



Veganuary 2016

6-Month Survey Results

Project Background

Veganuary is a global campaign that encourages people to try eating a vegan diet for the month of January. Following Veganuary 2016, Faunalytics worked with the Veganuary team to conduct an evaluation of the campaign's impact – the results [can be found here](#). This report summarizes the results of a separate six-month follow-up survey conducted in August 2016 among all Veganuary participants.

In summary, 22,951 people were officially registered for Veganuary 2016, which includes those who signed up on the website and some individuals who were added directly by the Veganuary team. Approximately 5,200 people responded to the survey in February 2016, the results of which are provided in the above-mentioned report and are not repeated here.

For the August 2016 survey, 3,369 people responded in full. The surveys were completed between August 8 and August 26, 2016. The survey was sent to all participants from all years, with multiple reminders for non-respondents. Of the 3,369 people who responded to the August survey, we have registration data for most respondents (3,096) and February 2016 survey data for just under half (1,598).

Please note: this report does not contain the complete project background, the full limitations, or our original suggestions, which can be found in the February 2016 report. It is worth reiterating, however, that the results here are particularly subject to nonresponse bias given that fewer than 15% of all Veganuary participants responded to the August 2016 survey. The results are also subject to social desirability bias, issues with self-reported data, and a host of other caveats.

Summary: 6-Month Survey Findings

- **IMPACT:** Faunalytics estimates that the potential “lifetime” impact of Veganuary has been to spare more than 2.2 million animals. This estimate comes with many caveats and assumes that survey respondents are representative of all 2016 Veganuary participants. While this impact is about 41% lower than the estimate provided in February, it suggests that many people (about 38%) may be continuing to consume a reduced level of animal products compared to before Veganuary.
- **SELF-DESCRIBED DIET:** In the August 2016 survey, the majority of respondents (63%) reported that their current diet is vegan. Any additional 23% said they are currently vegetarian, 8% reported being pescetarian, and only 6% reported being omnivores.
- **ACTUAL DIET:** All participants were provided with a food frequency questionnaire to identify how often they consumed each animal product during the first week of August. We coded the responses and found that 54% of participants actually ate a vegan diet during the week, 26% were vegetarian, 16% were omnivores, and there were just two pescetarians.
- **VEGAN MEALS:** Participants were also asked to estimate what proportion of meals they had eaten during the past *month* were vegan. About half of the survey respondents (49%) reported that all of their meals were vegan, while nearly a fourth (23%) said that 75-99% of their meals were vegan. One in five respondents said that 25-74% of their meals were vegan, while 8% estimated that less than a quarter of their meals in the past 30 days were vegan.
- **INTENDED DIET:** Encouragingly, a large majority of survey respondents (79%) say they intend to eat a vegan diet in the future. This includes continuing vegans, but also an additional 16% who currently eat at least some animal products. Another 10% of survey respondents intend to eat a vegetarian diet in the future, while 3% intend to be pescetarian, 2% intend to be omnivores, and 6% are unsure.
- **BENEFITS:** Three-fourths of respondents (75%) said they have experienced generally better health since their participation in Veganuary, while only 2% experienced generally worse health. More than half of respondents (54%) say they had more energy, while 5% had less energy. Finally, well over a third of respondents (43%) said they lost weight, while 12% said they gained weight since Veganuary. One in five respondents also wrote in other changes they experienced.
- **ACTIVISM:** The vast majority of these Veganuary participants (86%) are involved in some form of animal or vegan advocacy. Since taking part in Veganuary, 20% of respondents report becoming active for the first time. Another 27% say they have become *more* active since participating in Veganuary. At the same time, a plurality of 40% say they are similarly or less involved in advocacy since taking part in Veganuary. The other 14% report not being involved in any advocacy.
- **INSPIRATION:** Underscoring the potential “ripple effects” of a campaign like Veganuary, nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) say they have inspired others to take steps toward a vegan diet. Another 27% say they are unsure and 9% say they have not inspired anyone.

Dietary Changes

As a medium-term indicator of how many people intend to continue with their diets after Veganuary, we timed the second follow-up survey to ask about participants' diets during the first week of August. This is seven months following the start of Veganuary 2016 and six months after our first follow-up survey in February 2016. The August timeframe should give us a reasonable sense of how many people are actually sticking with the dietary changes they made (or intended to make) during Veganuary 2016.

To determine the extent of diet change among participants, we focus on three time periods: diet before Veganuary; diet during the first week of February; and diet during the first week of August. For the participant's diet prior to Veganuary, we are using registration data, but we are missing that information for some respondents. For all other time periods we are using coded FFQ data. It should be noted that fewer than half of August 2016 survey respondents provided data for all three time periods. With those caveats in mind, here is a summary of participants' self-reported diets by phase:

| | Prior to Veganuary (N=20,597) | During January (N=5,195) | First Week of February (N=4,049) | First Week of August (N=3,369) |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Omnivore | 34% | 16% | 15% | 20% |
| Pescetarian | 12% | 9% | 9% | 0% |
| Vegetarian | 34% | 24% | 29% | 26% |
| Vegan | 19% | 51% | 46% | 54% |

As we would expect, the behavior change varies by type of diet. About a third of those who were omnivores (32%) or pescetarians (33%) prior to Veganuary reported eating a vegan diet during the first week in August. Just over half (52%) of those who were previously vegetarian ate a vegan diet in the first week of August. And encouragingly, the vast majority (82%) of those who were vegan prior to Veganuary said they were still vegan during the first week of August (although up to 18% of vegans did appear to lapse during the seven months). These differences are detailed in the table below.

| | | Diet During First Week Of August | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| | | Omnivore | Pescetarian | Vegetarian | Vegan |
| Diet Before Veganuary | Omnivore | 50% | 0% | 19% | 32% |
| | Pescetarian | 45% | 0% | 22% | 33% |
| | Vegetarian | 8% | 0% | 41% | 52% |
| | Vegan | 5% | 0% | 12% | 82% |

We are able to get a more accurate picture of behavior change when we review differences at the individual instead of the group level. The table below summarizes how many people shifted between the various diets from prior to Veganuary to the first week of August. During this time, more than a third (38%) of these respondents made a “positive” change (reduced animal products). By contrast, 13% of respondents reported *increasing* their consumption of animal products. About half of respondents (48%) indicated that their diet did not change from prior to Veganuary to the first week of August.

| Diet Pre-Veganuary Vs. Diet During First Week of August | |
|--|------------|
| "Positive" Changes | 38% |
| Omnivore > Pescetarian | 0% |
| Omnivore > Vegetarian | 4% |
| Omnivore > Vegan | 6% |
| Pescetarian > Vegetarian | 3% |
| Pescetarian > Vegan | 4% |
| Vegetarian > Vegan | 22% |
| "Negative" Changes | 13% |
| Vegan > Omnivore | 1% |
| Vegan > Pescetarian | 0% |
| Vegan > Vegetarian | 3% |
| Vegetarian > Omnivore | 3% |
| Vegetarian > Pescetarian | 0% |
| Pescetarian > Omnivore | 5% |
| No Changes | 48% |
| Omnivore > Omnivore | 10% |
| Pescetarian > Pescetarian | 0% |
| Vegetarian > Vegetarian | 17% |
| Vegan > Vegan | 21% |

If we assume the diets that participants reported for the first week of August are both accurate and sustained (these are big assumptions), then nearly a third of Veganuary participants have become vegan. An additional 7% became vegetarian. If we assume further that these follow-up survey respondents are representative of *all* Veganuary 2016 participants who were not already vegan, then this year’s campaign will have produced 5,316 new vegans and 1,051 new vegetarians (and a handful of new pescetarians).

Estimate of Lives Spared

We estimate the number of animal lives spared over the course of a participant's "lifetime" using the same approach as in our February 2016 report. Again, this estimate is based on a number of assumptions and is therefore subject to a range of important caveats. We assume that participants maintain the level of dietary change they exhibited from pre-Veganuary to the first week of August. The result is an estimate of more than **2.2 million lives spared** over participants' lifetimes, as summarized below.

| "LIFETIME" | % Who Made Transition | Participants Transitioning | Lives Spared During "Lifetime" |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Omnivore > Pescetarian | 0% | 7 | 7,158 |
| Omnivore > Vegetarian | 4% | 867 | 5,744,529 |
| Omnivore > Vegan | 6% | 1,475 | 9,770,608 |
| Pescetarian > Vegetarian | 3% | 586 | 3,313,331 |
| Pescetarian > Vegan | 4% | 875 | 4,949,026 |
| Vegetarian > Vegan | 22% | 4,996 | 0 |
| Vegan > Omnivore | 1% | 319 | -2,111,237 |
| Vegan > Pescetarian | 0% | 0 | 0 |
| Vegan > Vegetarian | 3% | 734 | 0 |
| Vegetarian > Omnivore | 3% | 756 | -5,008,051 |
| Vegetarian > Pescetarian | 0% | 7 | -41,941 |
| Pescetarian > Omnivore | 5% | 1,208 | -1,166,695 |
| Omnivore > Omnivore | 10% | 2,313 | 0 |
| Pescetarian > Pescetarian | 0% | 0 | 0 |
| Vegetarian > Vegetarian | 17% | 3,929 | 0 |
| Vegan > Vegan | 21% | 4,878 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 100% | 22,951 | 15,456,729 |
| Elasticity Adjusted (50%) | | | 7,728,364 |
| 16% maintain changes for "lifetime" | | | 1,236,538 |
| 84% maintain changes for 7 years | | | 1,032,791 |
| TOTAL | | | 2,269,329 |

Additional Conclusions

Please see the original report for Faunalytics' full conclusions and recommendations from the February 2016 survey. Those conclusions still apply after reviewing the latest round of results. Following are a few additional conclusions based solely on the August survey results.

- **DECLINING IMPACT:** As we would expect, the dietary changes that persisted in the first week of February had partly eroded by August 2016. Specifically, the proportion of participants making “positive” changes dropped from 50% to 38%. The number of new vegans declined from 38% to 32%. The overall estimated impact in terms of lives saved declined from 3.8 million to 2.2 million animals. This suggests that *most* of the impact we saw in February is persisting in August, but we would expect the impact to decline further as more people lapse from the changes they made.
- **ACTIVISM:** There is strong (self-reported) evidence that Veganuary is influential in creating new animal advocates. Nearly half (46%) of participants say they became *newly* active or became *more* active since participating in Veganuary. If this were true of all Veganuary participants (though it almost certainly is not), then Veganuary would have created about 4,000 new animal advocates and encouraged many others to become more active than they were before Veganuary.
- **RIPPLE EFFECTS.** There are many reasons to think that the estimate of 2.2 million lives spared may be an overstatement. One reason this number may actually be *understated*, however, is that Veganuary participants are also influencing others. An incredible 63% of Veganuary participants say they have inspired people to take steps toward veganism since Veganuary. Many of these people were likely already animal advocates, but the Veganuary campaign appears to be providing both inspiration and resources to help people influence others to make a change.