

The main difficulties for vegetarians to become vegans: a study with brazilian consumers

As principais dificuldades para vegetarianos se tornarem veganos: um estudo com o consumidor brasileiro

Carolina Andrade Queiroz¹
Debora Fernanda Gonsalves Soliguetti¹
Sérgio Luiz do Amaral Moretti²

¹ Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, Curso de Marketing. São Paulo, SP, Brasil.

² Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, Programa de Pós-graduação em Hospitalidade. São Paulo, SP, Brasil.

Correspondence
Sérgio Luiz do Amaral Moretti
E-mail: sergiomorette@uol.com.br

Abstract

Vegetarianism and veganism are much more than simple diets. They are a philosophy of life that, through eating, proposes questions and changes of attitudes about normally accepted standards. In spite of its importance, the theme has been neglected and publications available in Portuguese are rare. In order to fill this gap, this article seeks to investigate vegan activism and to understand the real motivations for adherence and, especially, the difficulties vegetarians face in becoming vegans. To meet this purpose, a survey was carried out with vegetarians and supporters. The bibliographical research has characterized the types of vegetarian diet and the main motivations for vegans to maintain thisway of life, considering materials, such as articles, reports, books and documentaries that defend animal rights, sentience and respect for species. The results of the research indicate that there is a desire on the part of the public related to vegetarianism/veganism to broaden their diet. The barriers to this decision are indicated as: high prices, restricted distribution and lack of product and brand options.

Keywords: Veganism. Vegetarianism. Healthy eating. Animal rights. Change of life.

Resumo

O vegetarianismo e veganismo são muito mais do que simples regimes alimentares. Trata-se de uma filosofia de vida que, por meio da alimentação, propõe questionamentos e mudanças de atitudes sobre padrões normalmente aceitos. A despeito de sua importância, o tema tem sido negligenciado, sendo raras as publicações disponíveis em português. Com o intuito de preencher esta lacuna, o presente artigo buscou investigar o ativismo vegano e compreender as reais motivações de adesão e, principalmente, as dificuldades que os vegetarianos enfrentam para se tornarem veganos. Para atender a este propósito, foi aplicado um *survey* junto a usuários vegetarianos e simpatizantes. A pesquisa bibliográfica caracterizou as vertentes do regime alimentar vegetariano e as principais motivações para que veganos mantenham tal modo de vida, considerando materiais, como artigos, reportagens, livros e documentários que defendem os direitos dos animais, a senciência e o respeito às espécies. Os resultados da pesquisa indicam que existe, por parte do público relacionado com o vegetarianismo/veganismo, o desejo de ampliar sua dieta. As barreiras para essa decisão são apontadas: preço elevado, distribuição restrita e falta de opções de produtos e marcas.

Palavras-chave: Veganismo. Vegetarianismo. Alimentação saudável. Direito dos animais. Mudança de vida.

Introduction

Vegetarianism is a diet that excludes all types of meat and animal products, seeking to call attention to the ethical, religious, environmental and social implications of this act. Being a vegetarian does not mean eating exclusively vegetables. Winckler¹ shows us that this term has its root of the Latin *vegetus*, which means strong, vigorous, healthy, not a supposed plant-based diet.

The Sociedade Brasileira Vegetariana (SBV - Brazilian Vegetarian Society)² - which in 2016 completed thirteen years working with the promotion and awareness of vegetarianism through campaigns, agreements, events, research, education and political activities - classifies the vegetarian diet in four types: “(a) Ovolactovegetarianismo: consome leite, laticínios e ovos; (b) Lactovegetarianismo: consome leite e laticínios; (c) Ovovegetarianismo: consome ovos; (d) Vegetarianismo estrito: não consome produtos de origem animal” (SVB, 2016, p. 2).

Among the four modalities above, SBV indicates strict vegetarianism, a practice that completely excludes all animal products from the diet. The strict vegetarian diet includes a subdivision which,

guided primarily by ethics, will exclude from the vegetarian's life any form of torture or animal exploitation - called veganism.

Vegan consumers may be defined as having ethical motivations, they do not consume any animal product in any scope of their lives, be it food, clothing or any other type of activity that involves animal suffering. Veganism should be understood more as a stance in the political field and less as a diet.³ Thus, one may comprehend that the food practice is "... o que se planta, se compra, o que se come, como se come, onde se come, com quem se come, em que frequência, em que horário, em que combinação, tudo isso conjugado como parte integrante das práticas sociais".⁴

Thus, it is proposed that vegetarianism is much more than a simple diet. It is a philosophy of life, that in eating indicates some questioning and attitude changes.

One of the motivations for the vegetarian diet and the philosophy of vegan life is respect for animal rights, since they are sentient beings.^{5,6} According to Luna,⁷ *sentience is the capacity to feel, to be aware of oneself or only of the environment which surrounds it*. Today, it is scientifically proven that at least vertebrate animals have this ability: "senciência provavelmente existe em diferentes graus de complexidade nas diferentes espécies animais e, desta forma, não é uma questão de sim ou não".⁷

A evidência de que os animais sentem dor se confirma pelo fato que estes evitam ou tentam escapar de um estímulo doloroso e quando apresentam limitação de capacidade física pela presença de dor, esta é eliminada ou melhorada com o uso de analgésicos. Para muitos filósofos, a sentiência fornece ao animal um valor moral intrínseco, dado que há interesses que emanam destes sentimentos.⁷

Sentience changes the way animals are understood, avoiding causing pain and suffering to them. For followers of these values, animals are able to take care of themselves, to decide what is best for them. Hence, they should not be used to satisfy human interests.

Walker,⁸ a writer, activist and feminist, stated that "os animais do mundo existem por suas próprias razões. Não foram feitos para os seres humanos, do mesmo modo que os negros não foram feitos para os brancos, nem as mulheres para os homens". In other words, animal exploitation is seen as any other, hence the adherents of this lifestyle are kept engaged in order that any exploratory practice is extinguished.

The concept that our food should be our medicine and our medicine should be our food, brought by Hippocrates, applies when we understand that eating is not only the act of ingesting what will be necessary for our survival, however, it is a social act that involves choices, motivations.

Não comemos apenas quantidades de nutrientes e calorias para manter o funcionamento corporal em nível adequado, pois há muito tempo os antropólogos afirmam que o comer envolve seleção, escolhas, ocasiões e rituais, imbrica-se com a sociabilidade, com ideias e significados, com as interpretações de experiências e situações. Para serem comidos ou comestíveis, os alimentos precisam ser elegíveis, preferidos, selecionados e preparados ou processados pela culinária, e tudo isso é matéria cultural.⁹

This article seeks to investigate vegan activism, understand the real motivations for adherence, and especially the difficulties vegetarians face in becoming vegans. The question that guides this research is: What are the main difficulties found by Brazilian vegetarians to broaden the consumption of vegan products?

We start from some propositions and abundant theoretical references, with several authors who defend animal rights and equality, as Singer,¹⁰ who compares equality between men and women to equality between human and non-human animals: “O princípio da igualdade dos seres humanos não é a descrição de uma suposta igualdade de fato existente entre seres humanos: é a prescrição de como devemos tratar seres humanos”.¹⁰

Singer¹⁰ argues that animals should not be treated as humans, however, we must maintain their dignity and freedom, since despite not having a neurological system as complex as ours, they experience suffering, pain and joy. Along the same lines follows Francione,¹¹ for whom animal rights are compared to those of humans, and preaches an “abolitionism” on the current state of servitude in which they live.

The initial proposition is that because of the difficult access and high prices of products that do not contain any animal origin, vegetarians have difficulty integrating the vegan social group. The second one is that among the adherents of the various types of vegetarianism, many are due to health problems or the choice of a healthy diet, not the commitment to the defense of animals.

The study begins with a characterization of all types of vegetarian diet and the vegan way of life, considering some authors who defend animal rights, sentience and respect for species, a quantitative research among vegetarian consumers and the discussion of results, closing the article with the final considerations.

Vegetarianism

Because of the existing divisions of the vegetarian diet - strict vegetarians, ovo-lacto vegetarians, ovo vegetarians and lacto vegetarians - some differences must be taken into account, since the motivations may vary according to each orientation.

Strict vegetarians are concerned only with animals, therefore, they do not consume any type of chicken, fish, processed meats - such as salami, sausage, ham and mortadella - and seafood. Motivated by respect for animal rights, based on sentience, they seek the non-exploitation of animals in any type of food preparation. Their main motivations are very similar to those of the vegans.

There are also ovo-lacto vegetarians, whose basic premise is to maintain a diet without the consumption of meat from any animal, however, they consume dairy products and eggs. The website Farofa-la¹² indicates that this public understands that “os animais não tiveram que ser

sacrificados para fornecer esses dois tipos de alimentos”. That is why milk, eggs and their derivatives are consumed normally.

Ovo vegetarians are those who include in their menu only eggs, excluding dairy products and lacto vegetarians include only dairy products. Thus, “os adeptos do lactovegetarianismo alimentam-se de produtos de origem vegetal (como cereais, verduras e leguminosas, aceitando o consumo de leite de mamíferos e de seus derivados: manteiga, queijo, iogurte, etc.), além do mel”.¹³

Furthermore, in these two groups, in addition to reasons related to animal rights, there are also religious and health reasons. In Hindu religions, in which cows are sacred, their meat and its derivatives can not be consumed under no circumstances. For followers of Hare Krishna - a branch of Hindu culture - “a adesão ao vegetarianismo os leva de volta às origens da criação, quando os seres humanos não tinham em seu cardápio os alimentos de origem animal e ainda conservavam a pureza de viver em paz com a natureza”.¹⁴

For them, respect for animals and living in harmony with all species are their motivations to maintain a diet considered lacto vegetarian, since the consumption of milk and its derivatives in this case is accepted. In addition, some health problems, such as phenylketonuria, may be avoided. According to Fleury medical advice, it is a disease genetically determined by the decrease in the activity of an enzyme that is present in foods that are sources of proteins, such as milk, cheese, meat and eggs.

In this case, it is important to emphasize that the motivations of this audience are unrelated to animal defenses, however, they remain a part of this group.

Table 1 presents some of the characteristics.

Table 1. Food consumption according to the modalities of vegetarianism.

Diet	Consumption of meat	Consumption of dairy	Consumption of eggs
Ovo-lacto vegetarian	No	Yes	Yes
Lacto vegetarian	No	Yes	No
Ovo vegetarian	No	No	Yes
Strict vegetarianism	No	No	No

Source: Research Data, 2017.

Veganism

From the factors that motivate people to become vegans, it is possible to highlight: ethics; change of habits because of health; and concern for the environment. Regarding ethics, it is taken into account that the consumption of certain goods and foods is responsible for the demand that favors animal exploitation. For vegans, treating an animal as a raw material for human well-being constitutes a cruel and selfish attitude, “para as pessoas que se declaram veganos, há uma problemática ética no consumo de todos os produtos que envolvem o abate, a tortura e os maus tratos aos animais”.¹⁵

Documentaries such as “A carne é fraca” (The flesh is weak) of the Nina Rosa Institute, and the most recent research conducted by the NGO Repórter Brasil, on the meat supply farms for the Friboi brand, from the group José Batista Sobrinho (JBS), it is possible to see crowded pens, aggression, branding on the face, use of the electric shock sticks in cattle and calves.¹⁶ These are considered shocking denunciations by a group of people who, from then on, consider changing their habits.

Thus, veganism gains more and more adepts, because the images awaken awareness and activate their moral conduct in society. Some studies, such as the ones conducted by Naoe¹⁷ and Menezes Filho,¹⁸ have sought to establish a bridge between animal rights activism and public policies. Both studies have a strong ethical argument for the movement, both public and social. For Cunha,¹⁹ ethics is the most effective motivation because “há probabilidade maior de alguém abandonar o veganismo se este for aderido por outros motivos que não a ética”.

The second factor highlighted is the change in eating habits by people who believe that the strict diet will be healthier for the body. We know that vegans exclude from their diet foods derived from animals, such as meat, dairy products and eggs, avoiding also processed products and opting for natural foods such as fruits, vegetables and legumes. Due to the choice and selection of foods, “as dietas vegetarianas oferecem o benefício da proteção contra doenças, devido a seu baixo conteúdo de gordura saturada, colesterol e proteína animal [...]” (ADA, apud SBV ²⁰).

Recent studies show that people who restrict their meat and dairy diet are less likely to contract certain diseases. Nutritionist George Guimarães points out that the vegetarian diet, because it is more balanced regarding nutrients and rich in fruits, vegetables and fiber, is related to the prevention of type 2 diabetes, obesity and cancers. For the researcher, “à medida que as pessoas se alimentam de alimentos mais ricos (carnes, ovos, laticínios, produtos refinados, óleos e gorduras isolados), elas passam a sofrer das doenças de excesso, que além do diabetes e da obesidade, é o caso também das doenças cardiovasculares e do câncer”.²¹

The third main motivation is the concern about the effects that the animal industry may have on the environment. It is believed that the consumption of meat contributes to the devastation of forests. In 2013, the Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA - Institute for Applied Economic Research) published the study “Caracterização e Análise da Dinâmica Agropecuária na Amazônia Brasileira” (Characterization and Analysis of Agricultural Dynamics in the Brazilian Amazon), with data from the 2006 Census of Agriculture. This study found that due to the increase of 35.6 million to 56.7 million of the cattle herd in the region, the area devastated to make pasture grew 27%, equivalent to 9.12 million hectares in the period of 1995 and 2006.²²

Thus, the environment is affected without considering its effects for the rest of the economic and social activities. According to Fragoso,²³ “para que a produção de produtos de origem animal seja garantida, uma quantidade imensa de florestas e de outros ecossistemas importantes acaba sendo destruída, para serem convertidos em pastagens”.

Tendency of demand and supply of natural foods and products

In his research, Nunes¹³ identified a profile of vegetarians and vegans in the metropolitan region of São Paulo. While activism in both cases has increased dramatically in recent years, the data are still quite symbolic. The South Zone concentrates the majority of the activists, with 20%, followed by the North and West Zones, with 18% each. The East Zone has 11% and the Central one reached 9%; the other metropolitan areas totaled 20%.

An important datum of the research conducted by Nunes¹³ was that 70% of activists are women, with a mean age of 29 years. From the total sample, 38% declared themselves religious and 63% had higher education (42%) or a higher degree (21%). The majority are ovo-lacto vegetarians, with 56%; lacto vegetarians are 13%; and the reportedly vegan reached 29%. The reason for becoming vegetarians was respect for animals, with 62% of the options of choice.

These results show a qualified profile in terms of higher education, female homogeneity, mean age less than 30 years and religious option lower than the national mean. It should be noted that the profile found was rather similar to the one found by Rodrigues,²⁴ especially regarding the reasons related to ethical posture and consumption habits.

There are no concrete studies that report the demand for vegan products. Nevertheless, the Global Foods Trends Report of 2016 concluded that consumers in emerging countries will also prioritize products without animal raw materials: “Hambúrgueres vegetarianos e leites vegetais ultrapassaram o reino dos substitutos, principalmente para pessoas que se preocupam com a dieta e para aquelas que seguem uma dieta vegetariana”.²⁵

Brasil Food Trends 2020, a study carried out by the Federação das Indústrias do Estado de São Paulo (FIESP - Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo), the São Paulo State Government and the Instituto de Tecnologia de Alimentos (ITAL - Food Technology Institute), points to the upper class as the one which has a greater knowledge about the benefits and harms of the ingredients. However, for the middle class, price becomes an important aspect in choosing what to purchase.²⁶

In the same study are stated the increase of the concern of Brazilians with nutrition and the tendency of consuming more natural and healthy products. The survey points out that more informed and knowledgeable consumers tend to demand food that brings additional health benefits, quality seals, information on the origin of food and manufacturers that protect the environment or are part of social projects.²⁷

With the growing demand for healthy and low environmental impact products, vegan products became more attractive in the eyes of the consumer, for they contemplate the characteristics and values perceived by them. According to the Sociedade Brasileira Vegetariana (Brazilian Vegetarian Society), more than 200 products from about 25 different brands are certified by the Vegan Seal:

Considera-se PRODUTO VEGANO aquele que não contém em sua composição nenhum ingrediente de origem animal e durante cujo desenvolvimento (e durante o desenvolvimento de insumos usados para a fabricação do produto) nenhum animal foi usado em qualquer teste ou experimentação. (SBV ²⁸)

Despite the increased interest, vegan products are still considered expensive by the consumer market. For Fábio Chaves, founder and info-activist of Vista-se, Brazil's largest vegan portal, vegan products are expensive because they are produced on smaller scales and because many of them have organic ingredients in their composition.²⁹

The cost of the organic production chain is what justifies higher prices than conventional, non-organic products. According to the Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento (MAPA - Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply), there is a high percentage of losses due to transport and storage, as well as the lack of investments in research and innovations that may contribute to the productivity of the sector. The producer also has a higher cost with fertilization, due to the high volume used in exchange for pesticides. The required organic certification also contributes to increase the cost.

According to the agronomist Sebastião Wilson Tivelli,³⁰ plantations take longer to mature due to the disuse of fertilizers and pesticides, and the producer has to reserve a non-production strip in the perimeter of his property to guarantee the quality of his organic production, to avoid diseases and pests. These factors also contribute to the smaller scale of production and increase of the final price.

Methodology

This article seeks to investigate vegan activism and to understand the real motivations for adherence, especially the difficulties vegetarians face in becoming vegans.

To meet this purpose, an exploratory research of basic nature with a quantitative approach and a descriptive-exploratory objective was planned.³¹ The descriptive-exploratory research seeks to describe phenomena or to establish relations among variables, with the collection of data through questionnaires that may offer a description of the situation.³²

The research with a quantitative approach seeks to present a more accurate view of reality, types of products purchased and consumer behavior. Therefore, this approach uses structured questionnaires that allow to obtain perceptions of the consumers through numerical data. In fact, these surveys

[...] descrevem a complexidade de determinado problema, sendo necessário compreender e classificar os processos dinâmicos vividos nos grupos, contribuir no processo de mudança, possibilitando o entendimento das mais variadas particularidades dos indivíduos (Diehl, apud Dalfovo et al.³³)

The data collection was performed using a semi-structured instrument developed specifically for this purpose. The topics of the questionnaire were elaborated from the research carried out in the literature on the subject. The sample consisted of users of a vegetarian and vegan community on Facebook. In this network, the concentration of active vegetarians shows a participatory profile and an information diffuser regarding strict diets. The subjects of the research were invited to fill out the questionnaire hosted in GoogleForms, through an invitation made on the authors' social networks and on Facebook. The collection was carried out in the period of 06 and 07 of March, 2017.

Analysis and Discussion of Results

The sample resulted in 419 responses of individuals living in São Paulo (the capital city and the State) and out of the State, with a predominance of people interested or practicing some vegetarian or vegan diet. From the total of the sample, only 9% did not consider themselves as belonging to any of the options offered, according to table 2.

Table 2. Eating options of the sample. 2017.

You consider yourself	Sample	Percentage
Ovo-lacto vegetarian	156	37%
Vegan	112	27%
Vegetarian	86	20%
I do not consider myself any of the options	37	9%
Lacto vegetarian	17	4%
Ovo vegetarian	12	3%

Source: Research Data, 2017.

The study also showed a very strong female presence, with 366 respondents, representing 87% of the sample, and also a quite young public, in which 53% are between 18 and 25 years old and 30% between 26 and 35 years old. The level of education also points to a predominance of respondents who are attending or have already completed higher education. It is also possible to highlight postgraduates. The demographic data obtained are in line with the ones from Nunes,¹³ presented previously. Tables 2, 3 and 4 better demonstrate these data.

Table 3. Classification by genre. 2017.

Classification	Sample	Percentage
Female	366	87%
Male	48	12%
I prefer not to say	5	1%
Grand Total	419	100%

Source: Research Data, 2017.

Table 4. Classification by Age Range. 2017.

Age range	Sample	Percentage
26 to 35 years old	125	30%
36 to 45 years old	45	11%
46 to 55 years old	21	5%
56 years old or more	4	1%
Between 18 and 25 years old	224	53%
Total	419	100%

Source: Research Data, 2017.

Table 5. Classification by level of education. 2017.

Level of education	Sample	Percentage
Elementary school	2	0%
Complete High School	77	18%
Incomplete High School	7	2%
Complete Higher Education	96	23%
Incomplete Higher Education	157	37%
Postgraduate	80	19%
Total	419	100%

Source: Research Data, 2017.

Regarding the consumption habits of the respondents, there was the transition among vegan products, including those who do not classify as practitioners of any vegetarian / vegan diet or restriction, according to table 5. There seems to be a positive attitude towards veganism and, to some extent, some openness to this lifestyle, which will be confirmed at the end of the study, when respondents were asked whether they would be interested in becoming vegans, with a positive response from 94% of this public.

Table 6. Classification of the sample by eating habits. 2017.

Do you consume vegan foods:	Sample	Percentage
Yes	392	94%
Lacto vegetarian	17	4%
I do not consider myself any of the options	33	8%
Ovo-lacto vegetarian	144	37%
Ovo vegetarian	10	3%
Vegan	110	28%
Vegetarian	78	20%
No	27	6%
I do not consider myself any of the options	4	15%
Ovo-lacto vegetarian	12	45%
Ovo vegetarian	2	7%
Vegan	2	7%
Vegetarian	7	26%
Total	419	100%

Source: Research Data, 2017.

Furthermore, in this research, we asked about the motivations to adopt this lifestyle and/or diet, with the possibility of selecting more than one option. The main motivation was rather consensual: among 214 people who followed a vegan or vegetarian diet, 53% pointed to “respect for animal rights” as the most significant motivator for such a change in life to occur.

For 367 people, i.e., 90% of the answers, this option was indicated as their motivator, along with other variables such as “quality of life” and “health”. Figure 1 shows the results.

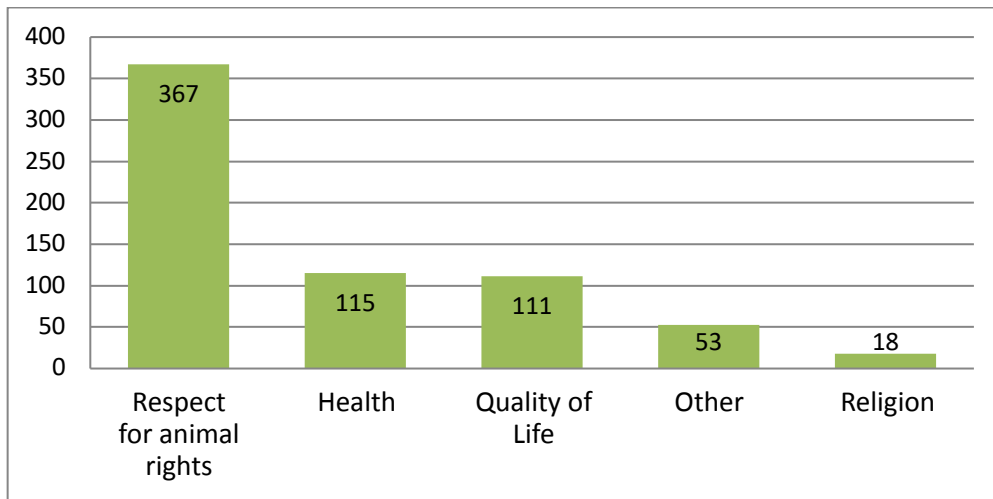


Figure 1. Motivations to adopt the diet

Source: Research Data, 2017.

After identifying the public of vegetarians and sympathizers, we sought to understand and analyze the current difficulties and barriers encountered for the adoption and more frequent practice of veganism. One of the results of the research that stood out indicates that consumption of non-vegan foods and products is also common among 89% (375) of the respondents, including among vegans, according to table 7.

Table 7. Consumption besides the diet, classification of the sample. 2017.

Consumption of non-vegans	Sample	Percentage
Lacto vegetarian	14	4%
I do not consider myself any of the options	32	9%
Ovo-lacto vegetarian	146	39%
Ovo vegetarian	8	2%
Vegan	99	26%
Vegetarian	76	20%
Total	375	100%

Source: Research Data, 2017.

In order to understand the consumption behavior that escapes the lifestyle and diet already adopted by this public, the reasons for consumption of non-vegan foods and products were questioned through an open question, giving space to the respondents to express their feelings, fears or impediments. The answers focused on three aspects:

1. Restricted distribution of vegan items as opposed to a broad access and ease of finding traditional ones, impacting on perceived convenience: *“it’s harder to find them near home, close to work, I don’t have time to look for them...”*
2. The offering of few options of vegan products and brands in contrast to the wide range of traditional ones, especially when eating outside the home.
3. High prices of vegan items, which added to the two previous aspects fatally compromises a more frequent consumption.

It is also worth noting the resentment of some respondents, who point out the lack of family support and a more restricted social contact, as it may be observed in the highlights of the parts of sentences collected from the open questions:

My family doesn’t accept (veganism)... they think it’s very radical... that it complicates my daily routine.
(I consume non-vegan products)... because I don’t want to seem annoying in social gatherings...

The main foods consumed by this public with some component of animal origin are milk derivatives, sweets such as cakes, ice cream and chocolate. In addition, other items cited were cosmetics, toiletries, cleaning products or drugs tested on animals. Here are some statements that illustrate these perceptions:

Any product that has no animal meat of any kind, but which had eggs or milk and derivatives in its production. Because it’s difficult to find products in our routine that don’t use at least one of these ingredients.
Butter, milk, cheese and processed products containing eggs and other ingredients of animal origin.
It’s very difficult to consume absolutely nothing that exploits animals in the society we live in, because the supermarkets where we buy our vegetables also sell meat. Cleaning products that aren’t tested on animals are also quite difficult to find.
Deodorant, oral hygiene products, etc. Because there isn’t any economically accessible vegan option.

To deepen the understanding of these issues, we asked the sample to indicate which are the main impediment to consume or consume more frequently vegan items. With six options of potential impediments, in a multiple choice question, 281 people - more than 60% - pointed to

high prices as the main barrier, followed by the variable “few options on the market”. Figure 2 shows the results.

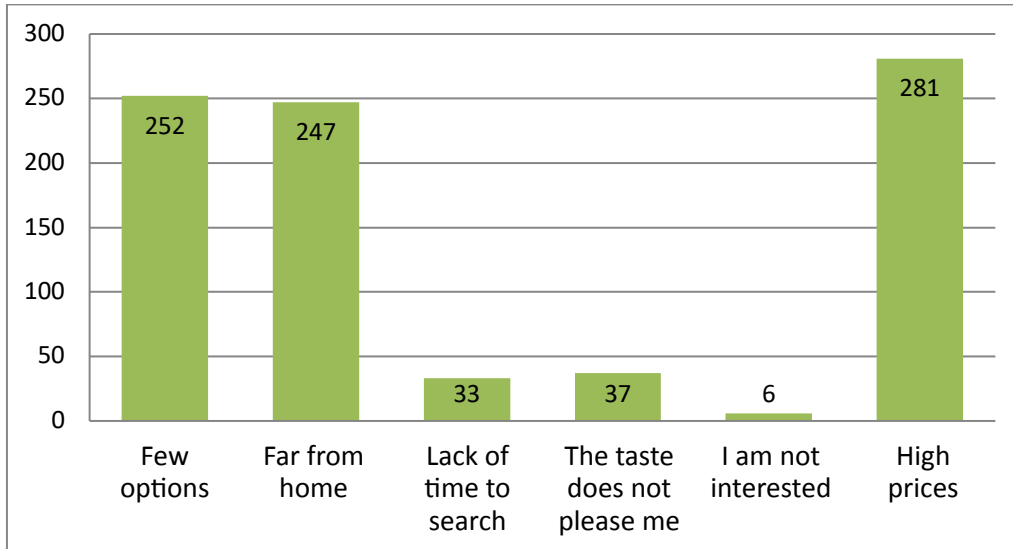


Figure 2. Reasons why you do not broaden your diet

Source: Research Data, 2017.

It is possible, then, to understand that although there is a public interested in this diet, with a desire to maintain this lifestyle, and that people are already consuming what they can find, the market still suffers from a deficiency of products and consequent restrictive prices.

The next datum found in the research shows that the main places where this public purchases their vegan foods are conventional supermarkets and stores of natural and organic products, according to figure 3.

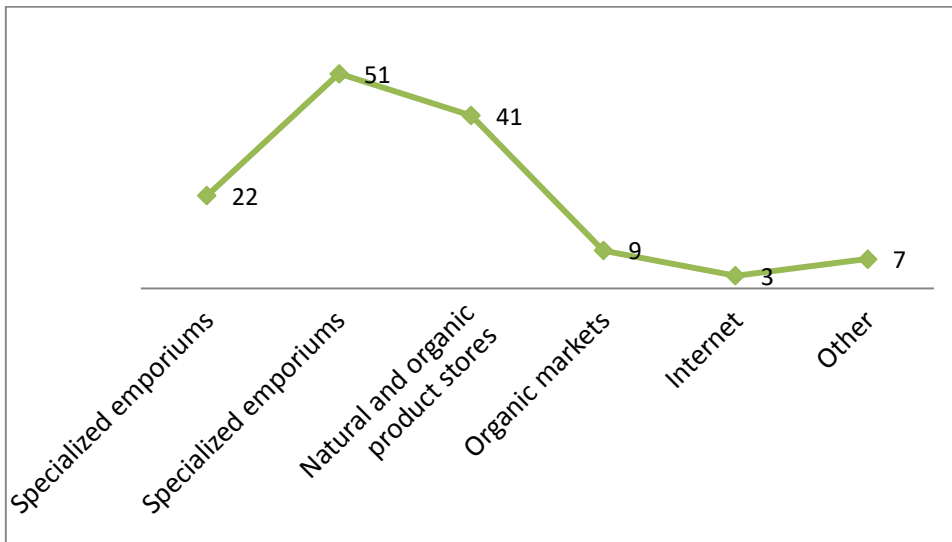


Figure 3. Places to purchase products of the diet

Source: Research Data, 2017.

Finally, when questioning all non-vegans whether they would like to become one, 94% of the sample stated they would like to or they are trying to become vegans, as figure 4 shows.

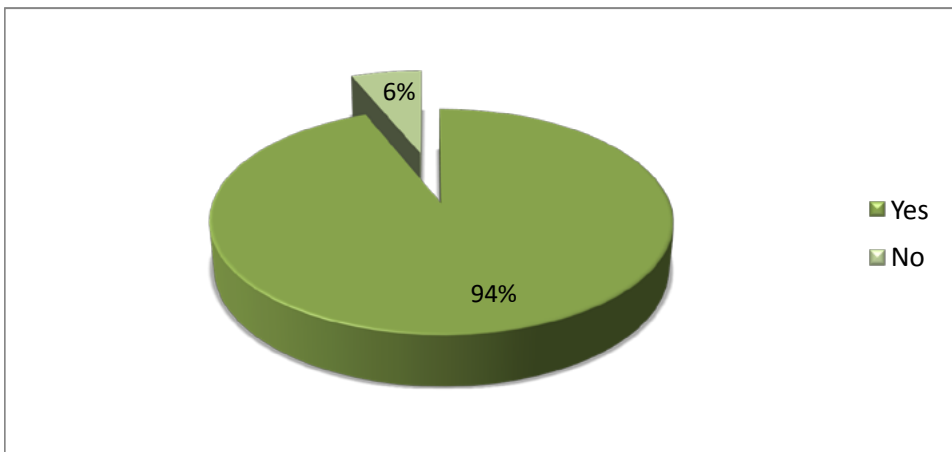


Figure 4. Desire to become a vegan.

Source: Research Data, 2017.

The opportunities for companies that want to enter or expand their participation in the vegan market are clear as long as they meet expectations and break down the barriers identified in this study.

Final considerations

This article sought to understand the public with an interest in the vegan lifestyle and the difficulties faced in trying to become a vegan. According to the analyses performed, it is possible to comprehend that, although there is a public interested in this diet, with a desire to maintain this lifestyle and that already consumes what they can find, the market still suffers from a deficiency of products and consequent restrictive prices.

According to the analyses carried out, two main propositions were considered for the number of vegans in the country not being as high as the number of vegetarians. The initial proposition was that because of the difficult access and high prices of products that are not from animal origin, vegetarians have difficulty integrating and transitioning more frequently into veganism.

The second one was that, from the types of vegetarianism, many of the adepts are present because of health problems or because of a choice of healthy eating, and not because of an engagement in animal protection.

After the research, the initial proposition may be confirmed because the study indicates the perception of high prices of vegan products as an important inhibitor of consumption, conjunctly with the perception of restricted supply, or rather, few product and brand options offered in the market. On the other hand, the second proposition was refuted, since respect for animal rights was extremely relevant and only 14% indicated health or religion as motivators for adopting a vegetarian diet.

It is possible to consider that the vegan market presents growth potential in our country. The public is willing to change their habits and to continue with their militancy for animal rights.

The main contribution of the article, both in the academic and in the managerial scopes, was to provide a preliminary understanding on the characteristics of vegan and vegetarian consumers, and what they expect from producers and retailers, namely: proximity/ expansion of supply and everyday access, as well as the diversification of vegan products and brands. It is an engaged public and who wants the growth of small producers for them to have more options of choice.

We hope that the study will stimulate further research in the field of veganism and broaden the knowledge about this important aspect of our social life.

Contributors

Queiroz CA, Soliguetti DFG and Moretti SLA worked in all stages, from the conception of the study to the revision of the final version of the article.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Winckler M. Vegetarianismo: elementos para uma conversa sobre. Rio de Janeiro: Quinze; 1997.
2. Sociedade Brasileira Vegetariana. Vegetarianismo [Internet]. [acesso em: 22 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://www.svb.org.br/vegetarianismo1>
3. Chaves F. Tipos de vegetarianos: entenda as principais diferenças entre os grupos de vegetarianos. Vista-se [Internet]. 02 out. 2012 [acesso em: 21 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <https://vista-se.com.br/tipos-de-vegetarianos-entenda-as-principais-diferencas-entre-os-grupos-de-vegetarianos>
4. Rotenberg S, Vargas S. Práticas alimentares e o cuidado da saúde: da alimentação da criança à alimentação da família. Rev. Bras. Saúde Matern. Infant. 2004; 4(1):85-94.
5. Dicionário Online de Português [Internet]. [acesso em: 27 nov. 2016]. Disponível em: <https://www.dicio.com.br/sencientes>
6. Molento CFM. Senciência animal. Curitiba: Universidade Federal do Paraná. 2005. 9 p.
7. Luna SPL. Dor, senciência e bem-estar em animais - senciência e dor. Ciência veterinária nos trópicos. Ciênc. Vet. Tróp. 2008; 11(Supl. 1):17-21.
8. Walker A. The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. Vegetarian Times. jul. 1989; (143):68.
9. Canesqui AM, Garcia RW. organizadores. Antropologia e nutrição: um diálogo saudável. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Fiocruz; 2005.
10. Singer P. Libertação animal. São Paulo: Martins Fontes; 2010.
11. Francione GL. Animals as persons. Columbia University Press; 2009.
12. Farofa-la. Você sabe a diferença entre veganos, frugíveros, vegetarianos e ovolactovegetarianos? Aum Magic [Internet] 27 ago. 2016. [acesso em: 15 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://aumagic.blogspot.com/2016/08/vegano-e-vegetariano-quais-as-diferencas.html>
13. Nunes ELM. Vegetarianismo além da dieta: ativismo vegano em são Paulo [dissertação]. São Paulo: Programa de Pós-graduação em Ciências Sociais da Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo; 2010.
14. Religiões adotam restrições alimentares como forma de cultuar Deus. Tribuna do Norte [Internet] 09 nov. 2008. [acesso 22 abr. 2017]. Disponível em: <http://www.tribunadonorte.com.br/noticia/religoes-adotam-restricoes-alimentares-como-forma-de-cultuar-deus/92407>
15. Brun L. Ética pelo direito animal e uma filosofia de vida. Revista Mix [Internet] 22 fev. 2014. [acesso em: 19 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <https://diariosm.com.br/cultura/%C3%A9tica-pelo-direito-animal-e-uma-filosofia-de-vida-1.2031320>

16. Locatelli P. Choques, socos e pauladas: a vida do gado que vira bife na JBS. Repórter Brasil [Internet] 05 set. 2016. [acesso em: 11 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://reporterbrasil.org.br/2016/09/choques-socos-e-pauladas-a-vida-do-gado-que-vira-bife-na-jbs/>
17. Naoe A. Novos conhecimentos e movimentos sociais questionam os usos dos animais. Com Ciência: Revista Eletrônica de Jornalismo Científico [Internet] 10 dez. 2011. Disponível em: <http://www.comciencia.br/comciencia/handler.php?section=8&edicao=73&id=907>
18. Menezes Filho A DS. A construção de políticas públicas de proteção animal no Brasil: uma análise sobre os direitos dos animais sob o ponto de vista ético, jurídico e social [dissertação]. São Luis: Universidade Federal do Maranhão; 2015.
19. Cunha LC. Por que a motivação para a adoção do veganismo é importante. Anda [Internet] 14 abr. 2011. [acesso em: 19 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://www.anda.jor.br/14/04/2011/por-que-a-motivacao-para-a-adocao-do-veganismo-e-importante>
20. Posição da Associação Dietética Americana. Declaração de Posição, 1996. Sociedade Vegetariana Brasileira [Internet] 26 maio 2007 [acesso em: 21 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://www.svb.org.br/205-vegetarianismo/saude/artigos/141-posi-da-associa-dietca-americana-ada-sobre-dietas-vegetarianas>
21. Guimalhães G. Dieta vegetariana na prevenção do Diabetes Tipo 2. Nutriveg: Nutrição Vegetariana [Internet] out. 2006. [acesso 21out 2016]. Disponível em: <http://www.nutriveg.com.br/dieta-vegetariana-na-prevenccediltildeo-do-diabetes-tipo-2.html>
22. Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada. Caracterização e análise da dinâmica da produção agropecuária na amazônia brasileira: uma análise a partir do Censo Agropecuário 2006. Relatório de Pesquisa. Brasília: IPEA; 2013. 187 p.
23. Fragoso RM. 10 bons motivos para se tornar vegan. Veganize [Internet] 21 jul. 2016. [acesso em: 19 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://veganize.com.br/10-bons-motivos-para-se-tornar-vegan>
24. Rodrigues AR. A construção da identidade social por meio do consumo vegetariano: um estudo netnográfico [dissertação]. Lavras: Universidade Federal de Lavras; 2012.
25. Mintel. Global foods trends 2016. [Internet]. [acesso em: 22 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <file:///C:/Users/DEBORA/Documents/Marketing%207%20semestres/Materiais%20para%20artigo/global-food-and-drink-trends-mintel-2016.pdf>
26. Federação das Indústrias do Estado de São Paulo. Brasil Food Trends. São Paulo: FIESP; 2020. p. 61. [acesso em: 25 out. 2016]. Disponível em: http://www.brasilfoodtrends.com.br/Brasil_Food_Trends/files/publication.pdf
27. As tendências relacionadas a confiabilidade e qualidade. In: Federação das Indústrias do Estado de São Paulo. Brasil Food Trends 2020. São Paulo: FIESP; 2020. p. 43-46.
28. Definição de “Vegano” para Certificação. Sociedade Brasileira Vegetariana [Internet]. [acesso em: 24 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://www.selovegano.com.br/quem-pode>
29. Chaves F. Ser Vegano é caro?. Vista-se [Internet]. 24 ago. 2010. [acesso em: 22 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <https://vista-se.com.br/ser-vegano-e-carol/>

30. Tivelli SW. Mercado de orgânicos cresce, mas ainda enfrenta barreiras, dizem produtores. Agência Brasil [Internet] 21 jun. 2012. [acesso em: 25 out. 2016]. Disponível em: <http://memoria.ebc.com.br/agenciabrasil/noticia/2012-06-21/mercado-de-organicos-cresce-mas-ainda-enfrenta-barreiras-dizem-produtores>
31. Malhotra N. Pesquisa de marketing: uma orientação aplicada. 4. ed. Porto Alegre: Bookman; 2006.
32. Denker AFM. Métodos e técnicas de pesquisa em turismo. São Paulo: Futura; 1998.
33. Dalfovo MS, Lana RA, Silveira A. Métodos quantitativos e qualitativos: um resgate teórico. Revista Interdisciplinar Científica Aplicada. 2008; 2(4):01-13.

Received: March 15, 2018

Revised: June 05, 2018

Accepted: July 26, 2018