

VEGGIES

Continued from Page 3

Vegetarians are often thought to be unhealthy by meat eaters who assume that meat is the only source of protein, said student Jen Magun.

"Protein is in so many things. Bread and grains have a lot of protein," she said.

Animal sources not only come with a high source of protein but also with a high source of cholesterol, said Mary Ann Kelly of Applied Nutritional Services in Eugene.

There are different types of vegetarians. Lacto-ovo vegetarians don't eat meat but consume animal products (namely eggs and milk). Lacto vegetarians don't eat meat and eggs but consume milk and dairy products. Ovo vegetarians don't eat

meat and milk but eat eggs. Vegans eat no meat or animal products.

Vegetarians are by no means "sprout-eating" freaks as many meat eaters believe, Marssdorf said.

"(Meat eaters) think I'm a hippie granola-eating freak," he said, adding that non-vegetarians also often ask "What do you eat?"

"There are tons of things out there (to eat) that aren't meat," he said.

Italian food is a favorite for vegetarians, Marssdorf said. Indeed, many health food and environmental stores in Eugene offer special items for non-meat eaters.

Anything a shopper can get with meat is available with a substitute, said Tom Lea of Sundance Natural Foods.

"A lot of local small companies manufacture homemade goodies," he said. "We have frozen pot pies and fast food like tacos and pizza."

Oasis Fine Foods Marketplace has an "incredible selection" of vegetarian items, said owner Doug Brown.

Brown's store has garden burgers made from grains and spices, and tofu hot dogs. It also stocks vegetarian lasagne, which does not contain meat but has cheese.

You could eat a meal a day as a non-vegetarian and not miss meat, Brown said.

When making food selections, vegetarians must be more creative than meat eaters, Magun said.

"You have to use your mind," he said.

The main nutritional concern

vegetarians should be aware of is combining their foods appropriately.

"Vegetarians will only suffer nutritionally if they plan their diets without being aware of what they're doing," Kelly said.

Meat is a major source of protein, Kelly said, but not the only one. Combining soy beans and rice, for example, will form a complete "building block" of amino acid, a complete protein.

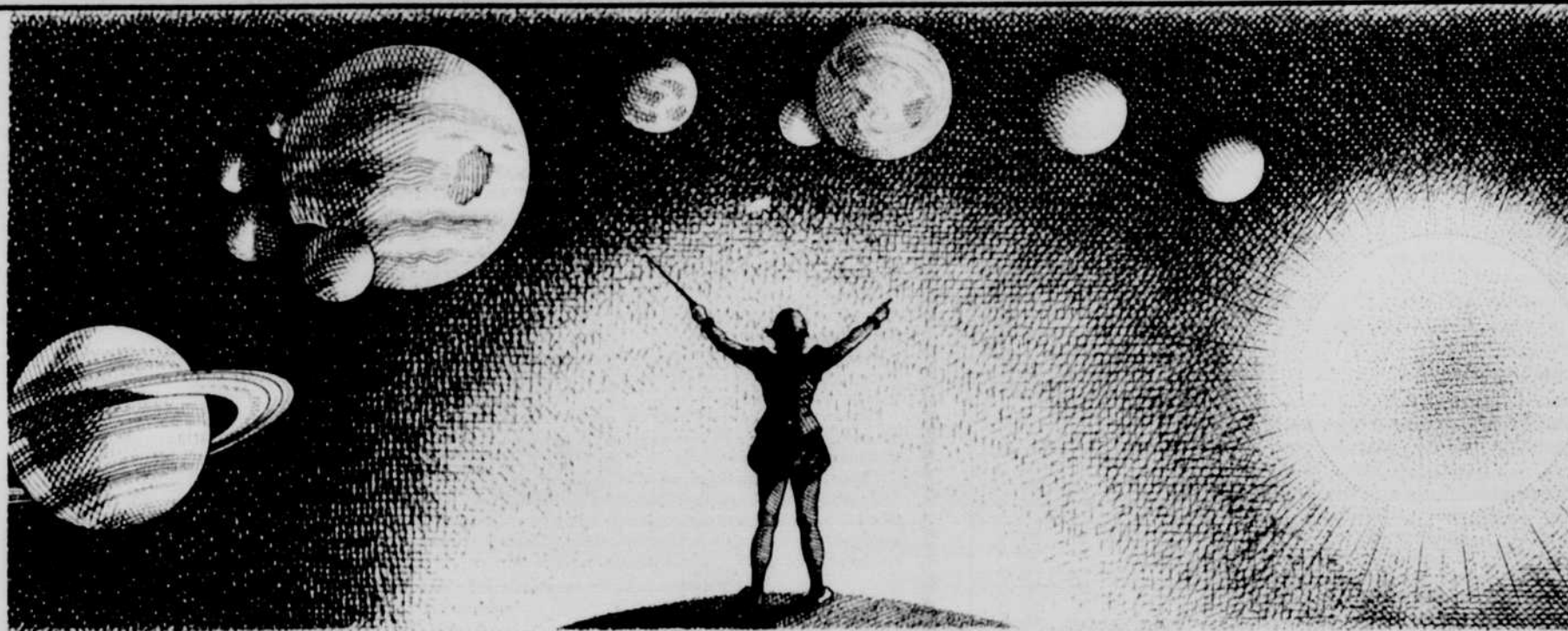
Combining legumes and alternative protein sources, such as soy beans, with whole grains and rice will provide vegetarians with protein. Consuming products high in vitamin C will aid the body in its absorption of iron.

There are a few easily correctable drawbacks to being a vegetarian.

"If people are deficient in iron and vitamin B-12 it could result in anemia," Kelly said adding that iron is found in other protein sources. The way vegetarians receive vitamin B-12, however, is "basically a bottle."

Tofu, a soybean curd, is a popular source of protein for vegetarians, said Theresa Thornton, marketing coordinator at Surata Soyfoods. It has 108 units of protein in comparison to 85 units found in a proportionate size of meat.

Vegetarians must put more effort into their food selection. However, most vegetarians say they gain the comfort of knowing they're receiving benefits ranging from a healthier diet to the knowledge that animals are not killed to provide them with food.



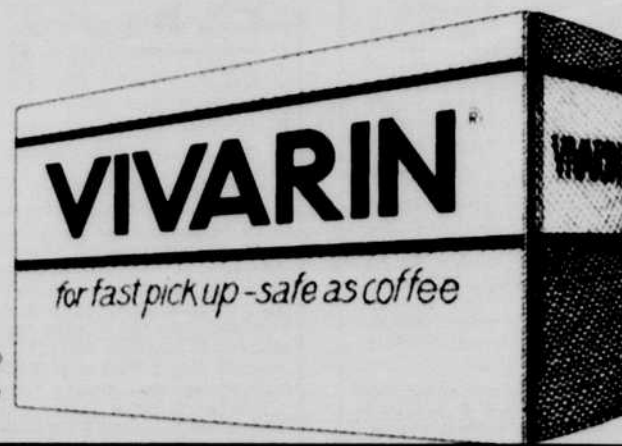
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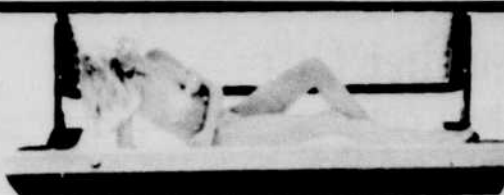
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