

What is a Vegan?

Some vegans are stricter than others, so it's important that we be explicit about what we mean by "vegan."

The National Capital Vegetarian Association (NCVA) has adopted a very basic definition of "vegan" for our Restaurant Outreach program.

Vegans avoid:

1) Meat

- This means flesh of all kinds: cow, pig, chicken, fish, sheep, etc.
- This also includes
 - animal fat and fluids including lard, suet, meat-based stock, blood, etc.
 - the meat derivative gelatin, which is in a lot of prepared foods (e.g. marshmallows)

2) Eggs

- This includes
 - mayonnaise
 - egg albumen

3) Dairy

- This includes
 - Milk, cream, sour cream, cheese, butter, yogurt, etc.
 - Dairy derivatives whey and casein, which are in a lot of margarines and soy-based cheeses

4) Honey

The NCVA's definition of vegan does **not** include avoidance of:

- strangely-named ingredients of uncertain origin (e.g. food additives such as monoglycerides that are found in commercial breads and other prepared foods)
- refined sugar
- alcoholic beverages that may have been processed using animal products
- otherwise vegan products whose labels say they "may contain" animal products. The "may contain" statement is often used when a product is processed in the same facility or on the same equipment as the animal product in question.