

## Volunteer Orientation

### **1. About the Toronto Vegetarian Association**

The Toronto Vegetarian Association is a volunteer-driven charitable organization devoted to providing information and support to people who are interested in making healthier, greener, more peaceful food choices. Founded in 1945, it is Canada's largest and most active vegetarian organization. We are a registered non-profit, charitable organization.

Our mission is to inspire people to choose a healthier, greener, more peaceful lifestyle.

Striving to be inclusive to all members and potential members, the TVA developed the following policy, titled Celebrating Vegetarian Choices.

*The Toronto Vegetarian Association is an organization that brings together vegetarians of various motivations to work towards a common goal – to inspire people to choose a healthier, greener, more peaceful lifestyle. TVA defines a vegetarian as ‘someone who lives on a diet free of the flesh of any animals with or without the addition of dairy products, eggs or honey.’*

*TVA celebrates all those who choose a vegetarian lifestyle. Some vegetarians are also vegan and these are two separate choices. We ask that staff and volunteers focus on celebrating the benefits of vegetarianism while accepting and supporting the choices made by fellow TVA supporters.*

*In order to develop a positive, open dialogue with members of the public, we must be respectful of everyone's choices, whether we agree with them or not. Volunteers should remember that we all come to vegetarianism at our own time and for different reasons. When representing TVA, we ask that you keep this in mind as you promote TVA's mission.*

**Office Location:** 17 Baldwin Street, Second Floor, Toronto

**Office Phone Number:** 416-544-9800

### **2. Toronto Vegetarian Food Fair 2009**

The Toronto Vegetarian Food Fair is the largest of its kind in North America, and includes vegetarian food products for sample and for sale, as well as cooking demonstrations, guest speakers and other events. This year's fair has an environmental focus, with related products on exhibit as well.

**Date:** September 11, 12, 13 2009

**Location:** Harbourfront Centre (235 Queens Quay West, Toronto)

**Website:** [veg.ca/foodfair](http://veg.ca/foodfair)

**Cost:** Free

**E-Newsletter:** An e-newsletter which provides regular updates on speakers, exhibitors and more. People can sign up for the newsletter at [veg.ca/foodfair](http://veg.ca/foodfair).

**Volunteering:** Applications for volunteer positions will be posted in early summer. Position descriptions and application forms will be available online at [veg.ca/foodfair](http://veg.ca/foodfair), under the Volunteer section.

### **3. Toronto Vegetarian Association Programs**

#### Resource Centre

**Location:** Second floor of 17 Baldwin Street, above Vegetarian Haven restaurant.

**Telephone, fax, e-mail:** Telephone: 416-544-9800, Fax: 416-544-9094, E-mail: [tva@veg.ca](mailto:tva@veg.ca)

**RC hours:** Wednesdays: 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Saturdays: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

**Holdings:** TVA's Resource Centre has hundreds of books, cookbooks, magazines, videos and DVDs available for viewing or loan. We also stock a large selection of free literature, and vegetarian books (over 100 titles) and merchandise (t-shirts, stickers, buttons, magnets, hats, bags, etc.) are for sale.

#### Vegetarian Directory

The Vegetarian Directory is a free publication, listing vegetarian and vegetarian-friendly restaurants, as well as health food stores, cooking classes and more.

The print version is updated annually, and the web edition ([veg.ca/directory](http://veg.ca/directory)) is updated on a regular basis. The 2010 Directory will be launched at the Vegetarian Food Fair in September.

#### The Veggie Challenge

The Veggie Challenge asks people to pledge to go meat-free for one week. This program is open to anyone interested in reducing their consumption of animal products, including people who may already be vegetarian, but would like to go vegan.

Daily emails are sent for one week with recipe ideas, nutritional information and more, to help people make healthier, greener, more peaceful food choices. Those that sign up are entered into a draw for prizes. Winners are selected every two months. Those who submit stories about their experience are eligible to win additional prizes.

#### TVA Website

[www.veg.ca](http://www.veg.ca)

A comprehensive resource for vegetarian information, such as restaurant listings, events, articles, fact sheets, recipe links, and much more.

### TVA Groups

We host a range of vegetarian social groups across the GTA that help to provide support and networking opportunities for vegetarians, vegans or those hoping to transition to a plant-based diet.

#### **Groups by Location**

Durham Lakeside Group

Veggies of Halton and Peel

York Region/North York Vegetarian Group

#### **Groups by Interest**

Dinner Social Group

Queer Veggie Social Group

Raw Vegan Group

Reading Group

Vegetarians in Their Twenties

#### **4. TVA Memberships**

We request a minimum donation of \$20 for membership, but many people choose to give more as funds from memberships go toward supporting our programs, such as the Food Fair and the Vegetarian Directory.

We now have monthly giving forms! When people show an interest in joining TVA, please ask them if they would like to make an **annual donation** (green form) or a **monthly donation** (white form). If someone fills out a white form, please be sure to confirm they are aware they are making a monthly donation.

TVA members have the option of purchasing a discount card (see below). TVA members receive a 16-page, quarterly newsletter. Memberships, and associated discount cards, are valid for 12 months from the date the membership is processed. We will issue an income tax receipt for the full amount of their donation.

Discount cards are one for \$20 or two for \$35. In addition to discounts at participating vegetarian and vegetarian-friendly restaurants and cafes, it also provides discounts at numerous health food stores, vacation spots, and other stores and services. **Only TVA members may purchase a discount card.**

## 5. FAQs

### What do I do if I have to cancel my shift?

Please aim to give at least 48 hours notice should you need to reschedule or cancel your shift. Contact the Administrative Assistant (blazarus@veg.ca) directly to cancel or reschedule your shift.

If the shift you are cancelling is within the next 48 hours, **please notify the emergency TVA contact listed on your confirmation email by telephone**. Do not just leave a message at the TVA office.

### What if no volunteers show up for the next shift?

Please wait a few minutes before leaving—the volunteer may be stuck in traffic, or having a hard time finding the TVA table.

If a volunteer still fails to arrive after a reasonable waiting period, call the emergency TVA contact.

### Do members need to be vegetarian?

No, it is not required for TVA members to be vegetarian.

### What forms of payment do we accept?

We accept cash, cheque, Visa and MasterCard at outreach events. Cheques should be made out to Toronto Vegetarian Association.

### Do prices include taxes?

Yes, all prices include taxes where applicable. You do not need to add taxes.

### What should I do if I am approached by the media?

Please review our Media Tip Sheet for information on responding to media inquiries. In general, volunteers are encouraged to use TVA's mission statement when describing the purpose of the organization: Inspiring people to choose a healthier, greener, more peaceful lifestyle. Volunteers are encouraged to list specific programs and activities that the organization runs or currently participates in, and are strongly discouraged from describing the organization's position on controversial subjects. Further media inquiries should be directed to senior staff.