

TORONTO  
VEGETARIAN  
ASSOCIATION  
2008-2010  
STRATEGIC PLAN



NOVEMBER 15, 2007

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Since it was founded in 1945, the Toronto Vegetarian Association has been a grassroots group, driven largely by volunteers. In the beginning, the organization arranged dinners and lectures for its handful of members. By 2007, TVA had published two cookbooks, developed an annual Vegetarian Directory, introduced a discount program that can save members hundreds of dollars, hosted the World Vegetarian Congress and launched a comprehensive website. The group has grown to more than 1,000 members and its annual Food Fair attracts more than 15,000 visitors each year. The broad scope of TVA's activities, our volunteer-driven history and our size will be key strengths for us to build upon.

This document is the result of two years of work by the Toronto Vegetarian Association's volunteers, staff and board of directors. It spells out four core initiatives for using the organization's resources, people and energy in the most effective way possible. These strategies will help us to encourage more people to live more healthfully, humanely and environmentally.

While staff and board members were preparing each section of the strategic plan, we sought input from members, volunteers and others. Then, as the plan began to take shape, we asked key volunteers for more help. Thanks to the efforts of dozens of devoted people, we have created a document — which has been reviewed and approved by the TVA board — that will guide our organization's work over the next three years.

### VISION

By 2010, the Toronto Vegetarian Association will have inspired thousands of people to choose a healthier, greener, more peaceful lifestyle. New initiatives will bring dozens more volunteers into TVA, and they in turn will help hundreds of new people to learn about vegetarian issues for the first time.

We will effectively communicate the environmental, health and compassionate grounds for vegetarianism through major local, regional and national media and online to new audiences of thousands more. As a result, we will be seen as a reliable source of information and a passionate and respectful advocate for vegetarianism.

TVA will form partnerships with key organizations involved in the environment, public health and compassion for animals. These groups will turn to TVA for advice and information, which they will incorporate into their own campaigns.

We will strive to become more inclusive and engage new members and volunteers from communities with vegetarian-friendly cultural backgrounds. TVA membership will grow from its 2007 range of about 1,000 to "2,010 by 2010." Our success in fundraising will lead to annual budget increases that support our program needs.

### PROCESS USED

Before the strategic planning process began, we reviewed and altered the organizational structure of TVA. Until recently, TVA was managed by its board of directors with staff support for major programs like the Food Fair and the Vegetarian Directory. In 2005, the TVA board decided to hire an executive director to handle day-to-day management, allowing the board to focus on governance and strategy. Since then, TVA has hired another full-time staff member and the board has launched four committees to support its major objectives.

One of the board's first major tasks during this phase was to review our mission statement. To better reflect our audience, the scope of our activities and the values we wish to communicate, we adopted: "To inspire people to choose a healthier, greener, more peaceful lifestyle." We also drafted an accompanying values and vision statement with input from members, volunteers and staff.

We began our strategic planning process in earnest by looking at the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Among the biggest challenges identified was that TVA's actions lacked focus. As a result, we've made focus a key priority in this strategic planning document; our focus will rotate between environmental issues in 2008, health issues in 2009 and compassion for animals in 2010.

Besides concentrating our activities on these subject areas, we've also narrowed our focus in terms of the target audiences for our messages. We've decided to put special effort into reaching three groups of people in the Greater Toronto Area: university- and college-aged youth, people aged 45-64 at risk for health problems, and communities with a vegetarian-friendly cultural heritage.

## CORE INITIATIVES

As mentioned, we have established four core initiatives to be developed over the next three years. After analyzing our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and after discussions at board meetings, we have developed these strategies to capitalize on our strengths and overcome obstacles to our goals:

1. **Align programs:** To be able to focus our key message and best reach our target audiences, we'll need to carefully match our programs with our strategic goals. So we will involve program leaders in strategic planning and in developing their programs. We will also launch major new initiatives in the areas of health in 2009 and compassion in 2010.
2. **Increase persuasiveness:** We need to take new steps to measure how effective we are at getting our message across, and how to make our message more persuasive. First, we will update all materials available to volunteers who deliver programs. Then we will seek new ways to make our message more effective. Finally, we will launch new ways of communicating to print and online media.
3. **Increase revenue:** We need to increase our net revenue so we can adequately support existing programs and the new initiatives in this plan. We will raise more funds from TVA members by finding new donors and by giving existing supporters new opportunities to support our programs and goals. We will create a plan to raise more funds through major gifts, grants and sponsorship.
4. **Make TVA more inclusive:** Finally, we must strive to make TVA more inclusive. We will ensure that all vegetarians feel welcomed and supported by our programs. We will identify barriers to involvement and develop plans to recruit more members and volunteers from different ethnic groups.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The following will be needed to ensure that our strategic plan will be successfully completed:

- **Communication:** We will enlist the communications committee to share the details of our strategic plan with key volunteers and help guide them to pass communications to other volunteers involved in the programs. With support from staff and board members, we will help program leaders to include our annual strategic focus in their activities.
- **Monitoring of activity and accountability:** We will monitor progress using key performance indicators to ensure that we are keeping implementation plans on task and that the overall plan is progressing as envisioned.
- **Infrastructure changes:** We will launch a programs review committee to evaluate existing programs and make recommendations to modify, improve or validate new and existing programs. This will help us to meet our strategic goals by aligning existing programs and launching new ones. We will also create an advisory panel to provide technical resources and expertise so we can successfully implement the strategic plan.
- **Funding:** We will create a fundraising plan by expanding membership donations, filing new major grant applications and stewarding new and existing major donors. This is essential because over the course of this strategic plan, two major funding sources will come to an end — a \$156,500 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and a \$60,000 grant from the Edward Bronfman Family Foundation.

## CONCLUSION

The Toronto Vegetarian Association has come a long way since 1945 and we are proud of all that we've achieved so far. Together, we will continue the work done by passionate TVA volunteers over the past 62 years as we envision a world where people think critically about their food choices, where market forces drive food producers to provide healthy, sustainable plant-based foods, and where all animals are treated with compassion and kindness. We hope you'll join us in working to make this vision a reality.

## ORGANIZATION PROFILE

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### HISTORY

The Toronto Vegetarian Association (TVA) was founded on June 19, 1945, at a gathering of 18 people in Toronto. One of TVA's first campaigns involved sending soy grits and vegetable oil to war-torn Europe. Other early activities included holding dinners and lectures, writing to restaurant owners to request meatless dishes, and having letters and notices published in Toronto's daily newspapers. By July 1946, there were more than 100 members.

By 1954, TVA based most of its administrative operations out of the house of its longest-serving president, Barbara Jackson. In April of that year it published its first newsletter. The association became incorporated in November, 1955.

Long-time members have described TVA as being a quiet organization in the 1960s and 1970s. Many of the activities were really just social get-togethers. Nonetheless, forward-looking members obtained charitable status for TVA in 1976. But by the mid-1970s and early 1980s, the group was stagnating, and new recruits were rare.

In 1983, Matthew Bates was elected the first new president of TVA in 31 years. A small group of younger people took over the leadership, instituting better record-keeping and board meeting procedures. At the time, there were about 400 members, but many hadn't paid dues in some time. The new leaders soon discovered that TVA's charitable status had lapsed, because annual financial statements hadn't been filed. Fortunately, its status as a charity was reinstated.

In the 1980s and 1990s TVA focused on outreach through lectures, tabling and fact sheets. TVA hosted a one-day Vegetarian Information Fair in 1984, followed by its first Vegetarian Food Fair in 1985, which almost 500 people paid to attend. In 1986, the event moved to Harbourfront Centre where it attracted an estimated 3,000 people. In September 1986, TVA's newsletter was renamed *Lifelines* and gradually expanded in size and scope. TVA hosted a five-day North American vegetarian conference in 1987.

In 1989, as a result of a planning process, TVA moved out of Jackson's home and into the Bathurst Street Centre for Peace and Justice, just south of Bloor Street. It was here that TVA's Resource Centre was started, although there had been a library at Barbara Jackson's home since 1957.

In 1991, TVA published its first cookbook, *Eggplant and Beyond*. The first *Vegetarian Handbook* was published in 1992 and 4,500 copies were sold. In 1994, a second cookbook, *Vegetarian Tastes of Toronto*, was published and 45,000 copies of TVA's free *Vegetarian Directory* were distributed throughout the city, with similar numbers in subsequent years. In 1995 TVA launched its first website, which has since been expanded and revamped several times.

The annual Vegetarian Food Fair was at first entirely organized by volunteers. Later, a coordinator was paid an honorarium, then finally the coordinator was hired on contract. Attendance continued to grow as the event became two and then three days long and took up more space at Harbourfront Centre. The 10th Annual Vegetarian Food Fair in 1994 attracted more than 10,000 people. By 2000 and beyond, average annual attendance ranged between 12,000 and 15,000. TVA's profile in the international vegetarian movement got a big boost when it hosted the 37th World Vegetarian Congress in July 2000, after a two-year planning effort.

Thanks in large part to the introduction of a discount program, TVA's membership grew considerably in the 1990s. In August 1993, it reached 1,000; by 1995 it was 1,400. But restructuring the membership fees — making the discount card an optional extra and eliminating senior and student rates — resulted in a considerable drop in membership numbers.

In 1999, TVA had to move when the Bathurst Street Centre for Peace and Justice was sold. Thanks to the efforts of a board member with family connections, Rogers Wireless AT&T provided TVA with free space at Yonge and Eglinton. After five years, Rogers moved out of the building and therefore so, once again, did TVA. Since 2004, TVA's office space has been sublet from Vegetarian Haven restaurant on the second floor of 17 Baldwin Street.

Although committees had been formed in the past, they tended to not last long and the board of directors had remained a working board. In late 2005, the board decided to hire an executive director and convert to a governance board. In 2007 four standing committees were formed.

## CURRENT PROFILE

Founded in 1945, the Toronto Vegetarian Association is Canada's oldest, largest and most active vegetarian organization. We are a registered charitable organization (11926 7532 RR0001).

### **Organization name:**

Toronto Vegetarian Association

### **Address:**

17 Baldwin Street, 2nd floor, Toronto, ON M5T 1L1

### **Telephone:**

416-544-9800

### **Fax:**

416-544-9094

### **First date of service:**

June 19, 1945

### **Date of incorporation:**

November 17, 1955

### **Charitable number:**

11926 7532 RR0001

### **Incorporation number:**

000079688

### **Number of members:**

More than 1,100 (November 2007)

### **Number of staff:**

Two full time

### **Executive director:**

Kathleen Farley (2005 to present)

telephone: 416-544-9800

email: kfarley@veg.ca

### **Number of volunteers:**

More than 340 (November 2007)

### **Governance:**

TVA is governed by a board of directors comprising 11 TVA members. The board is supported by committees that assist the board in four areas: audit and finance; nominating and governance; fundraising and membership development; and communications.

Also refer to:

*Appendix #1: Organizational Structure and Programs Chart*

## Programs

The Toronto Vegetarian Association runs a variety of programs serving the Toronto community and beyond:

- **Annual Vegetarian Food Fair:**  
Held each year in early September, this free celebration has grown to attract more than 15,000 people annually.
- **Resource Centre:**  
This downtown information centre is open to the public and is staffed by volunteers. More than 400 titles of books and cookbooks, magazines, DVDs and videos are available for loan or purchase.
- **Veggie Challenge:**  
Open to anyone, this program provides support to people willing to try going vegetarian or vegan.
- **Vegetarian Directory:**  
This free publication lists Toronto-area vegetarian-friendly restaurants, stores, cooking classes and more. Updated annually and distributed citywide.
- **Lifelines:**  
The TVA's 16-page bimonthly newsletter is filled with news, articles, recipes, restaurant reviews, event information and much more.
- **Website (veg.ca):**  
Our comprehensive site offers a wide range of vegetarian information, including restaurant listings, events, articles, fact sheets and recipe links.
- **TVA Groups:**  
We host and support a range of vegetarian social groups across the Greater Toronto Area that share special interests or local activities: York Region Group, Vegetarians in Their Twenties, Toronto Vegan Family Group, Queer Veggie Dinner Social Group, Raw Vegan Group, Dinner Social Group, Singles Group, Veggies of Halton and Peel, Durham Lakeside Group, Reading Group.
- **Outreach:**  
We often staff tables and distribute materials at school, corporate and community events around the Greater Toronto Area. We also exhibit at trade shows and consumer expos.
- **Other programs and services:**  
From nutritional workshops to celebratory events and contests, we're committed to meeting the needs of the community by offering useful and relevant programs and services.

## STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Here is a brief summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges that TVA faces. Bear in mind that the distinction between them can sometimes be blurred — for example, while getting the vegetarian message into schools can be viewed as an opportunity, it can also be considered a weakness if we haven't done so already.

### Strengths

- **Organizational knowledge and history:**  
TVA has been around for more than 60 years.
- **Leadership in the movement:**  
We are the largest dedicated vegetarian organization in Toronto, with a membership open to all.
- **Our members:**  
TVA is blessed with a loyal and dedicated membership.
- **Passion:**  
of our staff, our volunteers and our supporters.
- **Outreach:**  
TVA hosts the Vegetarian Food Fair, the largest event of its kind in North America, attracting more than 15,000 people annually, and we participate in many other community events.
- **Publications:**  
*Lifelines* and *Vegetarian Directory* are two successful and well-received TVA publications.
- **Broad scope:**  
Existing programs such as the Veggie Challenge, Resource Centre and social groups.
- **Online presence:**  
High-traffic website and use of Web-based social marketing (podcasts, Facebook).
- **Discount program:**  
A great benefit to members that also enables excellent links with businesses.
- **Financially sound:**  
Successfully applied for major funding (Trillium Foundation, Bronfman Foundation). Our charitable status offers a distinct financial advantage, while also garnering respect.

### Weaknesses

- **Focus:**  
Has been somewhat diluted — for example, trying to cover everything from environment, to health, to compassion.
- **Skill gaps:**  
Some key skills missing within volunteer base.
- **Funding:**  
Long-term funding to support infrastructure not yet in place.
- **Business connections:**  
Existing connections not yet leveraged into sponsorship dollars.
- **Membership:**  
Relative to the estimated number of vegetarians in the Greater Toronto Area, our membership is low and the recent trend is low growth.
- **Exclusivity:**  
Some may perceive that we are a club rather than a charity.
- **Differing visions:**  
There have been internal struggles on how to engage vegans without alienating lacto-ovo vegetarians and vice versa.
- **Geography:**  
Lack of focused plan for geographic scope for programs, particularly online ones.
- **Statistical trends:**  
We have not successfully countered the constant growth in chicken consumption in Canada, for example.

### Opportunities

- **Environment:**  
Animal agriculture has a major impact, as recently recognized by mainstream authorities, and interest in environmental issues is at a high point.
- **Health issues:**  
Obesity, cancers and diabetes can be greatly helped by a plant-based diet.
- **Compassion:**  
The disconnect between public perception and current industrial farming practice begs to be exposed.
- **Funding:**  
We can build on past success with major granting bodies, for example, the Trillium Grant.
- **Vegetarian population:**  
There's a large number of vegetarians in the Greater Toronto Area.

- **Schools and universities:**  
Three major universities, multiple campuses and many community colleges provide us with a large target market.
- **Diversity:**  
There's a significant local population with a vegetarian-friendly cultural heritage.
- **Veg city:**  
Toronto is a relatively vegetarian-friendly city.

### Challenges/Threats

- **Resistance:**  
The word "vegetarian" can scare some people.
- **Inclusiveness:**  
Some people do not feel sufficiently welcomed by our organization, since some members are seen as judgmental of the decisions made by others.
- **Funding:**  
Restricted scope of many funding programs will potentially limit the sources of funding available to an organization with our structure and focus.
- **Misguided perceptions:**  
Some think it's "difficult" to adopt and maintain a vegetarian diet.
- **Competition:**  
Strong marketing and lobbying power in the meat/dairy industry.
- **Competition:**  
Competitive giving environment for non-profit organizations.
- **Media coverage:**  
The challenge of being heard — getting the word out.
- **Volunteers:**  
Attracting, training and retaining them.

## END GAME VISION

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By the end of 2010, we will have completed a full year focusing on each of the three pillars of our mission — environment in 2008, health in 2009 and compassion for animals in 2010. This focus will allow us to seek new members, secure new funding and create new programs.

Our efforts will have an increasing impact mainly on people in the Greater Toronto Area and into the Golden Horseshoe in Southern Ontario. We will have stronger resources to deliver our message within this region.

We will raise our number of donor members to more than 2,010 by the year 2010. We will attract enough new funding to maintain our infrastructure, which is supported by special funding sources today. Our total operating budget will grow by 50 per cent to more than \$400,000 per year.

We will align ourselves with environmental, health and wellness, and animal advocacy groups in order to share resources and speak with a louder voice on mutually important issues. We will participate in advocacy to an extent that is appropriate to our mission, vision and values and that is within our mandate as a charitable association.

As a result of new training and evaluation procedures, volunteer feedback will show that people of all diets will feel accepted. We will seek new members and volunteers from communities with vegetarian-friendly cultural backgrounds. Committee and board membership will become more diverse to reflect these efforts.

### **Environment – 2008**

As a result of our focus on the environment in 2008 we will:

- Inspire more people in the GTA to consume more plant-based foods in order to reduce their environmental footprint.
- Fill more than 20,000 information requests for information on the environment and food.
- Increase the public's awareness of environmental food issues through at least five media stories on the impact of food choices on the environment.
- Increase funds raised through membership donations, direct mail and a new monthly giving program.

### **Health – 2009**

As a result of our focus on health in 2009 we will:

- Inspire more people in the GTA to consume more plant-based foods in order to improve their health and reduce their risk for chronic disease.
- Fill more than 25,000 additional requests for information on vegetarian nutrition and the health benefits of vegetarianism.
- Serve at least 100 people through our new flagship health program.
- Increase the public's awareness of vegetarian nutrition and the health benefits of vegetarianism through at least five media stories.
- Publish opinion articles by our new health writers group in at least two major newspapers and in five to 10 secondary market publications.
- Continue to increase our funding base by recruiting new members and securing major gifts, grants and sponsorships totalling \$50,000 to \$75,000.

### **Compassion for Animals – 2010**

As a result of our focus on compassion for animals in 2010 we will:

- Inspire more people in the GTA to adopt a fully vegetarian diet in order to reduce animal suffering.
- Launch an online viral marketing piece on the theme of animal compassion that at least 200,000 people will view.
- Fill 50,000 more requests for information on the rights and welfare of farmed animals.
- Increase the public's awareness of the suffering that farm animals endure through at least five media stories.
- Continue to expand our funding base through donations, major gifts, grants and sponsorships.

## CORE INITIATIVES

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These initiatives define how the end game will be achieved. They provide the general framework for the “big picture” improvements in the most important areas. They are broad and ambitious.

An Implementation Plan is a set of tasks that supports a core initiative, indicating an activity with a high payoff. Implementation Plans address how new initiatives will be used over the long-term — they contain a sequenced set of tasks, schedules and defined responsibilities (named individuals or positions). The Implementation Plan itself also needs an owner responsible for completing the action steps. Owners of Implementation Plans are accountable to the board.

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### CORE INITIATIVE 1: ALIGN PROGRAMS WITH TVA'S STRATEGIC GOALS

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#### The Initiative Defined:

All programs will focus on environmental issues in the first year of this plan, while in 2009 the emphasis will be on health, and in 2010 on animal agriculture.

Through the efforts of our internal communication and planning with representatives of our programs, all staff and volunteers involved with one or more of the organization's programs will be able to clearly articulate the strategic focus for the year and specifically how their program is addressing it.

The general membership and everyone coming in contact with TVA programs will also be able to identify the annual strategic focus as a result of the materials, communication or activities.

Where possible, program activity will support positive change targeted by TVA and measured with agreed-upon indicators.

#### Key Performance Indicators:

- We will conduct surveys, both internal and external, to see if the strategic focus has been communicated effectively.
- We'll determine how to measure the success of a program when we establish what the program will be.

#### Critical Constraints:

To ensure that this initiative is successful, it must address the following weaknesses and threats identified by the strategy team:

- In the past, our programs have operated independently without specific strategic guidance. It's quite possible we may encounter the difficulties typically found when implementing change in an organization
- We need to set tight deadlines to achieve focus in the first year of this plan.
- New funds need to be raised to carry us through the latter part of this three-year plan.

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### IMPLEMENTATION PLANS:

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#### #1A: Annual strategic focus — Engage program leaders and volunteers, and develop program plans

Definition: We will share the details of our strategic plan with key program individuals and help guide them in cascading communication to volunteers involved in the programs.

We will have the program leaders develop and implement plans for integrating our annual strategic focus into their activities.

Owner: President

Goal: Plans successfully completed to the point of achieving first milestone and additional follow-up assigned to ensure completion for the balance of the plans.

Completion: June board meeting

## Implementation Plan #1A

Action Item	Desired Result	Owner	Due By
1. Develop presentation for program leaders and other interested volunteers outlining details of the strategic plan and how they can help execute it.	Presentation completed and approved by executive director.	Chair of communications committee	Dec. 20 '07
2. Deliver the presentation to representatives from each program and solicit plans from program teams for how they will incorporate the new strategy into their activities.	Attendance report of presentations provided to the board showing that representatives from all programs received the message.	Executive director	Jan. 31 '08
3. Create plans noted in action above, including conceptual plans for the three years of focus and specific plans for Year 1.	Documented plans received and approved by the board for all affected programs.	President	April '08 board meeting
4. Achieve first milestone in program plans.	Evidence of achievement noted in board minutes.	Board secretary	June '08 board meeting
5. Assign further follow-up for plans to appropriate individuals that will ensure the rest of the planned activity is completed.	Assignments noted in executive director's monthly report.	Executive director	June '08 board meeting

### Planned Future Implementation Plans:

- 1B: Create a flagship health initiative for 2009
- 1C: Create a flagship initiative on compassion for 2010

## CORE INITIATIVE 2: INCREASE PERSUASIVENESS OF TVA'S MESSAGE

### The Initiative Defined:

Ensure that we promote TVA and its mission in a compelling, persuasive manner and that we make TVA more visible in the community.

We will update or develop new materials supporting our strategic initiatives. In addition to updating information supporting strategic goals, we will use general information about our organization (logo, contact information, mission) more prominently on all materials whenever possible.

We will explore relationships and alliances to make our message more effective.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Increased requests for TVA to provide additional information through website hits, media requests and more web links to our organization from new alliances.
- Achieving revenue targets in Core Initiative 3, since that will rely on output from this initiative.

### Critical Constraints:

To ensure that this initiative is successful, it must address the following weaknesses and threats:

- There are many opinions within the organization regarding what best practices or more effective approaches should be deployed — it will be difficult to obtain consensus.
- We don't have good data or measurements in place to gauge how effective our materials and overall message are.

### IMPLEMENTATION PLANS:

#### #2A: Update materials available to members delivering our programs

**Definition:** Provide updated resource materials for our programs, with a stress on focus areas identified in this strategic plan.

Redevelop fact sheets and other brochures and update website info based on recent research and additional info now available.

Continue to establish the TVA "brand" through effective use of our logo, contact info and mission statement, ensuring that these elements are prominently displayed where possible.

Activity related to this will begin in March 2008.

**Owner:** Development coordinator

**Goal:** Develop materials to support our 2008 focus, with the full set available by the 2008 Food Fair, and establish a plan for developing similar materials for our 2009 and 2010 focus areas.

**Completion:** October 2008

Action Item	Desired Result	Owner	Due By
1. Recruit a team or assign responsibility to an existing committee.	Appropriate people involved as approved by the executive director.	Development coordinator	March 31 '08
2. Determine gaps — review existing resource materials and develop list of what's required to support our focus in Year 1 of this plan.	A listing of required updates and new materials confirmed with the development coordinator.	Chair of communications committee	April 30 '08
3. Create 90-day work plan to address the gaps.	Plan presented at the May '08 board meeting.	Executive director	May '08 board meeting
4. Complete the 90-day plan.	New materials launched through the summer with a substantial set addressing the 2008 focus available prior to the 2008 Food Fair.	Development coordinator	Aug. 29 '08
5. Establish a plan for repeating the above cycle of activity with a view to our focus areas for 2009 and 2010.	Plan approved by the board.	Executive director	Oct. '08 board meeting

**#2B: Expand the effectiveness of our message**

**Definition:** Starting in June 2008, develop various ways of making our message more effective.

- Develop alliances with other organizations.
- Explore how to increase media relations, and leverage coverage of major events and programs.
- Use internally produced media (such as *Lifelines* newsletter, website, etc.) to address our annual focus area.
- Identify additional opportunities.

**Owner:** Chair of communications committee

**Goal:** Create a communication plan designed as noted above to make our message more effective, with the longer-term goal of building our membership base and increasing the ratio of plant-based food consumption vs. animal-based food.

**Completion:** January 15, 2009

Action Item	Desired Result	Owner	Due By
1. Create a plan to support our strategic focus areas and aimed at identified target audiences, particularly those not now represented in large numbers within our membership: a. Identify what alliances to pursue. b. External media. c. Establish plans for internally produced media.	Documented plan approved by board.	Executive director	July 15 '08
2. Identify short-term elements of the plan to deploy in support of 2008 initiatives.	Documented plan approved by communications committee.	Executive director	July 15 '08
3. Implement short-term plan.	Environmental focus supported with best resources available based on short timeline and report on results provided to board at Oct. '08 board meeting.	Chair of communications committee	Sept. 30 '08
4. Review existing resources and evaluate effectiveness	Report provided to executive director.	Chair of communications committee	Oct. 15 '08
5. Refine longer-term plans based on short-term results and evaluation of existing resources.	Revised plans approved by board.	Executive director	Oct. 30 '08
6. Achieve first-level milestones in longer-term plan and establish follow-up plan.	Milestone achieved as defined in the plan and documented follow-up plan approved by executive director.	Chair of communications committee	Jan. 15 '09

**Planned Future Implementation Plans:**

- 2C: Health writers group
- 2D: Online "viral" campaign designed to propagate compassion message

## CORE INITIATIVE 3: INCREASE NET REVENUE

### The Initiative Defined:

In order for TVA to refocus and redevelop its programs and resources and to improve its ability to get across its message, it must increase net revenue.

We will develop increased streams of funding by recruiting more members, by providing better ways for members to invest in our programs, and by linking our programs with the goals of foundations, granting bodies, commercial enterprises and other potential supporters.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Income from membership donations.
- Income from other sources.

### Critical Constraints:

To ensure that this initiative is successful, it must address the following weaknesses and threats:

- We have been at a plateau with our membership for a while.
- There is an increasingly competitive marketplace for non-profit support dollars.
- In recent years we were successful in obtaining an increase in funding sources and will need to find ways of maintaining this revenue stream, which our operations are increasingly reliant on.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLANS:

### #3A: Increase funds from TVA members

**Definition:** Starting in January 2008, we will develop and implement a plan to significantly increase revenue obtained from our membership. We wish to rise above the plateau where our membership numbers have stayed for a few years. We also wish to create effective mechanisms for members to support our new initiatives and encourage them to increase their financial contributions within that support.

**Owner:** Chair of fundraising and membership development committee

**Goal:** Grow to 2,010 members by the year 2010 and increase the average donation per member.

**Completion:** September 15, 2008

Action Item	Desired Result	Owner	Due By
1. Identify ways to increase income through member donations, considering the following potential sources: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attracting more members by focusing membership appeals on target audiences.</li> <li>Targeting donations to support specific elements or initiatives within the strategic plan.</li> <li>Seeking larger average donation per member by communicating the benefits and options such as monthly giving, or special appeals.</li> </ol>	A report outlining the possible initiatives prepared and presented to the executive director.	Chair of fundraising and membership development committee	March 15 '08
2. Identify funding requirements/ targets for specific projects, so those numbers can be incorporated in communications used in appeals for funds in support of those projects.	A report of dollar requirements/ targets identified and presented to the chair of the membership and fundraising committee.	Chair of audit and finance committee	March 15 '08

3. Partner with communications committee to determine best strategy for reaching audiences identified in Action #1, potentially using info identified in Action #2.	A strategy report presented to the board.	Chair of fundraising and membership development committee	April 30 '08
4. Identify first priority, establish plan for the initial project and schedule activities.	Documented plan approved by board.	Chair of fundraising and membership development committee	May 31 '08
5. Initiate activity for the first project.	Achieve first milestone in the project as reported to the executive director.	Chair of fundraising and membership development committee	Aug. 15 '08
6. Create schedule for next steps.	Documented schedule presented to executive director.	Chair of fundraising and membership development committee	Sept. 15 '08

**#3B: Increase funds through major gifts, grants and sponsorship**

**Definition:** Create a plan that puts TVA on a path to raising more funds through major gifts, grants and sponsorship. Identify potential sources, match programs to those sources and submit applications and proposals to support our funding requirements

**Owner:** Executive director

**Goals:** Replace existing grants and sponsorship with enough new income to allow the operating budget to continue growing. This Implementation Plan will establish a path to increase revenue by 50 per cent over three years (to more than \$400,000) when combined with additional membership donations

**Completion:** May 2009

Action Item	Desired Result	Owner	Due By
1. Take inventory of program assets.	A document approved by the executive director has been created for each program that describes each activity, resources and target audiences, along with intended impact of each program.	Development coordinator	Oct. 15 '08
2. Identify resource gaps and areas for potential program growth.	Development targets approved by board of directors	Executive director	Nov. 20 '08
3. Research and identify funding opportunities compatible with programs.	Short-list of grants, corporations, major donor prospects and corresponding program funding needs.	Chair of fundraising and membership development committee	Jan. 31 '09
4. Select best opportunities and prepare applications and proposals or cases for support and deliver to selected targets: a. Grant applications. b. Gift solicitations. c. Sponsorship proposals.	Completed applications, proposals and solicitation plans, completed and delivered, based on targets approved by board of directors.	Executive director	April 30 '09
5. Develop a review cycle to ensure that funding needs/development targets are met.	Documented review cycle in place.	Executive director	May 31 '09

**Planned Future Implementation Plans:**

- 3C: Membership appeal to match our 2009 strategic focus
- 3D: Membership appeal to match our 2010 strategic focus

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## CORE INITIATIVE 4: MAKING TVA MORE INCLUSIVE

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### The Initiative Defined:

The Toronto Vegetarian Association is an organization that brings together vegetarians and vegetarian-friendly people of various motivations and practices, to work together toward a common goal — to inspire people to choose a healthier, greener, more peaceful lifestyle.

Recent feedback to the organization has indicated that some vegetarians do not feel sufficiently welcomed by our organization and that some members are seen as negatively judgmental of the decisions made by others.

In order to develop a positive, open dialogue with all members of the organization and with members of the public, our paid and volunteer workers should be respectful of everyone's choices and that we all come to vegetarianism at our own time and for different reasons.

We wish to develop an accepting and inclusive reputation within the community.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Membership numbers increase.
- Survey results confirm that the organization is perceived as accepting and inclusive

### Critical Constraints:

To ensure that this initiative is successful, it must address the following weaknesses and threats:

- The passion that some members have for animal rights may occasionally overwhelm the sensitivity message.
- Our members with the most passion are often the most committed volunteers and we do not wish for them to feel our effectiveness is in any way limited by taking this stance, since that could affect their commitment.

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## IMPLEMENTATION PLANS:

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### #4A: **Develop mechanisms to ensure that all vegetarians feel welcomed and supported by our programs**

Definition: Starting in May 2008, create an environment within TVA that welcomes all vegetarians and people exploring vegetarian concepts and encourages participation in the organization's activities. This will be achieved through a variety of mechanisms such as:

#### **Training Volunteers**

Incorporate sensitivity training into the orientation for all volunteers, including board members.

#### **Regular Evaluation of Programs**

Review all programs (such as resource materials, *Lifelines*, website) to ensure that the overall message is sufficiently inclusive.

Owner: Board secretary

Goal: Our reputation within TVA and in the community encourages participation, as measured by survey results that show positive impressions and membership growth.)

Completion: February 28, 2008

## Implementation Plan #4A

Action Item	Desired Result	Owner	Due By
1. Develop materials to be used during sensitivity training of volunteers.	Sensitivity training materials completed and approved by the board.	Executive director	Dec. 20 '07
2. Establish policy for deploying the new training materials in orientation of new volunteers and staff and in recurring training for existing volunteers and staff.	Sensitivity training policy presented to, and approved by, the board.	Chair of nominating and governance committee	Dec. 20 '07
3. Determine means of delivering sensitivity training to volunteers and complete the first round of the training.	Ongoing sensitivity training plan in place and completed training records for the first round of training on file.	Development coordinator	Jan. 31 '08
4. Create an annual review plan for evaluating all programs to ensure our overall message is sufficiently inclusive: a. Identifying responsibility for the annual review. b. Creating a checklist for the review process.	Draft of the annual review plan completed and an action item added to the board action list to follow up yearly.	Chair of nominating and governance committee	Feb. 28 '08

### Planned Future Implementation Plans:

- 4B: Identify perceived barriers to membership and develop value proposition for recruiting more members and volunteers from different ethnic groups
- 4C: Recruit more members and volunteers from different ethnic groups

## TRACKING AND CONTROL

To ensure that the strategic plan will be successful and to allow for adjustments or improvements along the way, the following will take place:

- At every monthly meeting of the board of directors, there will be an item on the agenda related to the progress of the plan. A set of key performance indicators (KPIs) will be monitored (see chart below). The executive director will provide an update on the progress of the plan.
- The executive director will follow an additional set of detailed indicators that will allow for early intervention if results are not being seen and will alert the board as appropriate.
- Committee chairpersons and program leaders will have specific responsibilities and will be accountable for success within their areas of focus, as noted in our implementation plans.

The secretary of the board will be responsible for maintaining a chart of results related to our KPIs with updated information completed before every board meeting. The chart will be based on the following template:

Focus	Category	Indicator	Target date(s)	Target	Actual
Our Cause	Growth in Vegetarian Behaviour	Plant-based food consumption in GTA			
		TBD survey metric			
Our Organization	Members	Number of members (donors / volunteers)			
	Revenue	Donation revenue from members			
		Grants/gifts/subsidy revenue			
		Other revenue			
	Implementation of Strategic Plan	Actual completion vs. planned completion as a percentage (based on either planned hours to be completed by this date or number of actions planned to be completed by this date)			
Internal surveys regarding elements of the plan (for example, inclusiveness)					

## INFRASTRUCTURE/RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE PLAN

### 1. Organizational Structure

There are now four standing committees that report to the board of directors:

- Audit and finance committee
- Communications committee
- Fundraising and membership development committee
- Nominating and governance committee

In addition, many of TVA's programs are run by volunteer teams (Veggie Challenge, VDot Youth Program) that report to the executive director.

The following additional committees will be required to successfully implement the strategic plan:

#### New programs review committee

A programs review committee will be struck to examine and evaluate new and existing programs. The committee will be asked to recommend how to modify or improve the creation of programs, including their structure and leadership. The nominating and governance committee will draft a terms-of-reference document in early 2008 for board approval. This will identify details of the required skills and activity for the committee.

#### New advisory panel

We will need a wide range of technical resources and expertise to successfully implement the strategic plan. While we have been relatively successful recruiting specialized talent to the board of directors, gaps still exist. So we will form an advisory panel to expand the resources available to the board and other TVA members. While the panel will not be expected to meet regularly and will have no formal decision-making power, its members will be asked to provide specialized advice or to open doors when needed. We will therefore recruit high-profile community members, influential leaders and experts in areas where we have identified a knowledge gap within TVA.

The nominating and governance committee will present draft terms of reference for the proposed advisory panel at the December 2007 board meeting. Recruitment will soon afterward, with appointments to be approved by the board of directors.

### 2. Staff

As of November 2007, there are two full-time staff: an executive director and a development coordinator. Both will have ownership of several action items and

implementation plans. Implementing the strategic plan will therefore require staff resources that at least match our existing level.

#### Current employment market

Indications are that we will see increasing competition for talent. This will likely raise expectations for working conditions, pay and benefits. We will factor this into our budgeting (see No. 4, Finances).

#### Summer students, co-op placements, and interns

Summer students, co-op placements and interns can help ease some of the administrative burden now shared by staff so day-to-day administrative tasks don't detract from staff's ability to focus on program implementation and delivery.

- **Summer students:** Funded by the Canada Summer Jobs program. In the past, TVA has been awarded funding to hire one to three summer students for 10 to 14 weeks. Summer jobs are limited to "career-related" experiences; however, some flexibility of roles and responsibilities is typically permitted.
- **Co-op placements:** In 2007, TVA provided co-op placements to post-secondary students in the Toronto area. Future co-op placements are likely.
- **Interns:** While TVA does not now have an internship program, existing programs at other organizations may serve as a model for TVA.

The benefits of using summer students, co-op placements and interns to handle administrative matters must be balanced with the managerial challenge of training and supervising these individuals.

#### Staff support for programs

Resource gaps and areas for potential program growth will be identified as part of *Implementation Plan #3B: Increase funds through major gifts, grants and sponsorship*. These will specify:

1. What staff time needs to be allocated to each program.
2. What, if any, additional staff are required to run or increase programs.

While summer students, co-op placements and interns may also be recruited to assist in program areas, they will typically be short-term. This will be a challenge for programs requiring staff continuity. Some programs may also require skills above the typical entry level. Program staff costs will need to be factored into budgeting (see No. 4, Finances).

### 3. Volunteers

Completing the strategic plan will require substantial commitment from volunteers, both in terms of time and talent. We will need to provide management and support to volunteers where needed, as well as continually refresh our pool of volunteers to avoid burnout.

Also, many of our programs rely mainly on volunteer leadership. Leadership development will therefore be another important requirement.

- **Ontario Trillium Foundation grant:** Funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (see below) continues until the end of July 2009. These funds have been allocated to build infrastructure to ensure a strong volunteer program (including systems for recruitment, training and evaluation). As of the end of our last reporting period (July 31, 2007), we had met or exceeded all performance indicators for this initiative.

### 4. Finances

#### Net assets

As of June 30, 2007, TVA had an unrestricted net surplus of more than \$96,000. Net assets internally restricted for special projects came to more than \$36,500, with a further \$9,500 restricted for restructuring. Net assets restricted for special projects are to be used for items such as buying new computer equipment and software. Net assets restricted for restructuring are to be used for expenses related to the restructuring of the operations.

#### Ontario Trillium Foundation

TVA is now halfway through a three-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to fund volunteer development. This funding (\$156,500) will run out in July 2009. Our volunteer development initiative factored in fundraising activities and targets in 2008 and 2009 so as to maintain volunteer development after the grant ends. One key target was establishing a fundraising and membership development committee, which took place in 2007. This committee will specifically aim to increase our supporter base and find new revenue.

Our plan to maintain activities after the Trillium grant ends also emphasizes the need to create an organizational culture that regards fundraising as organization-building. As a result, we introduced a "membership ambassador" training program for volunteers that is beginning to show results. We have further emphasized resource development in our strategic plan as one of our four core initiatives (see *Core Initiative 3: Increase Net Revenue*).

#### Edward Bronfman Family Foundation

In March 2006, TVA received a special grant (\$60,000) from the Edward Bronfman Family Foundation, restricted to marketing our organization more effectively. Part of this grant was to fund one support staff position; this portion is due to run out by December 2008. (Funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation is still expected to cover a significant portion of staff costs from December 2008 to July 2009.)

About \$23,000 of this grant remains for contract and consultant fees, along with promotion and marketing. It's expected this will support activities identified under *Core Initiative 2: Increase Persuasiveness of TVA's Message*. In future planning, we will need to address funding for promotional and marketing activities beyond the scope of this strategic plan.

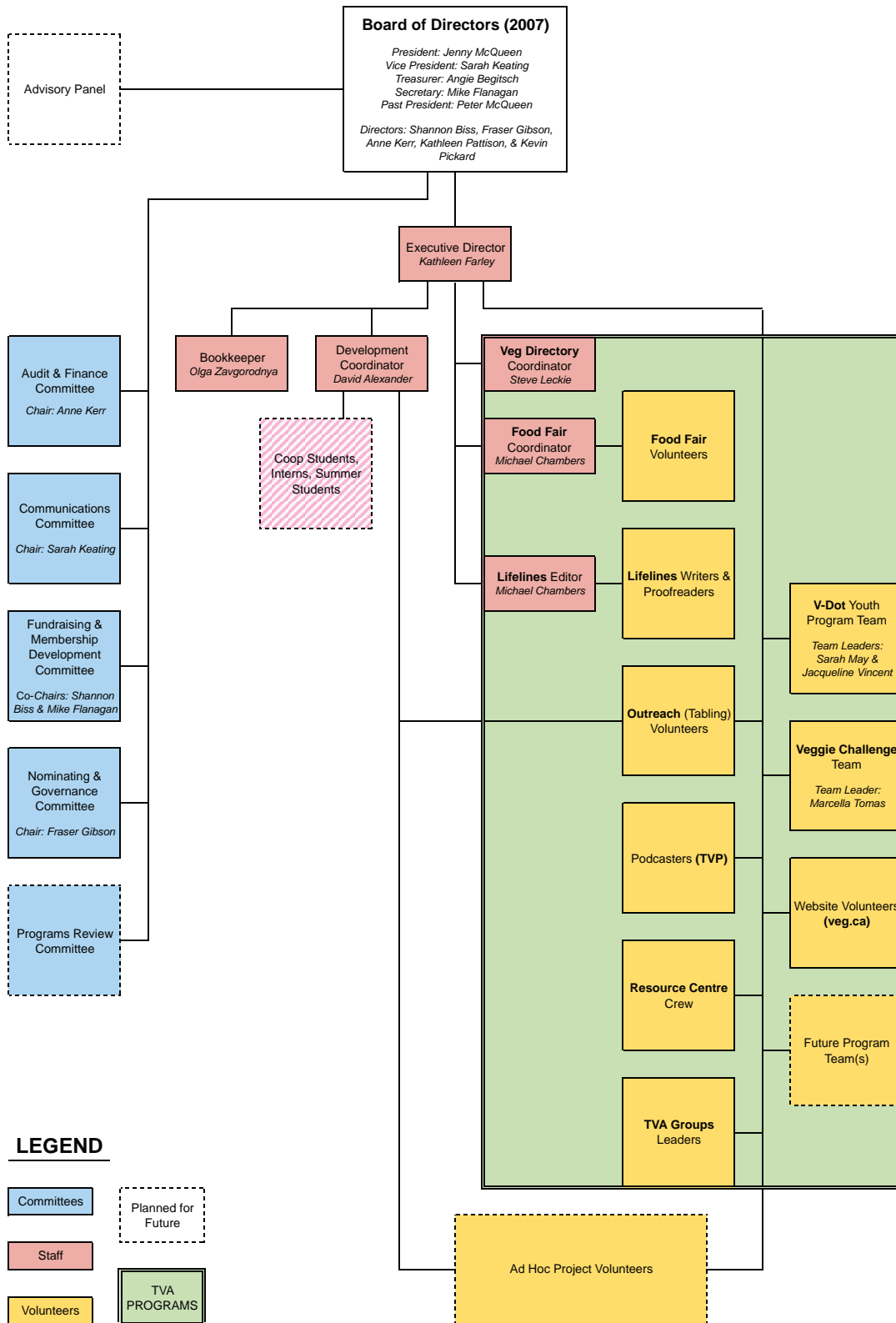
Our most significant funding gap will therefore be with staff salaries after July 2009. One major advantage we have in addressing this gap was our decision in May 2007 to leverage the strengths of the support staff we hired by revising this position to focus on development. Furthermore, the board recognizes the need for resource development. This will continue to be a focus of our planning activities (see "Budgeting" section below).

#### Budgeting

The board of directors approved a formal budget for 2007-08 in June 2007. A pro forma budget for 2008-09 and 2009-10 will be prepared by the executive director in collaboration with the audit and finance committee in time for the first meeting of the new board in December 2007. The pro forma budget will identify resource gaps and set broad fundraising objectives to support the implementation of the strategic plan.

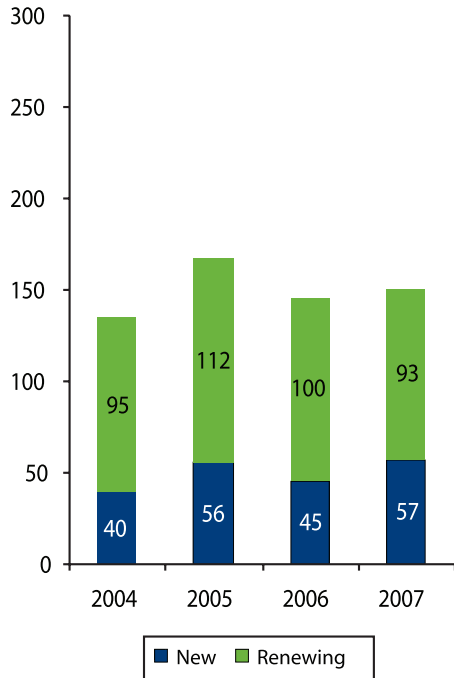
While we expect to obtain program funding through activities outlined under *Implementation Plan #3B: Increase funds through major gifts, grants and sponsorship* we are also aware of the need to increase unrestricted income, including membership donations. Plans to increase membership donations are further outlined under *Implementation Plan #3A: Increase funds from TVA members*. We will need to develop additional plans for *Implementation Plan #3C: Membership appeal to match our 2009 strategic focus* and *Implementation Plan #3D: Membership appeal to match our 2010 strategic focus*.

# APPENDIX 1: TORONTO VEGETARIAN ASSOCIATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND PROGRAMS CHART (AS OF NOVEMBER 15, 2007)

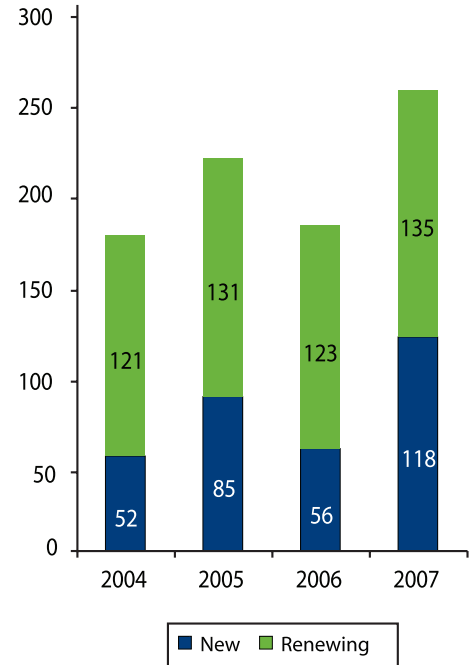


## APPENDIX 2: TORONTO VEGETARIAN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND DISCOUNT CARD HISTORY

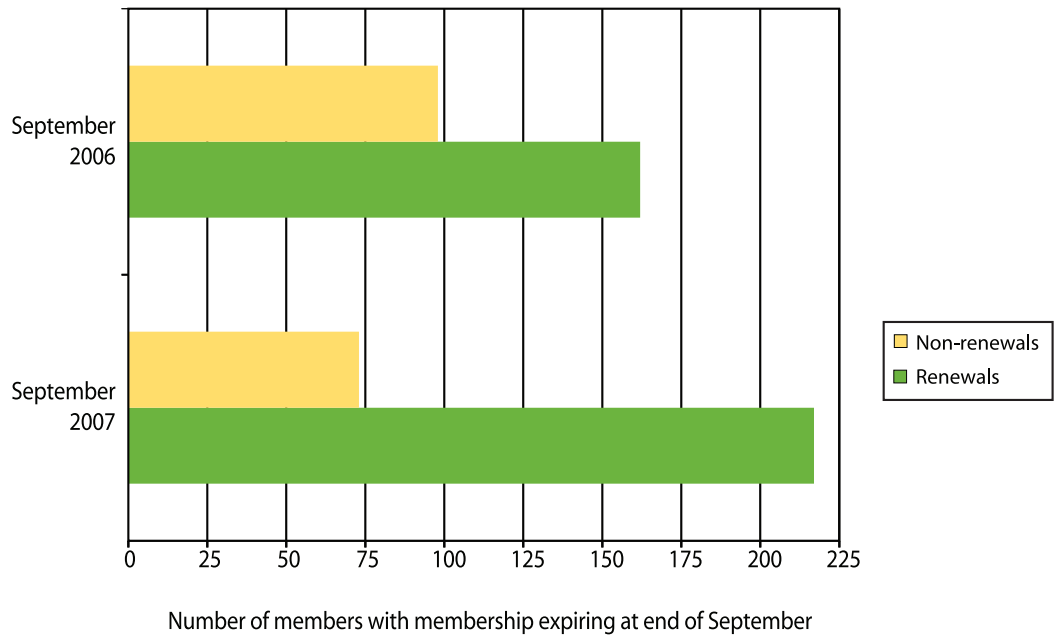
**Discount cards sold at the TVA Food Fair**



**Membership donors at the TVA Food Fair**



## APPENDIX 3: TVA MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS, SEPTEMBER 2006 VS. SEPTEMBER 2007

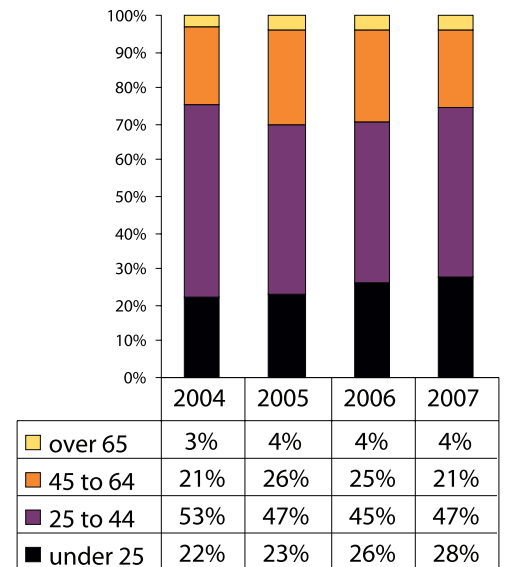


## APPENDIX 4: FOOD FAIR VISITOR DEMOGRAPHICS, 2004-2007

The 2007 Food Fair continued the trend of a more even distribution of visitors' ages (see chart). This year, there was another increase in visitors under 25. Of those, more than 65 per cent said this was their first time at the event (compared to 52 per cent of visitors as a whole). This may be due to our continued promotion of the Food Fair to first-year students at the University of Toronto and York University, where fliers were distributed in "frosh kits" (Ryerson did not participate this year). These results are in line with our goal of increasing attendance and participation among youth.

Overall, the percentage of visitors who did not consider themselves vegetarian has been consistent since 2005. A large increase in the percentage of first-time visitors shows that we did a good job of reaching out to new people this year. This confirms that we are continuing to attract new audiences, including those who do not consider themselves vegetarian.

**Food Fair visitor age distribution**



	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>First time attending</b>	43%	45%	43%	52%
<b>Percentage of non-vegetarians</b>	40%	46%	46%	45%

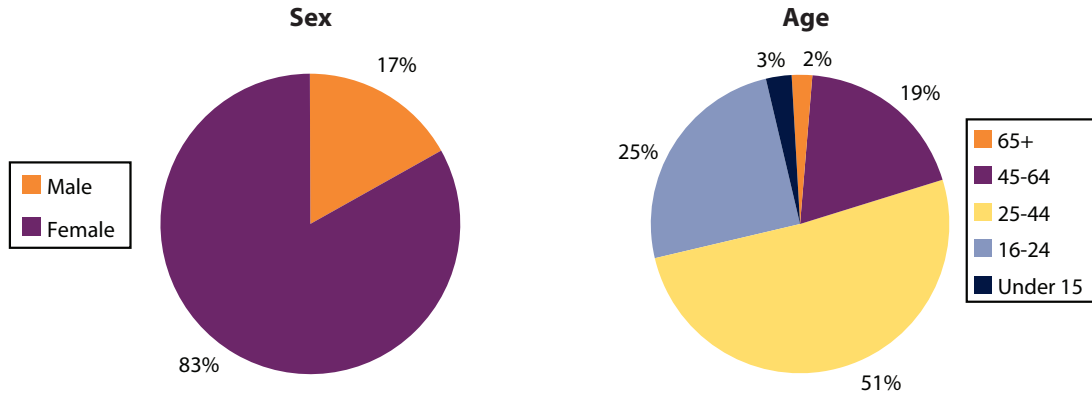
While the Food Fair takes place in Toronto, its reputation as a premier event for the vegetarian community continues to be quite strong outside the city.

	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Visitors from Toronto</b> ( <i>postal codes beginning with "M"</i> )	72%	69%	72%	67%
<b>Visitors from Ontario</b>	98%	95%	96%	95%

The demographic data about visitors was taken from the free draw survey that was available to all who attended the Food Fair. The form was distributed at every TVA booth at the Food Fair. From 2004 to 2006, the survey was printed within the Food Fair Guide. Both ways of conducting the survey produced results consistent enough from year to year that no significant differences can be attributed to the method used.

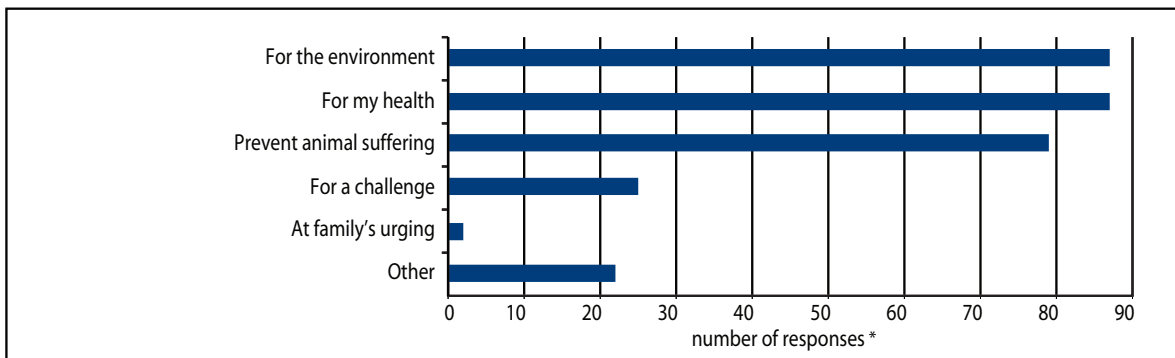
## APPENDIX 5: VEGGIE CHALLENGE PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS AND SELECTED SURVEY DATA, 2007

The Veggie Challenge team distributed a six-month follow-up survey in 2007 to track progress and gain insight from participants in this TVA program. Most of the 124 participants in this survey were women, and more than half were aged 25 to 44.



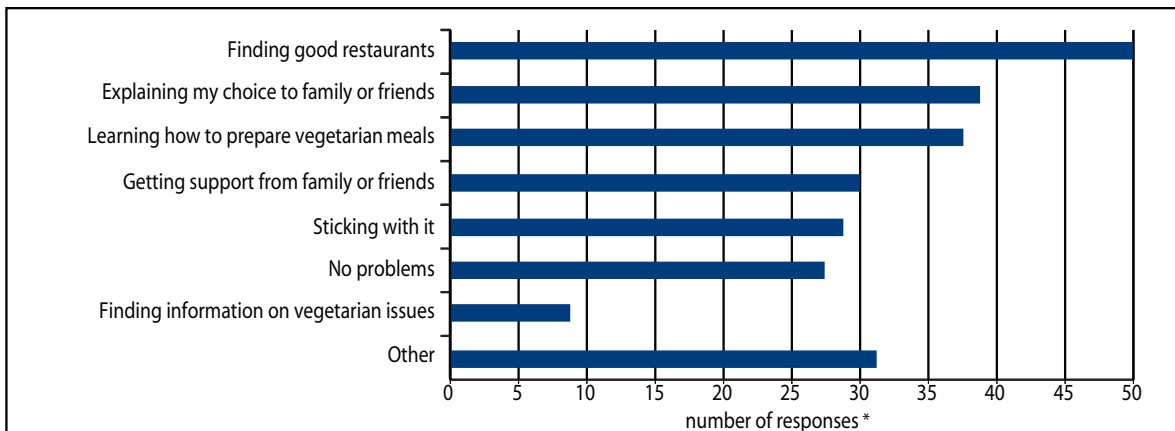
Respondents were asked about their motivations and challenges for adopting a vegetarian diet. The biggest motivating factors reported were health and the environment, followed by animal suffering. There was significant crossover among factors.

### MOTIVATIONS



Respondents reported that the challenges they faced mainly involved issues of emotional support (explaining their choice, sticking with it, family acceptance), and dining (finding restaurants, learning to cook vegetarian meals).

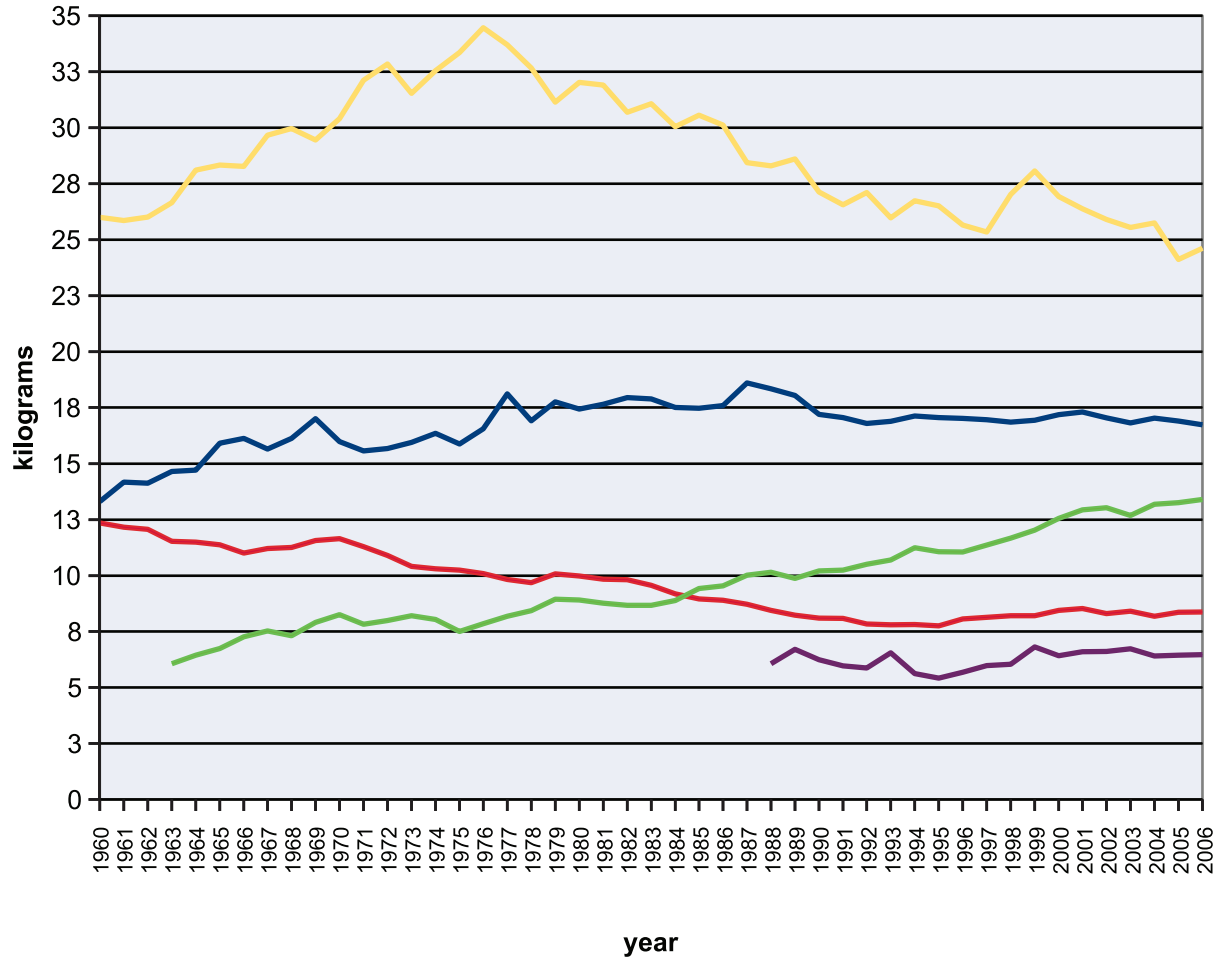
### CHALLENGES



\* Number of survey respondents who felt the statement applied to them.

## APPENDIX 6: FOOD CONSUMED PER PERSON IN CANADA BY MAJOR GROUP, 1960-2006

Estimates adjusted to account for losses in homes, restaurants and institutions resulting from cooking, storage and food wasted.



**Source:**

Food Statistics 2006, Statistics Canada, 21-020-XIE.

- Dairy products (in milk solid equivalent)
- Eggs
- Red meats (boneless weight)
- Poultry (boneless weight)
- Fish (no figures available prior to 1988)

## APPENDIX 7: FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION, BY AGE GROUP

Household population aged 12 and over, Canada and City of Toronto Health Unit  
(June 2005 boundaries), 2005

Fruit and vegetable consumption(1)	Total population for the variable fruit and vegetable consumption		Consume fruits and vegetables less than 5 times per day		Consume fruits and vegetables 5 or more times per day		Consume fruits and vegetables 5 to 10 times per day		Consume fruits and vegetables more than 10 times per day		Fruit and vegetable consumption, not stated	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Canada, 12 years and over, Both sexes	27,131,964	100.0	14,454,649	53.3	11,183,376	41.2	10,003,668	36.9	1,179,708	4.3	1,493,939	5.5
City of Toronto Health Unit, 12 years and over, Both sexes	2,234,412	100.0	1,174,769	52.6	930,636	41.7	855,070	38.3	75,566	3.4	129,008	5.8
City of Toronto Health Unit, 20 to 24 years, Both sexes	194,526	100.0	114,902	59.1	72,535	37.3	64,243	33.0	F	F	F	F
City of Toronto Health Unit, 45 to 64 years, Both sexes	610,730	100.0	299,880	49.1	270,790	44.3	245,548	40.2	25,242	4.1	40,060	6.6

### Legend

F: Too unreliable to be published

### Footnotes

1: Population aged 12 and over who reported the average number of times per day that they consume fruits and vegetables.

### Source:

Statistics Canada. no date., Table 105-0449 - *Fruit and vegetable consumption, by age group and sex, household population aged 12 and over, Canada, provinces, territories and selected health regions* (June 2005 boundaries), every 2 years, CANSIM (database), .

[http://cansim2.statcan.ca/cgi-win/cnsmcgi.exe?Lang=E&CANSIMFile=CII\CII\\_1\\_E.htm&RootDir=CII/](http://cansim2.statcan.ca/cgi-win/cnsmcgi.exe?Lang=E&CANSIMFile=CII\CII_1_E.htm&RootDir=CII/)  
(accessed: October 31, 2007)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Board of directors, committees and staff, Toronto Vegetarian Association**

**Fraser Gibson, strategic plan process leader**

**Roman Pawlyshyn, editor**

**Michelle Lee, graphic designer**

**The many volunteers, supporters and other individuals who participated in the planning process by sharing with us their vision, ideas and feedback.**



The Toronto Vegetarian Association is proudly supported by a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which builds healthy and vibrant communities in this great province.

The Toronto Vegetarian Association gratefully acknowledges the support of the Edward Bronfman Family Foundation. May the memory of Edward Bronfman be for blessing.



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