced properly.

4. Resource Efficiency:

Plant-based diets are more efficient in terms of resource use. They require fewer inputs like water, land, and energy compared to diets reliant on animal agriculture, making veganism a sustainable choice for feeding a growing global population.

5. Variety and Flavor:

Veganism encourages culinary creativity. By exploring legumes, grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds, individuals can create diverse, flavorful, and nutritious meals that are both satisfying and innovative. It also opens the door to global culinary traditions and plant-based innovations.

6. Global Impact:

Every person who adopts a vegan lifestyle contributes to a wider movement of ethical and sustainable consumption. Collective choices can influence markets, inspire food innovation, and drive systemic changes that prioritize the environment, animal welfare, and human health on a global scale.

What can I do?

1. Start with My Own Diet and Lifestyle:

Gradually transition to veganism by replacing animal products with plant-based alternatives like tofu, lentils, chickpeas, and vegan cheeses. Learn to cook delicious, nutrient-rich meals focusing on whole foods, and read product labels carefully to avoid hidden animal-derived ingredients. You can explore recipe inspiration on platforms like [Vegan Society Recipes](#).

2. Support Sustainable and Ethical Brands:

Choose cruelty-free products, including clothing, cosmetics, and household items that avoid animal testing and ingredients. Shop locally and seasonally to reduce your environmental footprint while supporting local farmers and ethical businesses. Apps like HappyCow can help you find vegan-friendly stores and restaurants nearby.

3. Educate Myself and Others:

Learn about the ethical, environmental, and health benefits of veganism so you can share accurate information with others. Use social media, blogs, and podcasts to spread awareness. For inspiration, you can follow influencers like [Dora's Table](#), who regularly shares delicious and creative vegan recipes that show how practical and enjoyable this lifestyle can be.

In addition, there are also very useful videos that help with practical guidance. For example, this [YouTube video](#) explains how to avoid nutritional deficiencies on a vegan diet, making it easier to adopt the lifestyle in a healthy and sustainable way.

4. Make Veganism Accessible and Appealing:

Share easy, affordable vegan recipes to show how simple and delicious this lifestyle can be. Highlight benefits such as improved health, reduced environmental impact, and compassion for animals. Encourage friends and family to try plant-based meals by hosting cooking sessions or sharing online resources.

What have I learnt?

I've learned that **veganism is more than just a diet**; it's a lifestyle that can make a real difference for the planet, animals, and human health. By choosing plant-based foods, I can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve water, protect natural habitats, and lower the environmental impact of food production. I now understand the difference between veganism and vegetarianism, and why avoiding all animal-derived products is key to maximizing sustainability and ethical living..

I've realized that making this lifestyle practical involves **small, achievable steps**: gradually replacing animal products with plant-based alternatives, trying new recipes, reading labels carefully, and choosing cruelty-free products. Supporting local and seasonal produce, buying from sustainable brands, and avoiding animal-derived clothing or household items are ways I can extend the impact of my choices beyond food.

Beyond personal habits, I've learned that **veganism can inspire social change**. By sharing knowledge, recipes, and experiences with friends, family, and my community, I can encourage others to consider more sustainable and compassionate choices. Overall, I now see veganism as a holistic approach to living that connects personal health, environmental responsibility, and ethical awareness, showing that even small actions can contribute to a larger movement toward a fairer, greener, and more sustainable world.

All is summerized in the [European approach of Microcredentials](#).

Micro-credential 1

Understanding Social Entrepreneurship

1.1 Value sustainability by reflecting on personal values while critically evaluating how they align with sustainability values. 1.2 Supporting fairness to support equity and justice for current and future generations and learn from previous generations for sustainability. 1.3 Promoting nature to acknowledge that humans are part of nature; and to respect the needs and rights of other species and of nature itself in order to restore and regenerate healthy and resilient ecosystems.

Micro-credential 2

Acting for a Circular Economy

2.1 (Systems thinking), to approach a sustainability problem from all sides; to consider times, space and context in order to understand how elements interact within and between systems.

2.2 (Critical thinking) To assess information and arguments, identify assumptions, challenge the status quo, and reflect on how personal, social and cultural backgrounds influence thinking and conclusions.

2.3 (Problem framing) To formulate current or potential challenges as a sustainability problem in terms of difficulty, people involved, time and geographical scope, in order to identify suitable approaches to anticipating and preventing problems, and to mitigating and adapting to already existing problems.

Micro-credential 4

“Acting for sustainability”

4.2 (Collective action) to act for change in collaboration with others. 4.3 (Individual initiative) to identify own potential for sustainability and to actively contribute to improving prospects for the community and the planet.