

Vegetarian & Vegan Society (VegSA) Inc.

Newsletter

Issue 3/11 - September 2011

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RALLY AGAINST LIVE ANIMAL EXPORTS

On Sunday August 14th about 2000 people assembled in Elder Park to protest against the ongoing export of live animals and to show support for the Bills to phase out the Live Export Trade being introduced into Federal Parliament later that week by Nick Xenophon and Andrew Wilkie.

A recorded message from Lyn White of Animals Australia was inspiring and Nick Xenoophon spoke in person emphasising that he would persist to see this through. It was disappointing that the Media gave little coverage to the event in spite of the many 1000s who attended similar rallies all over Australia. Also disappointing was the Prime Minister not allowing a conscience vote in Parliament (even though a number of MPs had expressed their sympathy for a ban). The consequence being that the Bills, presented to the Federal Parliament on 18th August were defeated.

An e-mail from Lyn White to participating groups (dated 18th Aug) stated: "But all is not lost. It is clear that despite today's result, our strategy is working. Knowing that support for an end to live exports continues to grow, <u>Andrew Wilkie and The Australian Greens have</u> <u>announced that they will reintroduce legislation on live export</u>. We have reached a most critical time to keep pressure on the government and let them know that Australians will never forgive, nor forget the suffering that the live trade is responsible for - and that we will not support a government that is prepared to abandon our animals and our ethical principles." Since then Lyn has released recent footage of malpractice both in Turkey and Israel. As Food For Thought goes to press the Labour Party Conference is debating the introduction of measures to ensure that all animals exported overseas will be stunned before slaughter.

Thanks to all those VegSA members and others who attended, to Animals Australia for organising and Animal Liberation for some very telling posters.

More info on live exports and other issues on www.animalsaustralia.org bumper stickers from Animals Australia or at VegSA events (\$2.00)

Leave this space for photocopy of <u>Ban Live Exports</u> bumper sticker Sticker reduced to 3.5 X 14.5 cm or photo(s)



UP-COMING EVENTS

As usual this looks like being a busy quarter of the year. **1st – 7th October is** <u>International Vegetarian Week</u> with <u>World Animal Day</u> on October 4th. It is difficult to organise a major event in a week that includes a public holiday as many people are busy with spring activities and many are heading out of town. Nevertheless VegSA is organising a <u>picnic in the Botanic Park</u> on Monday October 3rd. On Sunday November 13th there will be the 4th <u>Adelaide Vegan Festival</u>. On Sunday September 11th Theosophical Society will hold a full day seminar on "FOOD" (includes a vegetarian lunch). Animal Liberation will have 2 <u>free film shows</u> at Glandore as well as continuing the popular <u>Healthy Food Wise</u> <u>Cooking Demos</u>. Adelaide Vegans continue their weekly get-togethers and VegSA subgroups continue their regular (and some irregular) events. See page 8 for full details.

VEGETARIAN SINGLES GROUP

Are you, or is any one you know, interested in a Vegetarians Singles Group? The group will plan its own activities and meet, communicate, etc. according to the needs and wishes of its members. If interested please contact Su or Anthony via: vegsocsa@gmail.com or phone Anthony on 0450 677 726

NATIONAL ANTI-VIVISECTION CAMPAIGN

VegSA has received a request from arrc (Anti-vivisection Union) to pass on this information regarding the **movement by air of primates intended for research in Australia**:

Humane Research Australia is campaigning to stop the importation of macaques from Indonesia to Australia. HRA asks that we all <u>write to Ministers Tony Burke and Nicola Roxon</u> to demand an immediate ban on the importation of primates for research*. The full story and addresses are on the HRA website: http://www.aahr.org.au/campaigns/ban-primates This is the local part of the on-going global British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection campaign to end the international trade in primates. Complete campaign information can be found at: http://www.buav.org/ "

*Letter to Ministers can be addressed C/- Parliament House, Camberra ACT 2600

HRA encourages individuals to contact airlines from the following list to request that the airlines immediately stop their involvement in this cruel trade. [and, of course avoid using these airlines if possible. - Ed]

<u>Airlines that DO or would fly primates</u> destined for the research industry: Air Canada, Air China, Air France, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines, Continental Airlines, Lufthansa, Philippine Airlines, Vietnam Airlines. <u>Air France</u> customerservice.LHR@klmcargo.com Vietnam Airlines vna.uk@vietnamair.com.vn

service.LHR@kimcargo.com <u>vietnam Airlines</u> vna.uk@vietnamair.c

♦ IS IT REAL OR IS IT FAKE?

Thanks to new labeling legislation in the EU, European consumers will no longer have to ask. Clothing manufacturers will be required to clearly label the presence of animal-derived products -- like fur, leather, or feathers -- helping people make informed decisions about what they buy -- and avoid being duped into purchasing products of animal suffering. Read the label» http://action.humanesociety.org/site/R?i=IPKqUIVtLOrsuC1C7kRmBA

Quote: "Even the US Federal Drugs Administration confirms that 9 out of 10 drugs proven successful in animal tests fail in human trials." Helen Marston of Humane Research Australia in New Internationalist July/Aug 2011

VegSA 'Food for Thought' Acknowledgements:

Editor: Anne Sanders Layout/Editorial: Pam Marshall Mail-out: Committee. Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in Food for Thought are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Vegetarian Society of SA. Many Thanks to Chris Pyne (MP) office for photocopying



INTERVIEW WITH KAS WARD OF BLISS CAFÉ

In May 2011 'Food for Thought' editor, Anne Sanders, talked to Kas at Bliss Cafe about taking over, running and developing a cruelty free business.

Anne: What happened to make you decide to take on Bliss Cafe?

Kas: When we heard about Lisa and Steve, the previous owners, selling the cafe, and we didn't have money obviously to buy it, we didn't even think of buying it at that time but we heard that no one was really interested in buying apart from people who may not keep Bliss as Bliss which would mean that we would lose another vegetarian place in Adelaide. I've always wanted to have a cafe. And honestly I was thinking really of a small cafe just with coffee, tea and cake but Shane and I we talked about Bliss, that Adelaide needed a place for vegans to come and enjoy organic food so we thought OK it would be great to keep this place. Then we asked ourselves: how can we do it? So we approached Shane's parents to ask them for a loan to purchase a business.

Once we had their approval, and it was a long discussion on how we're going to make sure that we can run the business. I thought, because we both had a passion for veganism and organic food and I have managerial and administration skills plus Shane has got wonderful social people skills, that it would be a great match, a good start for the cafe. Then, we sat down with Lisa and Steve to discuss a Bliss take over. So that's how it all started. Later on we decided what we were going to do with the menu, what we were going to do with the staff, what we actually wanted Bliss to be like, what changes and improvements we wanted to bring on. So there was a lot happening at that time. That was the least we could do it and we did it.

Anne: I would imagine there would be administration skills and planning skills that you've already demonstrated before.

Kas: I used to run a business myself before but I didn't run a business in Australia so, before we took over Bliss, I actually went to Adelaide City Council and asked them if there were any business workshops on how to run a business in Australia? I participated in several workshops and I did a lot of research myself within those 2 weeks before we started. So it was really full on and I learnt a lot during that time. There are free business workshops for people who want to start a business in Adelaide, but not all of them are in Adelaide so I had to travel from one place to another. One was in Port Adelaide for example. One was in Reynella. So I attended different workshops in different places just to make sure that I knew as much as I possibly could before I took over the business: the registration of the business, the financial, the hospitality industry and how things work with the food business, then all the paper work, with the taxation. There's a lot, a lot of things. And I'd never run a cafe in Australia before, so I wanted to make sure that I had that knowledge at least to start with.

Anne: What made you become vegan?

Kas: That's a good question. I am a very ambitious person and when I started my vegetarian journey - That was maybe eighteen years ago. I didn't know too much about veganism or vegetarianism as such. I just wanted to stop eating meat. At that time I thought it was wrong.

I had a feeling that it was not for me, nor for my body. Plus I thought if I had a healthy diet I would live longer and I would look better as well. My grandma and my mum were overweight so I thought I would like to keep a nice figure, as a woman. It was important to me when I was a teenager back then. Later, it just came up naturally that I stopped liking yoghurt and milk and cheese. I just did not like dairy any more. It was maybe about 2 or 3 years after I stopped eating meat. I was still eating eggs and honey and, because I was really on my own with my vegetarian diet back then, I was looking for other people who were like me, with the same kind of interest in Poland and I found the Vegetarian World magazine and then the National Vegetarian Festival that happens once a year. I participated in the festival to meet like-minded people. It was a 2-weeks-camp where we learnt how to cook, how to do tai chi, yoga, a little bit of Angel guidance, tantra, massage and, most fascinating to me then, Gurdjieff movement. It was a really, really interesting camp. And it was a vegan camp, which I didn't realise as it was simply named vegetarian back then. And when I came to Australia. someone told me, "Oh you are not really vegan because you still eat honey." And I thought, "Ah, OK". So I stopped honey and I stopped eating eggs as well. Because I was so ambitious I thought, "People can't tell me I'm not vegan! I say I am vegan but I'm not". I wanted to prove that I actually achieved something personally as well. But it wasn't anything hard to do. It was just my lack of knowledge, more than anything. That's how it started, also with the Vegan Festival. I didn't know anyone here. Shane, my husband, was a meat eater. So I wanted to find other like-minded people to share some knowledge with. That's how I found Vegetarian Society, Animal Liberation and started from there.

Anne: And what about Shane? How did he come to be vegan?

Kas: Shane is a different story, I became vegan for my own health most of all and Shane, I didn't-ask him to stop eating meat or anything like that. I thought "It's his choice what he does" I loved him the way he was when I met him in Egypt. I believed that he would see why I made those choices and he would do what is right at a later stage when he is ready to do so. So, once I cooked a meal for him and I didn't feel right whilst cooking meat so I stopped that. I said, "I cannot cook for you anymore. If you want to eat meat you need to cook for yourself" and he was fine with that. And then we went to the Adelaide Vegans' lunch and we were watching the Animal Liberation Front movie afterwards at Cindy's place at Christie's Beach.

Shane was working 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off, in Perth. So once he called me from work and he said, "Oh, Kas, I had this chicken for dinner". And I said, "Oh, what's wrong with it? Normally you have chicken." And then he said, "No, no. It's different. I couldn't eat it. I just remembered all these pictures I saw in the movie. What happens to the animals and I just can't eat it any more". So that was his decision back then. He decided to stop eating meat because he felt that it was wrong what happened to the animals. And yes, he just stopped from one day and I was amazed. I think he should be really proud of what he has achieved. And all vegans I think should be proud because we, on the way, lose a lot of friends who are meat eaters, or who may think that what we are doing, makes us different from them and that we do not have a common interest or passion anymore. I know I felt upset when Shane lost a lot of friends of his because of that, because he wasn't drinking any more, he wasn't smoking any more. He wasn't eating meat any more so there was nothing sort of in common with his other mates. So I think for a man it might have been a more difficult challenge, a bigger challenge than for a woman.

Anne: How did he manage whilst he was working away?

Kas: He asked the chef to prepare vegan meals so when he was making soup, Shane would ask in advance to be sure that there is no meat. Usually he would get a meal that was vegan and sometimes, if there was nothing on, he would eat fresh fruit, cooked veggies or bread. I think it must have been hard for him.

Anne: To return to Bliss Cafe: To be sure that you are selling things that are completely vegan you probably have to do quite a lot of research. How do you go about that?

Kas: Well every new product that I introduce to the cafe I check it on line. That's the first thing. So for example, someone comes to Bliss and says, "Have you got, say, a cheese?" I say, "Oh, no, but we might have it next time when you come in." So what I do I go on the

internet. I check this product and it might say that it is vegan or it might say it is not vegan. If it doesn't say, I will send an e-mail to the manufacturer and ask them what ingredients they are. How they are produced. Is it certified that it is vegan? I basically just want to know everything about this product. I like to have the confirmation in writing from the manufacturer just to make sure that it is right, that someone else hasn't made a mistake. And apart from that I always ask for a "Material Sheet", a list of all the ingredients and where they come from. Sometimes manufacturers don't want to tell you everything. Sometimes they will tell you only what you want to hear. It's tricky And also I like to know whether things are organic or not because I prefer stocking organic vegan products not just vegan and, especially if it is made out of soy, I need to make sure it is GM free. It's tricky with American companies sometimes because they will say, "Yes this corn or this soy is GM free, but we cannot guarantee what's grown in the field next door. That worries me, contamination, because there's no real process behind it, which should be there. But other than that most of the companies will be very honest. And they will send you all the information. That is how I check.

But there are some products for example that may be vegan purely based on the ingredients like soy yoghurt. What I do, I go a little bit beyond that. I want to make sure there is no animal cruelty involved in the whole process, not just the ingredients in the product. So, if something before hand was tested on animals or used an animal product to create that ingredient, that is not vegan to me. Obviously, you know, you cannot check everything. But just with an example with the soy yogurt, they use cow's milk bacteria. So they grow it on dairy. Then they create a soy yogurt, which they think is vegan, but actually is not. As far as I know no one at the moment produces soy yogurt using vegan culture.

Anne: I know Soyganics [in SA] is trying to get something that is totally vegan but I do not know how far they have got with that.

Kas: With our customers at least no one really puts any interest in those products so I did not really push. And we've got soy creams and I make my own cream as well.

Then the new product that we actually introduced lately which might be a little controversial is Vegan Condoms. Someone would think, "What's wrong with regular condoms?" But actually most of the condoms on the market contain casein, which is from milk protein. So now we have personal intimate products that are totally vegan.

Also, I get suspicious whenever the label has numbers with a lot of preservatives (E100s and E300s etc). The more natural the better. If it does contain one I would research it and make sure that it is actually like a vitamin or just a natural flavour or salt or whatever, just to make sure it is a vegan product. It is the same with bread. How are you certain that this bread is vegan when they put tuna oil to most bread these days?

Anne: Even with vegetable oils there are certain oils you want to avoid for other reasons.

Kas: What we are doing at Bliss at present we are looking at products that contain vegetable oil or palm oil just to make sure that there is no palm oil in products we stock and we are going to reduce the number of these products and eventually eliminate them from the shop.

Anne: Is there any palm oil that's guaranteed to be not destroying the environment?

Kas: As far as I know not. As far as I know all palm oil may not necessarily affect the orangutans for instant but will lead to deforestation of other area. It's tricky. It's the same like with using paper and other things. It is just one little drop in the ocean, but you have to start somewhere.

And what we also have been doing lately. I have been watching a lot of videos on chemicals that are added to our food or things that happened after Chernobyl or chemical plants when they have uranium and other metals. It is believed that most of the produce from Turkey, like hazelnuts and apricots, they are highly polluted or toxicated. So even if they are called "organic" they might not necessarily be good to your body because there is so much radiation in them, because of the factories in Turkey particularly, and in Russia as well, the soil is polluted and it all goes into the food you put on your plate. So what I did last month I contacted the manufacturer of a particular candy bar that we stock and asked them, "Where do you source your apricots from?" and they told us they were from Turkey so I said, "Because of this situation we believe, although they are completely "organic" they might be

not very good for peoples' health. We will be reducing and eliminating this product in our shop and I would suggest that you should source the apricots from somewhere else". So we are just waiting to hear what they are going to do about it.

Also I've got an Ethical Guide and an ethical web site on the internet. So the product may be vegan like corn for example, cans of corn, but it's not actually produced in an ethical way. If that company is on the list of unethical companies we would not even get it.

Anne: It's not easy for individuals.

Kas: You do as much as you can. My personal view is, when we run Bliss and we have a shop we feel we've got a responsibility, especially when we advertise that we are 100% vegan and we're the only organic place in Adelaide with no contamination. We want to make sure that when people come in, not necessarily vegans, that whatever they buy it's going to be safe for the vegan. If they buy a present for a vegan or if you are vegan and you come in you don't necessarily have to check the labels. That's what we do for you. You don't have to go to a supermarket and, read all the labels and then try to think, "Is this ethical brand or not? Should I get these [brand of biscuit] which are vegan but not ethical or should I not?" So we do that for you. It's just the knowledge. It's just for people who eat meat, They might not know what's actually happening to the animals. And it was similar when I arrived in Australia. Many years ago I stopped using sugar and that was because most sugar produced back than was using bones to filter the sugar so when I arrived here I was against sugar, until we researched it and found out that it's actually not happening here.

Anne. How have things changed at Bliss over the last 2 years.

Kas: It's changed dramatically.

Anne: How many customers did you have when you started?

Kas: When we started we had probably between 5 and 10 customers a day. At the moment, depending on the day, we may have between 40 up to 180. Maybe not customers, but orders for food. We count just orders, but there are sometimes customers who come and buy products but they do not eat or they come and just drink and have a cake which we do not count. The statistics we run is just only for meal orders.

But that's only the Numbers, but I think the satisfaction from customers has increased as well from when we started and we are still learning. We used to be customers so we wanted Bliss to become a place customers, would like to come so we had all these great ideas that we wanted to implement and so we did.

We now offer free alkaline water to customers. We have put in the air conditioning so its warm when it is cold outside or chilled inside when it is hot outside. That improves a lot. Also we created a vegan shop that didn't exist before and not only groceries but just the number of books. I think it is the largest shop in Australia, under one roof, just with vegan and vegan related books. So we are pretty proud of that as well. Plus we have a clothing swap. We have movie screenings from time to time. We have Adelaide Vegans dinners once a month.

So we support the community as much as we can. For example all our compost goes to community gardens or to private gardens, not food scraps but produce scrap. Also a percentage of sales from the bottles that customers buy goes to Animal Liberation and One Village as a donation and when we have left over food we either distribute it among staff or we give it to the homeless shelter here on Whitmore Square. Just little things that we do to make sure we do our bit for the community. I think it is very important to create the relationship with community members as well.

Anne: Do you have plans for changes in the near future?

Kas: There are two ways. As the business owner I obviously create a Business Plan, which is on the wall. That's the business plan for Bliss and we do it regularly every 2 years. There is an action plan: what improvements and what changes are going to happen at Bliss. For the questions that are coming up from the business point of view we are going to systematise the process of induction and training processes for staff at Bliss. It's important because everyone is different so things have to be tailored to an individual. I'm doing a plan of training for each particular staff member, which is going to be very interesting. We do it inside and also we have the number one barista in SA, Ian Callahan, who trains our staff.

Also another thing, I have committed to implement 3 new products each month. That's a

minimum, so 3 new vegan products, it might be from Aus or from the US. And these are the products that customers ask about so what I would do, as we discussed before, I would research these products, make sure they are vegan, they meet all our requirements. Then we will get them to Bliss to provide them to the customers. Another thing that is going to change, we are going to develop the shop a little bit more to make like a little mini supermarket for vegans, and not only for vegans, so there are going to be more groceries and more produce in there.

Also what we're planning is to have the different menu for each season. For the time being we have different menus each quarter for dinner, but the lunch menu has stayed the same or similar. We just added a few items to it or removed them but I would like to have a totally different menu for summer and totally different menu for winter, just to reflect what's in season, what is available and make creative, nice and delicious vegan meals that people can enjoy and with enough nutrition as well.

And there is another exciting news, that I am in the process of writing a book, which is on BLISS and will contain also RECIPES that we use at Bliss and somebody will be happy because there's going to be cake recipes that people really love at Bliss. But also there will be savouries like curries, and soups and little things that we make like rice balls and Bliss balls. So that's going to be interesting. And part of the book, what I would like to do is that a few recipes will come from our staff and I will give the privilege to some of our regular customers to provide their favourite recipes as well. But that will be like a shared book, a community book as well.

So I think that's it. I'm learning a lot from other people. I've got two main mentors at the moment, how we can improve things, how we can grow. And I have got also two personal mentors that I am learning how to do business and how to run my life so there is a healthy balance between the business and my private life, which is very important as we have acknowledged. It is funny and interesting how we sometimes forget about important things that happen in our lives, that we all deal with people. We've just been discussing with one of my staff today that we are in such a privileged situation where Bliss is the only vegan organic place in Adelaide and all people who work there they have something in common which is that connection to the earth and we are very sensitive. We sort of live with Nature and with Nature laws. Running a business like that is different from running a regular business where people might be a little bit tougher and they think about money, how to create more customers which is very important and it is important to me as a business owner as well but what's the most important is that we are people and we work with people and we work for people. Those relationships with people are probably the most important thing in running Bliss.

BLISS ORGANIC CAFE

7 Compton St Adelaide (off Gouger St, near Central Market) ph 82310205 **Open:** Monday - Thursday 7am-4pm - Friday 7am-4pm and 6-9pm Saturday 8am-4pm and 6-9pm - Sunday 10am-2pm

VegSA Diary Dates:

◆ ADELAIDE VEGANS: Brings vegans together for networking and social gatherings. Dinner every Friday evening at various veg'n restaurants in the Adelaide CBD plus picnics, etc Bookings essential for dinners to enable the venue to reserve a table. For details and booking see EVENTS page on the Website: <u>www.adelaidevegans.org</u> or contact John: jbrasted@internode.on.net ph 0428 225 712 or Shane: swardshane@yahoo.com - 0410 481 290. For (raw) picnic information contact Morgaine 0435 519 477

♦ NATURAL HEALTH SOCIETY (SA): 1st Tuesday each month 7.30pm: Meeting & lecture at Unley Citizens Centre, 18 Arthur Street Unley. Further information: Secretary 8277 7207 website www.naturalhealthsa.com.au

October 4th Ken Lawson: <u>"Sprouting Seeds"</u> and demo of a wide range of sprouts. November1st Natasha Radcliffe: "<u>Diet and Chronic Disease</u> – Busting the Myths" December 6th <u>End of Year meeting</u>, bring supper to share (or pay \$4). Speaker: "Biofortification of Food Crops with Micronutrients - Promotion of orange-fleshed Sweet Potatoes in Melanesia" by Dr Graham Lyon *(more Diary Dates next page)*



VegSA Dates

International Vegetarian Week - October 1st - 7th World Animal Day - October 4th

- Monday October 3rd from12.30pm VEGAN PICNIC Look for VegSA banner near 'Friends Gate' on Plane Tree Drive, Botanic Park, Adelaide. Bring vegan food and drinks to share, friends, family, seats, other animals. Phone Anne on 83902314 for info or (on the day only) 0422 085 548
- Saturday September 17th Willunga Market visit (a.m.) 12.30pm lunch at The Green Room 2 High St Willunga (Bookings via Southern Social Group or Vegewise contacts - see below). Everyone Welcome.
- ◆ Vegewise Group 3rd Tuesday each month 12 noon (unless otherwise stated) at a vegetrian eatery or one with good veg options. Bookings: Joy 8326 0564 or 0428 832 605. September 20 - Let Them Eat Vegetarian Cafe: 18 Elizabeth Street. Crovdon. October 18 – Real Organics: 46 The Parade, Norwood November 15 - Vegie Village: 255 Waymouth Street, Adelaide
- Northern Vegetarian Group meets 2 or 3 times each quarter Saturday October 29th 12 noon - Carrot Heads: 6B Port Canal Shopping Centre 220 Commercial Rd, Pt Adelaide. Bookings: Karin 8390 2314 / 0466 972 112 by Wed Oct 26th
- VegSA Southern Group monthly social get together: 2nd Saturday of the month from 12 noon, Great Nature 3/48 Beach Rd, Christies Beach, No Booking but check details with Su: 8326 1062 email: vegsu2003@yahoo.com.au

Other Activities

Sunday September 11th - 'Sunday at the TS' 10.30 – 3.30 (310 South Ter): The Life of Food - 11-12 Living Food, 1- 2pm Raw Food and Gratitude, 2.30 – 3.30 Ayurvedic Food 12 – 1pm shared vegetarian lunch. For info phone Theosophical Society 82231129

Sunday October 9th - 3pm (for 3.30pm start) – 5.30pm. Animal Liberation SA: free film 'ARCTIC TALE' (G). Clarke Building, Glandore Community Centre, 23 Naldera St, Glandore. Bookings essential to 8296 3803 or diphilcorn@gmail.com. Refreshments Available.

Sunday December 11th: Same time, same place, 2nd free film, title: 'to be announced' ◆ Sundays 1-4pm Healthy Foodwise Cooking Demos - All vegan. Cost \$10/\$5 Glandore Community Centre, Naldera St, Glandore. bookings essential*. October 16th Plant based eating: easy, healthy and economical. Part of Marion Council's Sustainability "Learning Festival".

November 21st - Christmas Menu delicious new recipes for friends and family to enjoy, while saving as many turkeys as we can. *email: diphilcorn@gmail.com, ph 8296 3803



More diary dates on page 7

Box 311 Kent Town SA 5071 phone 08 8260 2778 info@vegsa.org.au www.vegsa.org VegSA