

## NOTE FROM THE COORDINATORS

### DO THE BEST YOU CAN



In this issue of *Vegetarian Journal* (page 25) we report on vegan and vegetarian items served in restaurant chains. Staff members Davida Gypsy Breier and Sarah Blum spent scores of hours contacting businesses. We have done this project continuously since 1985.

This year several consumer advisors gave us more complete answers than before. We believe this is because of all the follow-up questions we've asked in the past. But interestingly, more and more chains are telling us that they serve nothing vegetarian. We hypothesize that this is due to the actions of some vegetarians who have screamed at the fast food chains or even went so far as to sue them. Unfortunately, some restaurants, rather than boasting about the vegetarian alternatives they have, and thus increasing demand, are more in a defensive mode. We think the approach of many people quickly attacking a company for what they're not doing, rather than giving assistance and encouragement for what they *are* doing, can be counterproductive at times. Think through your strategies. Sometimes protest is called for, and at other times encouragement is the right approach, especially when the chain is making an effort to offer veggie options.

A reader asked us about GrapeNuts Cereal being okay for vegans. In the past, we were told that all the vitamins in their cereal were synthetic and not of animal origin. However, the person contacting us received this reply from Post: "... Also, none of the Post Cereals are [sic] suitable for Vegetarians. Since many of the ingredients often change and come from outside suppliers we're unable to provide the exact ingredients in our products. This information is proprietary." It's too bad that Post feels that in order to protect themselves, they have to say that none of their products are suitable for vegetarians. Consumers should understand that all companies, including natural foods companies, are in the same situation as Post. Ingredients come from outside suppliers and often do change without prior warning.

Reed Mangels reports in our e-mail newsletter (<[www.vrg.org/vrgnews](http://www.vrg.org/vrgnews)>) that the vitamin D source of GrapeNuts cereal currently is from oily wool. Vegans may choose not to use GrapeNuts, but technically this would still be a vegetarian source (though not vegan). Determining the exact sources of ingredients often gets very complicated. If you look at our booklet, "Food Ingredients Guide to Over 250 Ingredients" (available in our publications list, page 34), you'll see that there are many sources of items and many issues. Though this is of concern to vegetarians, this type of list should be used to move forward, and not to discourage people from being vegetarian. We should all do the best we can. Most fruits and vegetables today are probably grown with an animal source fertilizer, including organic products. And insects will be killed, even if without pesticides. So very little is "truly" 100% vegan. This information should be used not to say you can't live ethically, but to do the best you can. Just because a ballplayer doesn't hit a home run everytime, that doesn't mean s/he shouldn't play baseball. S/he hits the balls if s/he can. If s/he hits one out of three, s/he may be considered a great player.

By sharing information and support, let's hope you and The Vegetarian Resource Group can work together towards a more vegetarian world.

Debra Wasserman and Charles Stahler

*Debra Wasserman* *Charles Stahler*  
Coordinators of The Vegetarian Resource Group

EXHIBIT G-2