

Viva!



Outreach guide

Join Viva!'s volunteer community and
save more animals' lives



THE TRUE

COSTA
DAIRY

Photographed at a farm
that supplies farmers
who provide the milk
for Costa Coffee



viva.org.uk/costa

Viva!

About this guide

Take a moment to think about your favourite teacher; what was it about them that made you like them? Did you feel heard? Did you feel supported? Did you feel they met you where you were before taking you on a journey of discovery and helping you when you grappled with new ideas or concepts? At Viva! these attitudes are the ones we aspire to carry through into our outreach. We aim to provoke thought that doesn't attribute blame or shame but – in the best-case scenario – will plant a seed of change.

At first, outreach can seem daunting. However, being out on the high street and presenting our best authentic self, whilst having just a few facts up our sleeve can make a real difference – even if not apparent at the time.

This guide doesn't contain all the answers, but it will hopefully provide some tips on how we can effectively engage with the public whilst safely maintaining our sense of self. We may sometimes feel that things haven't gone as well as we might have liked, perhaps we feel that we misjudged the pace or didn't have the right facts. But that's ok because we are doing the very best that we can and we will continue to learn. Even if this is our first outreach event or our 50th.



Pragmatic outreach

Throughout our formative years and beyond we are taught that eating animals is natural and indeed necessary. It is therefore understandable that most people consume animal products without much thought to the intolerable destruction it causes.

Change will not happen overnight and therefore we need to be pragmatic in our outreach to achieve long term success.

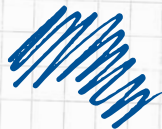


Generally, people fail to recognise their personal responsibility in ending animal suffering, but through outreach we can help them problem solve and find solutions. Our personal experiences, undercover investigations, research and resources all play a part in helping to inform and promote change.



'Volunteering gives me a feeling that I can make a difference. Being out there is like planting a seed, helping the public to start to think about the meat and dairy industry in a different way.'

Tom



Dr Melanie Joy

Dr Melanie Joy is a social psychologist, relationship coach and international speaker who promotes effective and sustainable vegan advocacy through her work with Beyond Carnism and the Center for Effective Vegan Advocacy (CEVA). Melanie promotes advocating with understanding, compassion and without judgement



– a philosophy that closely aligns with Viva!'s approach to outreach.

Melanie often refers to a ‘foot in the door’ strategy to change and this relates to the idea of motivation. People are more likely to agree to and be successful if they commit to a small – but not insignificant – change. After the first change there is a greater possibility that they will embrace a more substantial change as they experience a gradual shift in their identity which more aligns with their changing values.

Therefore, if during our outreach we can encourage commitment to a primary change, a secondary and larger change is more likely after a follow-up prompt – maybe a conversation with a vegan friend, interest in the growing vegan choices in their local supermarket, an article or exposé on television. Successive prompts move the individual one step further toward becoming vegan. Of course, for a few, becoming vegan is an instant change but if we consider our own voyages into veganism, many of us will relate to the often-used idea of a ‘journey’.

CEVA has developed a series of online courses. These are listed below and are recommended by Viva!. Once a course has been chosen scroll down the page and decide whether you can afford the full registration fee, a contribution or you wish to access the course at no cost.

- The Science of Effective Vegan Advocacy veganadvocacy.org/science
- Effective Vegan Advocacy veganadvocacy.org/eva
- Sustainable Vegan Advocacy veganadvocacy.org/sva



Practical application

This section is divided into three parts. The first part considers how we can prepare for outreach, the second how we might engage with the public and the third what we need to consider in terms of permits and resources. There

will also be references to the permissions we might give ourselves not to be a perfect and how we can keep check on our mental wellbeing.



Preparation

- Viva! has a comprehensive website that is regularly updated and is backed up by research: viva.org.uk. Knowing what resources are available to us and the public is an excellent starting point, in addition to knowing what leaflets are available for our outreach: viva.org.uk/resources. There is a whole host of resources relating to animals, the planet, health and vegan lifestyles. There is information for children, athletes, whether you are worried about protein, vitamin B12 or calcium. Take a look at our Vegan Recipe Club too, which has over 1,000 recipes: veganrecipeclub.org.uk. There is also our simple swaps leaflet which can help people to make that first change.
- If an outreach event relates to a specific campaign, there will be plenty of information to hand on our website or in the materials specifically provided for the event.

'I just want to have some good conversations and explain how veganism has improved my own life.'
Skye

- It is not necessary and is perhaps counterproductive to have hundreds of facts that will possibly bamboozle the other person. Have a few facts that are meaningful to you and get to know where more information is available for people to do their own research later. Giving someone a leaflet / card is helpful as an aide memoire of the conversation.
- Watching investigation footage or hard-hitting documentaries can be helpful, but there is a danger that we can traumatise or retraumatise ourselves. We can give ourselves permission not to watch everything that is available and also be mindful of how much content we are exposed to via social media.

I like talking to the public and provoking thought and maybe helping someone to have a change in attitude. I love it!
Carol



Engaging with the public

- The first thing to say here is that safety is paramount. Hopefully we know the person who is hosting the event and if necessary, we can contact them beforehand, introduce ourselves and highlight anything we may feel unsure about – including our level of experience. We may wish to observe for our first event or shadow someone with a bit more experience. The host will keep an overall eye on the event and discuss with the group how to can get support if needed.
- We absolutely have permission to withdraw from a conversation if we feel threatened in any way. We can say we feel uncomfortable and are withdrawing – and if necessary, we can seek support from a colleague/the host. These situations are uncommon but if we should be unlucky, we must make sure we are able to process what happened with someone.
- Notice body language, ours and theirs. Our body language is the first thing someone sees and if we look relaxed and confident that will portray to them that we are friendly and approachable. Conversely if someone looks like they are in a rush or is purposefully avoiding eye contact, now is possibly not the day to try to engage them.



Starting a conversation may seem like the hardest thing to do – here are a few ideas

- 'Hey, how are you today?'
- 'What brought you over to our stall?'
- If giving out food samples, 'have you had vegan cheese / chocolate before...what do you think?'
- 'Have you thought about veganism yourself?'
- 'Have you ever seen any footage of factory farming...what were your thoughts?'
- 'Do you know someone who is vegan...what was their motivation?'
- 'What do you know about the meat industry?'
- 'What do you know about the dairy industry?'
- If someone is vegetarian, 'what was your motivation to becoming vegetarian...what do you think the differences are between the meat and dairy industry?'
- If they have been a vegan in the past, 'what was your motivation to being vegan...what changed...how do you feel about that?'
- 'What do you think are the main advantages / disadvantages to being vegan?'
- 'What is your main barrier to becoming vegan...what would help you?'
- 'What would be a manageable first step for you?'
- We will encounter many objections as to why becoming vegan is too difficult. It is important to demonstrate that we have heard the objection and then be curious as to how they came to that conclusion. We can use our own experiences, appropriate facts –and think what resources might be helpful.



Objection to veganism

Becoming vegan is too expensive or too difficult



How we can respond

- According to some studies, following a plant-based diet can reduce our weekly food bill by up to 40 per cent
- Eating processed foods every day will undoubtedly be more expensive – all diets should be balanced and the more plant-based, whole foods we use, the cheaper it will be
- We can introduce simple swap ideas, for example making a chilli with vegan mince, changing cow's milk to a plant-based alternative and gradually increasing the number of plant-based alternatives in our food cupboards
- Resources: veganrecipeclub.org.uk
- Leaflets:
 - Budget Guide to Eating Vegan
 - Student Guide to Eating Vegan
 - Easy Swaps

I like cheese too much



- We can empathise that we did too – but understanding the dairy industry affected our decision to become vegan. We can share our own vegan journey
- Cheese contains high levels of a milk protein called casein and once digested it produces a chemical that comes from the same family as morphine and opium – mother nature's clever way of helping a calf bond with her mother. The good news is that mammals don't drink milk after they have been weaned



so being addicted to cheese or any milk product isn't a problem

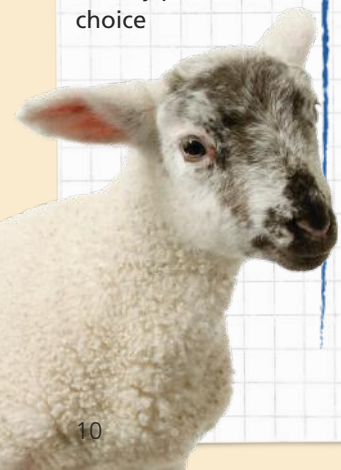
- Resources:
viva.org.uk/animals/campaigns/the-true-costa-dairy
- Leaflets:
 - Think Before You Drink
 - The True Costa Dairy

Where will I get my nutrients from?



- There are many myths about a plant-based diet not containing all the essential nutrients we need. We can point to high profile vegan athletes and sports personalities such as Lewis Hamilton, Venus and Serena Williams, Tia Blanco and ultrarunner Scott Jurek.
- Resources: viva.org.uk/health
- Leaflets:
 - Viva! Health Feeding You the Facts inc. Calcium, Vitamin D, Iron, IBS, Heart disease and strokes

It is my personal choice



- Animals, want to live just as much as we do. The first instinct every animal has is to survive. By killing them at all, we are taking away from them the most important thing they have; we are denying their intrinsic right to life. They do not have a choice
- We can also point out that most of our decisions are based on personal choice – but we choose not to burgle the neighbours or kick our children

What's wrong with eating fish?



- Numerous scientific studies have confirmed that fish feel pain. Industrial fishing causes them immense suffering because they are killed either by being crushed in the net, having their swim bladders explode when they are brought to the surface or by asphyxiating (being starved of oxygen) on the decks of trawlers
- We can also point out that a study by WWF conservatively identifies that over 40 per cent of global marine catches are organisms that are unused or unmanaged – this includes whales, dolphins and porpoises
- Resources: viva.org.uk/animals/aquatic-wildlife
- Leaflets:
 - Caught Out
 - Lice-nsed to Kill



And finally – plants feel pain too



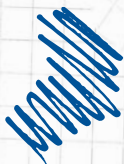
- We can say that plants do not feel pain. They do not have pain receptors, nerves or a central nervous system. They have evolved without the ability to flee from pain – so it would make no sense to feel it! And even if plants did feel pain, the average meat eater is responsible for about 10 times more plants being killed than the average vegan because all the animals that meat-eaters consume, eat huge amounts of plants themselves
- These and other objections are expanded on in 'Vegan FAQs'; viva.org.uk/lifestyle/going-vegan/vegan-faqs

- Barriers to veganism
- Human history
- Animals and ethics
- Planet and people
- Health and nutrition
- Religious questions



I can show people that vegans can be anybody and can be happy and passionate and normal
Skye

A simple example of how a conversation might develop



Hey, would you like to try some vegan cheese?

Mmmmmm, which one should I try?

What cheese would you normally eat?

I like a strong cheddar – but I don't think I could ever give up cheese to be honest

Yes, I used to feel the same. Try some of this one – my favourite is Cathedral City. What do you think?

Yes, that tastes really good. But of course you need the calcium and protein from cheese

So it seems that you like the cheese but are worried that you won't get enough nutrients from other sources. It's interesting that we're the only mammals who drink milk once we're weaned. What are your thoughts about that... what would happen I wonder, if we didn't drink milk that was only ever intended for calves?

The conversation could of course go in many directions. The purpose is to increase understanding and help the individual problem solve. A few more facts could be woven into the conversation, but we also want the conversation to flow. Anecdotally a really large percentage of the public still don't know that a dairy cow endures a cycle of pregnancy, birth and loss before an early death. Other interesting facts might include research that identifies osteoporosis to be the most prevalent in countries that drink the most milk, or that most dairy cows spend 7 months of ever year simultaneously pregnant whilst producing unnaturally large quantities of milk. We can choose the facts that have the most meaning – we can also make a few notes before an event if that's helpful. Not all the conversations will have a conclusion where the individual explicitly wants to make a change – but if they do, we can ask what might help (or hinder) them and provide them with leaflets and signposting.

Resources and permits

- **Social media** is a good way of attracting activists in our area and we may find that the same people like to come and support our events regularly
- **Location and permits** – our event will be more successful if there is good footfall. If the event is on public land the need for a permit is unlikely. However, if in doubt it is better to contact the local council. Applications are online and can take a bit of time so doing this early will be helpful
- **Access to a table with a black tablecloth** – this provides a base for our event and looks professional
- **Leaflets and posters** – in addition to leaflets, health factsheets, guides and the Vegan Recipe Club card, Viva! may also be able to provide posters for a specific campaign
- **Footage of factory farmed animals** is available from Viva!. Caution regarding allowing young children to watch it – good practice means we ask the parents to watch it first
- **Free food** is a great way of attracting the public, whether cheese, chocolate, or chicken / pork alternatives. Viva! have some funds to support this
- It is great to **share pictures** after the event with Viva! to include in their social media. If the picture includes the public, it is good practice to ask permission or have a sign that says photographs are taken and to let the host know if this is an issue. Pictures of children do need to be sanctioned by parents
- **Be creative** if you want to use props



This guide has looked at Viva!'s philosophy to outreach, how we prepare for events, how we engage with the public and some practical considerations. Above all else, we need to remember that outreach is an important tool in shining a light on factory farming. We don't have to be perfect but being present and approachable on our local high street, having a few meaningful facts up our sleeve and being able to signpost people to Viva!'s comprehensive resources, means we can make a real difference.

The Viva! outreach network is growing! If you would like to host a regular event on your local high street, or have any questions regarding this guide please email outreach@viva.org.uk



Outreach hosts and supporters

Would you like to organise, or support, a monthly outreach event on your local high street? Viva! can offer training, mentorship and will help every step of the way. Our network is growing and we have hosts in several towns and cities across the UK.

Market and Fair volunteer



Become a Viva! Stall Volunteer and attend local vegan, ethical or green events (as often or little as you like) and help us to raise vital funds, save animals and support campaigns.

Street actions and protests

When Viva! launches a campaign we often coordinate nationwide actions and ask activists to organise protests outside local shops, supermarkets and other venues. We can provide all the resources you need for a successful and effective event.

University Outreach

We are building a university network of volunteers and Viva! regularly attend freshers' fairs to help raise awareness and showcase the benefits of a vegan way of life, for you, the animals and our amazing planet.



Become a door dropper



This is an important role to share our campaigns and investigations with local communities. You decide where and how often you would like to door drop (and on what topics) and we will do the rest.