



ANNUAL REPORT

2011

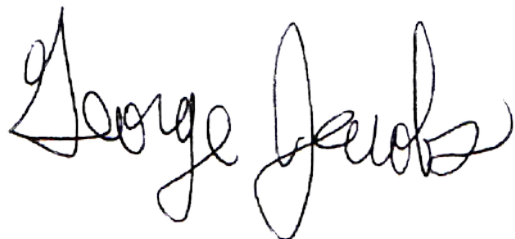
President's Address

VSS was founded in 1999. Every year, the organisation has grown and done more. On behalf of the Exco, I would like to thank all of the VSS members and the many others who have made VSS possible by contributing your time, effort and funds. On behalf of the VSS Exco, let me also say that we are proud of VSS's accomplishments in 2011, which built on the foundation of previous years' efforts.

Of course, many others promote vegetarianism without being involved directly with VSS, such as the people who prepare vegetarian food, the people who set an example for family, friends and peers by eating veg food, and the many other organisations that educate the public about the healthfulness of plant foods, the environmental sanity of choosing plant foods and the kindness involved in moving away from foods derived from animals.

2012 is a year of great challenge and of great opportunity for VSS. Challenge because global meat consumption continues to rise. This increase means that the number of animals whom are killed annually will continue to climb over 150 billion. 2012 is a year of opportunity for VSS because conscientiousness of the damage wrought by meat continues to grow, and VSS is busier than ever as people look to us for answers.

Is VSS ready for the challenge and opportunity we face in 2012 and beyond? Is each of us ready to grow the vegetarian movement in Singapore? I hope that this AGM can examine this issue.



**George M Jacobs (PhD), President
Vegetarian Society (Singapore)**

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Singapore 576147 (correspondence only)
www.vegetarian-society.org | info@vegetarian-society.org

Date: Saturday, 12 March 2011
Time: 2pm to 5pm
Venue: Kampung Senang Holistic Lifestyle Centre,
Blk 106 Aljunied Crescent #01-205,
Singapore 380106

Number of members present: 56
Number of observers/non-members: 10

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

1.1 Dr. George Jacobs, VSS President, took the chair, welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the 12th Annual VSS AGM.

1.2 Dr. Jacobs introduced health expert and speaker, Ms. Mayura Mohta, who gave a talk and demonstration on the topic of *Top Energy Foods You Must Eat Regularly*, following the AGM.

1.3 Dr. Jacobs introduced the ExCo team and updated everyone on membership numbers.

TO RECEIVE & ADOPT MINUTES OF THE 11th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2.1 The chairperson asked that everyone look through the minutes of the 11th VSS AGM, paying attention to the financial report and election of office bearers.

2.2 Ms. Nita Doshi motioned to approve that the minutes be accepted and Mr. Mark Soh seconded. The minutes of the 11th AGM was received and adopted unanimously.

TO RECEIVE & ADOPT THE 2010 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

3.1 Dr. Jacobs invited everyone to go through the 2010 Annual Report and welcomed any questions, comments, suggestions and disagreements. The report had taken a soft copy format which had been emailed to all members. Hard copies were handed out to those present and projected on screen.

3.2 Ms. Natalia Angel raised a point on the topic of meat production that "Climate Change" is a more accurate term over "Global Warming".

3.3 Ms. Jennifer Koh commented that the VSS's *Singapore Vegetarian Guide* (2nd edition) did not seem updated, but was assured by the Chairperson that all information had been verified at the point just prior to printing.

3.4 Ms. Ami Mehta proposed that VSS be active in school as much as possible. Dr. Jacobs assured her that VSS is very happy to talk at schools, but needs invitations. VSS participates in school visits and initiates school projects actively and in correspondence with the Health Promotion Board and Ministry of Health. The following weekend was the SPCA day-long forum for students aged between 11-18 years, where VSS along with ACRES were participating. An upcoming large-scale series of talks by world-renowned heart health expert, Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn would see much outreach and education for the public, health authorities, hospitals, schools, religious groups, healthy groups and any interested groups and NGOs.

3.5 The Chairperson thanked everyone for the input and opened the floor for members to accept and adopt the Annual Report.

3.6 Ms. Emily Wong proposed that the Annual Report be accepted and Mr. Edmond Chua seconded. The Annual Report was adopted unanimously with none opposing and no abstentions.

TO RECEIVE & ADOPT THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2010

4.1 The chairperson invited queries and comments on the VSS 2010 Financial Report and handed the segment to VSS Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Navaneethan Neminathan.

4.2 Mr. Navaneethan updated the attendees on the financial situation and explained that VSS is a charity and as long as it is not over-spending, there is no cause for alarm with regard to the modest profit margin. Outreach has definitely increased with more spending and resulted in an increased profile.

4.3 With no further questions on the finances, the Chairperson invited members to receive and adopt the financial report.

4.4 Mr. Chandra Shekar proposed that the Financial Report be adopted and Ms. Lily Leong seconded. The Financial Report was adopted unanimously with no opposition.

TO ELECT TWO HONORARY AUDITORS FOR THE YEAR 2011

5.1. The Chairperson explained the roles of the Honorary Auditors and thanked Mr. Low Lee Nguan and Ms. Emily Wong, the Honorary Auditors, for their work. He then invited members present to stand as the coming year's auditors. Mr. Chandra Shekar and Mr. Low Chip Khoon volunteered, and Mr. Clarence Tan seconded their nomination. There was no opposition and no abstention.

TO ELECT OFFICE BEARERS

6.1 The chairperson nominated a slate of candidates for election as VSS office bearers and introduced them and their duties. Those people and their respective offices were:

President:	Dr. George Jacobs
Vice President:	Ms. Lily Leong
Honorary Secretary:	Ms. Pauline Menezes
Assistant Secretary:	Mr. Edmond Chua
Honorary Treasurer:	Mr. Navaneethan Neminathan
Assistant Treasurer:	Mr. Neil Madhvani
Social Activities Facilitator:	Ms. Chua Kah Kheng
Publicity Officer:	Mr. Low Wen Jin
Ordinary Members:	Ms. Tara Melwani Ms. Sutha Raman Mr. Douglas Teoh

The Chairperson invited other nominations as well as the motion to approve the slate of office bearers presented. Ms. Natalia Angel proposed and Mr. Shreikanth Iyer seconded. None opposed nor abstained from the nomination.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 The Chairperson invited ideas from the audience on what VSS can do in 2011.

7.2 A vegetarian labelling scheme was proposed. The Chairperson explained that different countries have their own symbols and standards. VSS had actually investigated and decided not to go ahead as it is a complicated and lengthy process of ascertaining a myriad of food items from countless manufacturing sources. There just was not enough funds to undertake such a large-scale and long-drawn process. Furthermore, most food products are not produced in Singapore. However, VSS feels it is a good idea and welcomes volunteers to undertake such a project.

7.3 Geriatric research and healthy diet and research was also suggested. The Chairperson said that another NGO, Kampung Senang, is already very established at it. It operates five centres and their special focus is helping people with cancer through therapy, food, nutrition, education, yoga, etc. The Chairperson suggested VSS working with Kampung Senang on this. The Chairperson also hoped that Dr Esselstyn's visit would spark such an initiative.

8.5 The Chairperson thanked everyone for their presence and participation. The Chairperson then declared the AGM closed at 3:35pm. The President invited all to stay for the talk by Ms. Mayura Mohta and enjoy the healthy lunch prepared by Kampung Senang.

8.6 The end of the AGM was concluded on a high note with the lively and interactive talk by Ms. Mayura Mohta on foods that maximise energy and sustain consistent levels. Handouts containing recipes and a list of energy "generators and sappers" were distributed. Food sampling was also shared with the audience.

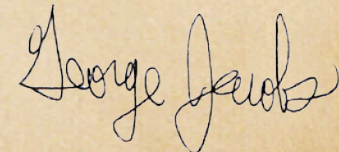
8.7 The managing editor of *VegVibe*, Mr. Gangasudhan, was also invited to introduce the free publication that is available online and in print. All attendees received a copy and for those who preferred the online version, the website address was also given. He then invited questions and comments for the magazine.

Recorded By



Pauline Menezes
Honorary Secretary

Vetted & Confirmed By



George M Jacobs
President

Reaching Out To Young Minds

For the year in review, the VSS continued to build on its strong ties with educators and academic institutions to impart knowledge and share information with today's youth - who are tomorrow's leaders.

Through talks, food demonstrations and other engagement activities and projects, the Health and Environmental Arguments were presented alongside some elements of the Kindness Argument.

As illustrated by the invitations that continue to be received by the Society, these outreach initiatives undertaken in 2011 have been highly successful.

NUS HIGH SCHOOL

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

PRO-TEACH

ETON HOUSE

RAFFLES INSTITUTION

CHESTNUT DRIVE SECONDARY SCHOOL

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

RAFFLES GIRLS' PRIMARY SCHOOL

BEDOK GREEN SECONDARY SCHOOL

TELOK KURAU PRIMARY SCHOOL

TEMASEK JUNIOR COLLEGE

BEDOK GREEN SECONDARY SCHOOL

ST MARGARET' SECONDARY SCHOOL

19 Jan ~ Raffles Institution

The VSS was invited back to deliver an assembly talk on vegetarianism and meat reduction.



21-22 Feb ~ Nanyang Technological University

The VSS took part in the *Earth Awareness Campaign 2011* exhibition at NTU, organised by the *Earthlink* student group. Vegetarianism was a key theme for the exhibition, which included the nutrition flyer, *Love Us, Not Eat Us* sticker, *Meatless in Singapore* brochure, an array of colourful, informative posters, the starving child statue, and an assortment of impactful videos.

8 Mar ~ Telok Kurau Primary School

The VSS was represented at a briefing for teachers and NGOs about *Design for Change*, an organisation that provides a platform for community service projects by upper primary and lower secondary school students.



12 Mar ~ Raffles Girls Primary School

The VSS was invited to preside as one of the specially-selected judges in a speech competition for upper-primary school students on environmental protection. It was pleasing to note that many of the students were aware of the environmental damage attributed to meat consumption.



7-11 Mar ~ Temasek Junior College

The VSS held an exhibition at Temasek JC as part of the college's *Health Week*, and during the same week, conducted a presentation to raise awareness of the poor health trends in Singapore and to urge everyone to do their best to promote prevention - the surer, cheaper and less painful option. The suggestion was made to increase the quantity and quality of plant based food in the college's canteen.




11-15 Mar ~ St Margaret's Secondary

The VSS showcased its wide range of exhibition materials, including colourful posters and thought-provoking statues, as part of the *Earth Week* events at St Margaret's Secondary. Issues such as how reducing our meat consumption can help address climate change, world starvation and the poor health epidemic were discussed, making the case that meat harms the environment.



April ~ Eton House

The VSS engaged preschoolers at an *Earth Day* exhibition at one branch of *Eton House* preschool with the goal to encourage healthy, kind eating habits among children. Touching on many of the reasons for eating less or no meat, including improved human health, protecting the environment and showing concern for our fellow animals, the posters made for a colourful, eye-catching and informative exhibition.



27 April ~ Republic Polytechnic

Into its fourth installment, the VSS delivered its annual talk at RP to a fully-packed lecture theatre - with students even sitting on the stairs, explaining the many benefits of eating less or no meat, and countering the various reasons for continuing to eat a diet high in animal-based foods. Our talk always generates a good crowd, filling a small lecture theatre, sometimes even.



20 May ~ Chestnut Drive Secondary School

The VSS was invited to set up an exhibition on the environmental benefits of meat reduction which was well received by the students as well as teachers.

27 May ~ Bedok Green Secondary School

In a more engaged collaboration, the VSS teamed with the Environment Club of Bedok Green Secondary School to conduct a talk-cum-smoothie demonstration for the student body and teaching staff in the school hall.

11 Jun ~ Bishan

Some secondary school students contacted the VSS to get advice on spreading the meat reduction message. The VSS helped the industrious and creative students build posters, flyer and stickers for a booth at a community event garced by Minster of Defence, Dr Ng Eng Hen.

26 Jun

The VSS was invited to conduct a presentation and video screening for upper primary school students. Covering a wide variety of topics, including health, environment, kindness to our fellow animals and the intelligence and emotions of nonhuman animals, it was well received by the young audience.



VEGGIE'DELITES



June ~ Institute of Technical Education College West

A project envisioned by the students themselves, the VSS helped guide the group of 20 motivated youths to conceptualise and develop a recipe book for awareness campaigns.

18 Aug ~ Greendale Secondary School

The VSS was invited to conduct an exhibition and mini food fair at Greendale Secondary revolving around the importance of helping the environment by eating less or no animal-based foods.



19 Aug ~ National Institute of Education

Working with the educators-to-be, the VSS had the opportunity to address the issue of meat reduction for approximately 300 NIE trainees.



27 Aug ~ NUS High School

The VSS had the opportunity to address the study body of the NUS High School of Math and Science at the *Second Annual Sustainable Development Youth Convention (SDYC)*.



1 Sep ~ Pro-Teach Student Care

During an appreciation lunch event attended by 80 Pro-Teach educators, the VSS conducted a presentation entitled *Farmed Animals: Spare a Thought for Them*.

22 Jul ~ VSS Student Members Gathering

Some of the VSS's student members decided to take the initiative and organised a get-together at the trendy VeganBurg outlet along Jalan Eunos. An opportunity to enjoy good food and make new friends, the students - coming from all walks of life - enjoyed the burgers and chatted the evening away sharing experiences about their vegetarian journey.



Connecting With The Mainstream

Another hallmark of the Society's efforts has been to touch base with the working adults so that they can be empowered to take positive steps towards a healthier future for themselves and a more sustainable one for society.

In the year of review, the VSS maintained its involvement with various partners and made its presence felt at various public exhibitions throughout the island.

Through these events, many new volunteers were recruited and opportunities to further the cause of the Society were procured.

8 Jan ~ Pyramid Meditation Society

The president of VSS was invited to grace an event organised by the Pyramid Mediation Society at the Civil Service Club along Tessonsohn Road to announce the launch of their latest book on vegetarianism.

5-6 Mar ~ Lianhe Wanbao Health & Beauty Fair

While the VSS has exhibited at the *Lianhe Wanbao Health & Beauty Fair* in previous years, it was involved as a guest for the opening ceremony. It was a good opportunity to network and raise awareness of the upcoming major event - Dr Esselstyn's talk. Four Seasons Organic Market, in particular, was very enthusiastic about promoting the event on behalf of the VSS.



23 Jan ~ Heal The Earth

The VSS participated as a partner at the *Heal the Earth* event at Marina Barrage, which included forming a record-breaking human formation and a carnival comprising 58 booths. VSS volunteers manned one of the booths to encourage visitors to take the very green action of eating less or no meat.

19 Jan ~ LINS Smoodess

The VSS was represented at the opening ceremony of LINS Smoodees Bar & Showroom, located at China Square. The owner, Adeline Tan, has supported the VSS by conducting demonstrations and workshops on preparing smoothies.



5 Mar ~ Mahabodhi Monastery

The VSS was represented at a benefit dinner for Mahabodhi Monastery, with a complimentary half-page ad in the programme booklet distributed at the dinner.

19 Mar ~ Animal Welfare Symposium for Students

The VSS president was invited to address an audience of over 300 students on the topic entitled *Eat Less Meat!* at the AWSS organised by the SPCA and held at Ngee Ann Polytechnic. The event was attended by a wide variety of students - from upper primary level to Junior College, and was prominently featured in the press.



9 Apr ~ Geography Teachers' Association

The VSS was invited to talk on *Vegetarianism as a Food Preference* at the Geography Teachers Association Annual Seminar at Park Royal Hotel.

22 Apr ~ Bottle Tree Park

The VSS participated in the major Earth Day event organised by Ground-Up Initiative at Bottle Tree Park, and handed out flyers to the visitors to raise awareness.



23 Apr ~ Melville Park Condominium

The VSS was invited to address an audience gathered in conjunction with Earth Day celebrations at Melville Park Condominium.

3 May ~ A*STAR Collaboration

Representatives of the VSS explored areas to collaborate with A *STAR through its new Healthcare and Lifestyle Programme.

17 May ~ Actions for Earth

The VSS was invited to conduct a public talk at Orchard Central on how it helps the environment when we eat less or no meat. The talk was part of a weeklong event organised by Hemispheres and focused on the idea that the most powerful action humans can take is to reduce or eliminate our consumption of animal based foods.



28 May ~ Yio Chu Kang Residents' Committee

The VSS was invited to address residents at Blk 700D Pavilion, Ang Mo Kio Ave 6, as part of a grassroots event to encourage people to eat more fruit.

29 May ~ VSS Talk Naturopathic Approach to Vibrant Health

The first VSS Talk of the year under review discussed the topic of Naturopathy and the naturopathic approach to achieving vibrant health. The speaker, Ketki Vinayachandra, who runs her own clinic and is a trained Naturopath, Herbalist, Nutritionist and Iridologist, offered guidelines on achieving vibrant health through a holistic lifestyle.





16 Jun ~ Green Living Carnival

The VSS was invited to take up a booth at the Green Living Carnival, at Bukit Panjang Park, jointly organised by the Jane Goodall Institute (Singapore) and the North West Community Development Council. The carnival was free and open to all, and was graced by world-famous primatologist and environmental educator Dr Jane Goodall herself.

3 Jul ~ VSS Talk

Nutrition Affects Joints, Muscles and Bones

Another VSS talk by Dr Casey deRoos was organised at Genesis Vegetarian Health Food Restaurant, entitled *How Nutrition Affects Joints, Muscles and Bones*. Dr deRoos, a Doctor of Chiropractic D.C., explained how food plays an essential role in the health of joints, muscles, and bones, and also shared tips on how proper nutrition can be used to reduce chances of exercise injury.

6 Aug ~ Urban Farm Tour

The VSS participated in the guided tour of the organic garden managed by Kampung Senang's Tampines Centre.

30 Aug ~ Holistic Wellness Symposium

The VSS took up a booth at the *Holistic Wellness Symposium* held by Kampung Senang at the Singpost Building.

28 Aug ~ Green Smoothie Demonstration

Adeline Tan, the entrepreneur behind LINS Smoodees, helmed a green smoothie demonstration session on behalf of the VSS and taught participants how to make their own green smoothies.

4 Sep ~ Tian Tao Temple

The VSS conducted an exhibition on vegetarianism at the Tian Tao temple located in Bukit Merah.

10 Sep ~ VSS Talk

Is a Vegetarian Diet Really Nutritious?

The VSS hosted a talk by the popular Dr Priyadarshani Kamat entitled *Is a Vegetarian Diet Really Nutritious?* at the Bukit Merah Public Library.

28 Sep ~ Raffles Institution Research Fair

The VSS was invited to give a talk on *Why should we go vegetarian? Is it for health and environmental reasons?* at the Research Fair held at Albert Hong Hall.

30 Sep - 02 Oct ~ Qualities of Life 2011

The VSS was invited back to set up a booth at the annual Qualities of Life exhibition and conduct presentations over the 3 days. The booth gathered close to 100 new subscribers and garnered a handful of volunteers.



02 Oct ~ The Veg School Opening

The VSS supported The Veg School on its opening day by sharing with attendees the work that the VSS does and encouraging participants to take up membership with the Society.

09 Oct ~ Kampung Senang 12th Anniversary

The VSS was invited back to set up the wildly popular smoothie counter at Kampung Senang's 12th Anniversary celebrations. The smoothie counter manned by VSS representatives and as well as volunteers from both the VSS and Kampung Senang managed to sell over 300 cups of smoothies over the course of the one-day event.

18 Sep ~ Vegan Yoghurt and Enzyme Drink Class

Adeline Lo, one of the VSS's favourite food presenters, conducted a workshop on making homemade vegan yogurt as well as enzyme drinks. In addition, she also shared how to use discarded fruit skins and vegetable roots to make cleaning enzymes.

15 Oct ~ Yuhua Community Centre

The VSS was invited to set up a booth at an exhibition entitled *Save the Planet, Cherish Our Health* organised by Yuhua CC, which was focused on raising awareness of environmental issues.

5 Nov ~ VSS Talk: Tooth Health

The VSS organised a talk in Mandarin to discuss how food affects the teeth. The talk was delivered by dentist Sophie Lee, who has practiced dentistry for more than 35 years.

12 Nov ~ SoCh Be The Change Exposition

The VSS was invited to set up a booth at an exposition entitled *Be The Change* organised by the group Social Change in Action (SoCh) which saw over 300 students set up project booths at *SCAPE to showcase their projects on improving the world around them. A sizeable number of teachers and parents who had accompanied the students also benefitted from attending. The VSS also gave a talk on Food Security to a small crowd.

15 Nov ~ 3rd Assembly of Youth for Environment

The VSS was invited as a guest to the *3rd Assembly of Youth for Environment* held at Fort Canning Green, where participants commemorated the occasion by planting a butterfly host tree each along the butterfly trail.

10 Dec ~ VSS Talk: Healthy Heart - Benefits of Vegetarian Diet

The VSS organised its final talk for the year of review conducted by Dr V P Nair, a cardiologist, who shared his expert opinion on the nutritional requirements that vegetarians should take note of.

25 Nov ~ Pro-Teach Teacher Gathering

The VSS was invited to conduct a presentation on the kindness argument to a group of about 50 teachers employed by Pro-Teach Student Care.

Engaging The Community



The society demonstrated its commitment to engage those interested in the vegetarian lifestyle by conducting workshops and food demonstrations in the year of review.

In addition, many bonding activities such as the popular Southern Ridges Trail hike continued to be a part of the VSS calendar of events.

It was notable that the strong participation in these activities was coupled by the active involvement by individuals who lent their time and effort as volunteers.



24 Apr ~ Southern Ridged Trail Hike

The VSS led a hike along Southern Ridges Trail, starting near Vivo City and ending at Hort Park. Led by the affable Andrew Tay, the expedition was well-received and enjoyed by everyone who participated.

Jun ~ Supporting Green Corridor

With the closure of the railway line owned by Malaysia and returned to Singapore, the Nature Society (Singapore) proposed that some of this land be used to form a green corridor for recreational use by humans and for survival and propagation by other animals, as well as plants. The VSS has supported this campaign and has taken part in several of the outreach activities that have been organised since.

16 Jun ~ Veggie Thursday Launch

The VSS helped to organise the launch of Veggie Thursday at Café Le Caire, a Middle Eastern mixed cuisine eatery.

3 & 31 Jul ~ Trip to Animal Sanctuary

Yet another trip was organised by the VSS to Noah's Ark Natural Animal Sanctuary (NANAS) which quickly filled up with participants.

Aug ~ Endorsement of Saddest Dolphins Campaign

ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society) coordinated a campaign entitled Save The World's Saddest Dolphins and the VSS joined many other organisations in supporting the effort to release the dolphins whom were captured for a planned RWS dolphin exhibition.

25 Sep ~ Happy Feet

The VSS took the lead in organising the first major event executed by Veggie Thursday and successfully coordinated the carnival at Fort Canning Park which was attended by about 300 participants.

17 Oct ~ AWARE Ball

The VSS supported AWARE in its fundraising event by attending its signature dinner event.

24 Nov ~ El Toro Salad Thursday

The VSS helped to initiate the Salad Bar at El Toro restaurant, a non-vegetarian restaurant that is veg-friendly. The initiative was launched as part of the Veggie Thursday movement.

26 Nov ~ Kampung Senang Thanksgiving

The VSS had a table at the Thanksgiving event held by Kampung Senang at its Holistic Wellness Centre.

27 Nov ~ International Nature Loving Association

The VSS was invited to speaker at the dialogue session that was part of the International Nature Loving Association (INLA) opening ceremony held at Queenstown community Centre, and graced by Dr Chia Shi-Lu, MP for Tanjong Pagar GRC.

20 Nov ~ Serangoon North Veg Food Fair

The VSS supported this independent venture by attending the event and supplying VSS collaterals to the organiser for distribution to participants.



Milestones and Achievements

The Society witnessed yet another year of growth and saw its profile and image increase many-fold, with more individuals and organisations approaching the VSS for ideas and guidance.

In the year of review, the VSS continued to provide timely and accurate information to the public and create interest amongst the mainstream populace on eating less meat for environmental, compassion and health reasons.

By the numbers...

- Over 7,000 email subscribers for eNewsletter
- 24 eNewsletters sent out
- Over 4,300 fans on facebook





Mar ~ VSS Food Guide (2nd Edition)

The updated and expanded edition of the Singapore Vegetarian Food Guide was released, featuring over 100 restaurants, 77 pages of mouth-watering photos, feature snippets on over 100 restaurants, and conveniently organised by precincts.

12 Mar ~ VSS Annual General Meeting

The 12th VSS AGM was held at Kampung Senang Holistic Wellness Centre located at Aljunied, with an inspiring celebration of the achievements in 2010. Many ideas were shared and talks and food demonstrations were conducted as well.

May ~ VSS's First Intern

Interns provide organisations with youthful energy at a more manageable cost while the young individuals gain valuable experience. It was thus a boon when SMU approached the VSS on internship opportunities and soon thereafter, the intern joined the Society from May to July. The person was a real gem - well-organised, energetic and friendly and gave hope for more of such capable interns to be engaged in future.

May ~ The Kind Exchange

The VSS participated in the *Event of Feelgoodness* activity coordinated by The Kind Exchange at Studio M Hotel, and enjoyed in the evening of warm exchange and getting to know other non-profit organisations and volunteers. Many like-minded individuals were met, and several were already vegetarian or keen on exploring the lifestyle.

25 Jun ~ Kuala Lumpur Visit

At the invitation of the Malaysia Vegetarian Society, the VSS president was appointed as a panellist at the *Health Education & Health Awareness* exhibition at the Mid-Valley Megamall in KL, Malaysia. The event was an opportunity to meet Malaysia's Health Minister, Dato' Sri Liow Tiong Lai who is a vegetarian.

Good Paper Collaboration

The VSS helped to prepare a series of articles on Veggie Thursday for publication in Good Paper.

Singapore Tourism Board Collaboration

A series of discussions with the Singapore Tourism Board and a travel agency were held to explore the viability of conducting vegetarian food tours. The developments are still in its infancy and may be revived in 2012.

Wide Distribution of Food Guide

The VSS successfully worked with the Singapore Tourism Board to distribute thousands of copies of the Singapore Vegetarian Food Guide to tourists, and promote local vegetarian restaurants. The objective was to promote Singapore as a veg-friendly tourism destination.

8-9 Nov ~ 5th Asian Vegetarian Congress

The VSS was represented at the congress which was held at Hangzhou, China.

Highlight Event

22-28 Mar ~ Visit by Heart Health Expert Dr Caldwell Esselstyn, accompanied by Mrs Ann Esselstyn

Dr Caldwell and Mrs Ann Esselstyn visited Singapore for the first time, and had a packed itinerary, including dinner with Health Minister Khaw Boon Wan and his cardiology team.

During his visit Dr Esselstyn addressed doctors and health professionals at National Heart Centre, NUHS, Mount Elizabeth and Ren Ci Community Hospital, and also took time out to talk to medical students at NUS and heart patients at National Heart Centre.

He was also interviewed by 938Live (twice), Primetime Morning, Lianhe Zaobao, Straits Times, VegVibe and Silver Lining.

The culmination was a public talk on preventing and reversing heart disease to a sell-out crowd at DBS Auditorium, organised by the VSS. The talk was followed by a specially arranged dinner at Genesis Health Food Restaurant which was packed full to the brim with volunteers and well-wishers.

A DVD copy of the final talk at DBS Auditorium was also produced by Adventist Community Services.





Managing Communications

A combination of the improved profile of the society coupled with the heightened awareness of the link between meat reduction and climate change, resulted in media representatives continuously seeking the opinions of the VSS and consulting the Society in the preparation of many articles that appeared in the press.

Correspondingly, more of the letters submitted by the VSS were published in both the print and online mediums offered by the major news providers in Singapore.

Subsidise Healthier Options in School Canteens (government feedback submitted in June)

Following the successful participation in the Animal Welfare Forum organised by ACRES, the VSS submitted the following proposal to the government for its consideration.

Overview of the issue

The eating habits children form when young can impact them for their entire lives. Furthermore, the beginnings of many killer diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes, can be traced to the food people eat when young, even if the symptoms appear many years later. Thus, we need to strive to do what we can to start children on the right path. In turn, children may even be able to influence their adult family members.

Constructive feedback

The food in most school canteens, even much of the vegetarian food, does not match health experts' guidelines, as canteen food tends to be high in oil, low in whole grains, high in animal products, low in plant foods. Of course, children's preferences play a part. Indeed, they often reject food that is good for them. One reason for this rejection is price. Children can be very price sensitive, and healthier food can be slightly more expensive.

Proposed solution

The government might want to consider subsidising healthier options in school canteens. The Vegetarian Society has experience working with school canteens - even when healthy, plant based food meets kids' taste test, they won't buy it unless the price is right.

We understand that there is already a precedent for subsidising healthy food - at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, whole grain foods are cheaper than white rice.

Yes, subsidies cost money, but if we think long term, perhaps we actually save money, because of reduction in health care expenses and in lost time due to illness, not to mention the suffering of individuals and their families. Perhaps, a few schools of various types - preschools, primary, secondary, JC, ITE - could pilot such as scheme, including development of age-appropriate dishes.

Harder to Operate a Vegetarian Stall? (email correspondence with journalist in July)

The following is the correspondence between the VSS and a journalist from Shin Min Daily regarding the viability of veg food stalls.

Email from journalist

I am a journalist from Shin Min. I have some questions regarding the operating costs of vegetarian stalls. Recently, a San De Vegetarian Food Stall at Marina Bay Sands closed down due to insufficient manpower and poor customer response.

Do you all encounter a lot of such cases? Is it very difficult to maintain a vegetarian food stall in Singapore? Has a lot of vegetarian stall owners reflect on this issue?

Reply from VSS

Thanks for contacting Vegetarian Society (Singapore). We can put you in touch with some veg stall operators if you wish - the VSS website hosts a list of 500+ veg stalls and restaurants. Indeed, with so many veg eateries, SG is one of the world's best countries for vegetarians.

While we don't have statistics, it's our impression that the number of veg stalls is increasing, as more people are interested in meatfree eating, whether for reasons of health, environment or kindness to our fellow animals, as well as spiritual reasons. Also, it isn't only full time vegetarians who eat at veg stalls. Nowadays, many people are meat reducers, i.e., people trying to eat less meat. For instance, recently 28 NGOs came together to launch Veggie Thursday.

Also, HPB advocates that we eat whole grain foods, such as brown rice, and many veg stall offer brown rice. Previously, veg stalls had a reputation for not serving many veggies and instead serving lots of fried foods such as mock meats. Fortunately, that seems to be changing.

Yes, veg stalls face the same pressures that other stalls face: rising rents, labour shortages, finding good staff, rising prices of ingredients.

VSS tries to support veg eateries via education in the form of social media, flyers, talks, exhibitions and more.

The Sadness of Slaughter

(unpublished letter from reader in July)

Following an article published in MyPaper describing the pig slaughterhouses in Singapore, one reader submitted the following letter.

I refer to "Pigs to Pork" MyPaper, A6-A7, 5 July, 2011. The article and the accompanying photos provide a graphic glimpse at how pigs are killed here in Singapore. Sad. Pigs are intelligent creatures, just as are chickens and cows and the other animals whom we eat.

The sadness begins before the slaughter. From birth to all-too-early death, we deprive these fellow animals – yes, we are animals, too - of anything resembling a natural life. Pigs to pork – living beings to lifeless objects – but they feel pain, too. They experience emotions, too. If they had been permitted, these non-human animals too would have developed family ties.

Generations of people in India and elsewhere have lived without meat. Scientific research shows that we can be healthy, even healthier, on a plant based diet. So, why?

Complimentary Ad Space in VegVibe magazine

(in 6 issues from January to November)

In support of the work that the VSS does, VegVibe magazine offered 6 complimentary full-page ads (including designing) to the Society for its use as necessary.

The Who/Which Project

(interview by Australian radio in December)

Approaching the issue from the concept of words having the power to shape our thoughts and perception, the VSS president was interviewed on an Australian radio show on the topic of the use of 'who' instead of 'which' when referring to nonhuman animals - as in the sentence, "The chickens who were slaughtered today were probably less than six weeks old". The interview and transcript are available online from the website www.abc.net.au/rn/linguafranca (under the title 'who/which project').



Reducing Meat to Save Water

(unpublished letter from the VSS in January)

Following an article published in MyPaper describing the pig slaughterhouses in Singapore, one reader submitted the following letter.

I refer to 'Small steps to shrink our water footprint' (ST Jan 8, p. A30). The article's author, Dan McCarthy, asks if we should become vegetarians as a step towards wise water use. Reasons why meat has a large water footprint include:

1. Many kgs of plant food need to be fed to chickens, pigs, cows, etc. to produce just one kg of meat. Large quantities of water are required to grow all that extra food.
2. The approximately 60 billion land animals whom we humans ate last year produced large amounts of solid and liquid waste. Some of this waste ends up polluting water.

McCarthy demonstrates that we can take many actions to shrink our water footprint. Reducing our meat consumption deserves an important place on our water reduction menus.

Interview by Healthwise Magazine

(conducted in April)

Loh Yeow Nguan, the VSS Director for Education and Outreach, was interviewed by Healthwise magazine, which is circulated mainly to hospitals and clinics to encourage a healthy lifestyle. The magazine was particularly interested in the recipes offered by the VSS, both for cooked dishes as well as the raw dishes, such as green smoothies.

Diet Change to Battle Heart Disease

(unpublished letter from reader in April)

A VSS member sent the following letter to the Straits Times Forum as a reply to an article discussing the issue of statin use.

I refer to 'Getting to the heart of statin use' by Andy Ho (Apr 2). The article discusses doubts about the widespread use of statins in the treatment of coronary heart disease (CHD).

Fortunately, another evidence-based path exists for combating CHD and lowering cholesterol: diet change. Last month, Dr Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr., Director of the Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Reversal Program at the Cleveland Clinic Wellness Institute, was in Singapore to speak with cardiologists and others.

His research, published in the American Journal of Cardiology and since replicated, describes how moving to a plant-based, oil-free diet saved the lives of heart disease patients. Adopting such a diet wasn't easy for Dr Esselstyn's patients in the U.S., but most of them have stayed on that diet for more than 15 years, as described in his book, Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease.

Consider the alternatives to diet change: seriously impaired health, untimely death, medicines with side effects and expensive surgery with the attendant risks and with the probability that the symptoms will recur.

Fortunately, Singapore is a good place for adopting such a plant-based diet, as the culinary wizards in our food paradise, including those at our approximately 100 vegetarian restaurants, enjoy a challenge and look forward to serving their customers' gustatory and health requests.

Don't Forget Meat Reduction

(email correspondence with journalist in February)

On 6 January, Straits Times columnist Stephanie Yap published a column titled *A Year of Vegging Out* which described what she had learned about the horrors of meat production and shared her unsuccessful attempts to reduce her meat consumption. She also cited the book *Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer, which carefully documents the cruelty that is part and parcel of modern factory farming. The following is the correspondence between the VSS president and the columnist.

Email from VSS

I read your column – 'A year of vegging out', and I admire your efforts to reduce your meat consumption and your reasons for doing so. As you note, it is horrible what we do to our fellow animals so that we can unnecessarily eat them.

In your column, you quote 'Eating Animals'. Coincidentally, I was watching a video today of a talk by the book's author Jonathan Safran Foer, and in the Q&A section of the talk, there's a part where he makes some points that might be relevant to your situation. In particular, he explains that being veg isn't something binary; it's actually a continuum.

Absolutely no one is pure; no food is guilt free. For example, non-human animals who live in fields are killed as tractors harvest plants. Also, lots of insects are killed as food is transported. Thus, it's about reducing, not eliminating, suffering. Have you heard about Veggie Thursday?

Reply from journalist

Thanks so much for your encouragement and all the interesting links. What Foer says about reducing suffering is indeed thought-provoking. Sometimes, we focus so much on absolutes and miss the forest for the trees. I will join the Veggie Thursday Facebook group. Thanks again for writing to me!



VSS Quoted in AMICA (published in April)

The April/May issue of AMICA, “the intelligent woman’s luxury fashion magazine”, carried an article on how a person’s friendship with a cow during a farmstay in England changed their views on meat. To accompany the article, AMICA’s editor asked the VSS for a short piece on meat and the environment.

NO MORE MEAT



LIFE IS FULL OF SURPRISES, AND WE SURELY WON'T KNOW WHO WE'D CROSS PATH WITH. A CHANCE ACQUAINTANCE WITH A COW ON A FARM SURPRISED IT CONSULTANT ZACITZHE AND CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT EATING MEAT

VEGETARIANISM — MAKES SENSE

by George Jacobs, president of Vegetarian Society, Singapore

Most of us eat at least three times a day. What many people don't appreciate is that what we eat affects not just our taste buds, our waistline and our wallet, it also affects the environment. Yes, the food choices we make can help the environment if we eat more fruits and veggies and less or no animal products. There are the two main links between our diet and the environment, especially the Big GW (Global Warming).

EATING MEAT IS WASTING FOOD

The first link between our food and the health of our planet is that eating meat is wasting food, because we have to feed many kgs of food to the cows, pigs, chickens, etc. to obtain just one kg of meat. Think about yourself growing up. Do you know at what age the average human child gains the most weight? For girls, it's age 12, when they gain on average about 4.7kgs, and for boys, it's age 13, when they gain an average of about 5.2kgs. Think back to when you were 12 or 13, and ask yourself, "Did I eat only about 5kgs of food that entire year?" Of course not. You ate many more kgs of food, and it's the same with non-human animals.

That's why eating meat is wasting food. We have to grow so much extra food to feed the other animals whom we human animals later eat. The GW link lies in the fact that we have to cut down so many more trees to obtain the land to grow all this unnecessary food. As you know, trees soak up CO₂ when they are alive, but when we cut down trees or burn them, CO₂ is released.

EATING MEAT GIVES THE EARTH GAS: GW GAS

Here's the second link between eating animal foods and GW: Eating meat gives the Earth gas, GW gas. When most people think of GW, they think of CO₂, and, yes, CO₂ is the largest contributor to GW, but there are other greenhouses gases that are more powerful than CO₂.

Methane is a greenhouse gas at least 20 times more powerful than CO₂. The animals whom we eat, especially ruminant animals, such as cows and sheep, emit methane as part of their digestive processes. That's right, burping and farting are melting the polar ice caps. Nitrous oxide is another greenhouse gas, and it's estimated to be about 290 times more powerful than CO₂. Nitrous oxide

is found in the manure of the animals whom we use chopsticks, forks and spoons to load into our mouths.

Did you know that the human animal population of about 6.8 billion eats about 60 billion of our fellow land animals every year? That figure does not include all the marine animals whom we consume. [Did you know that an increasing percentage of marine animals grow up, not swimming freely but in Concentrated Feeding Operations (CAFOs), less kindly called "factory farms," which pollute bodies of water] Think about all the manure our 60 billion land based friends are producing and all the nitrous oxide from that manure being released into the atmosphere.

LIVESTOCK CONTRIBUTE MORE GW THAN DOES TRANSPORTATION

Most people think that slowing GW is about not flying in airplanes, about taking public transportation or about walking, and those are all good ideas. But, according to a 2006 UN report, Livestock's Long Shadow, production of animal products leads to more greenhouse gas emissions than does transportation. To quote the UN report: "The livestock sector is a major player, responsible for 18 percent of greenhouse gas emissions measured in CO₂ equivalent. This is a higher share than transport."

Some scientists dispute the 18% figure. A 2009 article in a World Watch Institute publication put the figure at 51%. On the other hand, one scientist recently put the figure, at least in the U.S., at only 3%. Regardless, reducing meat consumption can play a role in reducing the enormous threat posed by GW.

A VIRTUOUS CYCLE

Actually, eating less meat is a virtuous cycle, because when we eat less meat and other animal based foods, we help our health, by decreasing our intake of fat and cholesterol and increasing our intake of fibre and antioxidants. In turn, we also help the environment, and a clean environment also helps our health. Last but not least, when we demonstrate empathy for our fellow animals by not eating animal based foods, we feel good about ourselves, which also boosts our health.

Is giving up animal based foods all at once too much of a challenge? No worries. In Singapore, we have Veggie Thursday, a idea begun in Belgium in which every Thursday (or whatever day you choose) people adopt a plant based diet. www.veggithursday.sg Please do give it a try. You might be pleasantly surprised at how easy and tasty it can be.

To find out more about the Vegetarian Society, Singapore, visit www.vss.org

Accounting Report

In terms of funding, the Society enjoyed strong support and was able to improve its financial strength by adding a surplus and reports a balance of \$88,245 for the year ended 2011.

The VSS achieved this through more donations and earned better returns on fees and advertising income.

Financial Report


for the period 1st January 2011 to 31st December 2011

Income & Expenditure Statement for the year ended 31 December 2011

	\$	%
Income		
Donations in Cash	38,555.43	45.8%
Programme Fees	17,841.00	21.2%
Membership Fees	11,480.00	13.6%
Sales of Work	5,079.40	6.0%
Advertising Income	11,215.00	13.3%
Total Income	84,170.83	100.0%
Expenses		
Employment Expenses		
Salaries	18,000.00	21.4%
CPF Contribution	2,808.00	3.3%
Skills Development Levy	41.50	0.0%
Total Employment Expenses	20,849.50	24.8%
Rental		
Rental of Equipment	85.60	0.1%
Rental of Rooms	1,725.00	2.0%
Total Rental	1,810.60	2.2%
Supplies and Materials	11,693.88	13.9%
Transport	2,595.20	3.1%
Communications	1,210.46	1.4%
Professional Fees	22,749.20	27.0%
Public Education	10,306.50	12.2%
Bank Charges	570.60	0.7%
Depreciation of Fixed Assets	274.66	0.3%
Total Expenses	72,060.60	85.6%
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	12,110.23	14.4%

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2011

Assets		
Property & Equipment		
Equipment	25.67	
Total Property & Equipment		25.67
Current Assets		
Cash On Hand	89,582.73	
Undeposited Funds	250.44	
Pledges Receivable	1,000.00	
Inventory	997.73	
Total Current Assets		91,830.90
Total Assets		91,856.57
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Other Current Liabilities	3,610.60	
Total Current Liabilities		3,610.60
Total Liabilities		3,610.60
Net Assets		88,245.97
Equity		
Prior Year's Surplus/Deficit	76,135.74	
Current Year Surplus/Deficit	12,110.23	
Total Equity		88,245.97

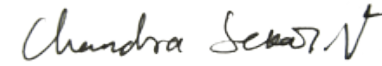

Honorary Treasurer
Navaneethan Neminathan


Auditor
Low Chip Khoon


Auditor
Chandra Sekar Verappan


Honorary Treasurer
Navaneethan Neminathan


Auditor
Low Chip Khoon


Auditor
Chandra Sekar Verappan

with fond memories
Teresa Hsu (1898~2011)

Action Earth
ACRES
Adeline Lo
Ai Xin Society
Anderson Junior College
Andrew Tay
Assembly of Youth for the Environment
AWARE
Balakrishnan Matchap
Betty Hoe
Bishan Community Library
Bright Hill Temple
British Petroleum (BP)
Bukit Merah Public Library
Cat Welfare Society
Catherina Hosoi
Central Library of the National Library Board
Chong Hua Tong Tou Teck Hwee movement
Mdm Choo Hong Eng
Clarence Tan
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Environmental Challenge Organisation
Singapore
Family Service Centre (Yishun)
Foreign Domestic Worker Association
Gelin
Genesis Vegetarian Health Food Restaurant
Global Indian International School
Green Kampung website
Greendale Secondary School
Green Roundtable
Guangyang Primary School
GUI (Ground Up Initiative)
Herty Chen
Indonesia Vegetarian Society
International Vegetarian Union
Juggi Ramakrishnan
Lim Yi Ting
Kevin Tan
Heng Guan Hou
Hort Park
Kampung Senang Charity and Education
Foundation
Loving Hut Restaurants
Mahaya Menon
Maria and Ana Laura Rivarola
Mayura Mohta
Maitreyawira School
Mediacorp

THANK YOU... *for your invaluable support*

So many individuals, food outlets and organisations gave their invaluable effort, time and resources to light the path towards vegetarianism. Space may not have allowed us to list everyone, but all the same, we extend our most heartfelt thanks to you.

MEVEG (Middle East Vegetarian Group)
Millennia Institute
Mr Chng Hock Hai and family
Nanyang Technological University
National Institute of Education
National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre
National Youth Envirolympics Challenge
Nature Society (Singapore)
Noah's Ark Natural Animal Sanctuary
NUS SAVE
NutriHub
Post Museum
Queensway Secondary School
Prof Harvey Neo
Raffles Institution
Rameshon Murugiah
Serene Peh
Singapore Buddhist Federation
Singapore Kite Association
Singapore Malayalee Association
Singapore Polytechnic
Singapore Sports Council
Singapore Tourism Board
Singapore Vegetarian Meetup Groups
SPCA
St Anthony's Canossian Secondary School
Straits Times
T. Colin Campbell Foundation
Temasek Polytechnic
Tampines Regional Library
UBS Bank's Vegetarian Society
VegVibe Magazine
Vegetarian Club of Bangladesh
Women's Initiative for Ageing Successfully
Wong Koi Hin