

# Pros and Cons of Food Choices for Humane Events

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# My Epiphany

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- “I don’t get it....”
- “Did we end up saving lives....”
- We have only one job at an animal welfare organization; to protect animals.

# Con's of Vegan Meals at Humane Events

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- ⦿ Perception that non-meat-based meals means a bowl of carrots and celery
- ⦿ Perception that your organization has become radical
- ⦿ Perception that people will walk out or make loud complaints
- ⦿ Perception that people won't like the food
- ⦿ "My board of directors won't let me create a vegan menu for our event"

# Pro's of Vegan Meals at Humane Events

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- ⦿ No disconnect between the mission of protecting animals and eating lunch
- ⦿ No explaining to people why we're eating one animal in order to raise money to save another
- ⦿ No one has to be a vegan in order to eat a vegan meal!
- ⦿ Even omnivore donors are beginning to expect your meals to be both healthy and humane.

# Our Experience at the Montreal SPCA on this issue

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- All our events are strictly vegan
- We do not lend our name to 3<sup>rd</sup> party fundraising events if meat is served
- We work really hard to make sure the food served is great!
- We say nothing to our guests about our events being vegan. No preaching. We explain when we're asked.
- In the past 5 years, we have had about 6,000 guests at events where food was served. We have had four complaints specifically about not having a meat choice.

# How do we avoid all those complaints?

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- The vegan food we serve really is great. We work hard to ensure that.
- We have no events where food is the focus of the event. No sit-down dinners. Instead, we have buffet's, tappas-style plates, hors d'oeuvres, amuse bouche, etc.
- Free booze. Booze is cheaper, by far, than food.

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# Nervous? Try this....

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- ◉ Have a small wine-tasting reception for 20 or 30 of your better donors/supporters/friends.
- ◉ For food, try high-end vegan finger food from a local chef.
- ◉ Don't mention that the food is vegan at the event. Just let your guests enjoy.
- ◉ Take a poll after the event (Monkey Survey)



# Questions for Our Panel

**Now the fur will fly!!**



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- Under what circumstances should a humane organization unnecessarily cause pain or death to an animal?
    - When it's dinnertime?
    - When we feel that not to cause pain and death would be seen as radical.
    - When we are willing to ignore our mission in order to serve
    - Never.

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- ◉ The five freedoms
  - ◉ Whiskey Experience
  - ◉ Paws for a Cause
  - ◉ Snout and About
  - ◉ Betes de Mode

# Advice

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- ◉ When serving vegan food, make sure it is great!
  - Great chefs like challenges
  - Taste some samples weeks before event
  - Organize a tasting session to make sure it is what you want