



素食與健康

Health & Vegetarianism (3)

◎ 嚴國銘

(接上期，英文版)

Yen, Kuo-Ming

Moreover, let's look at the Chart IV, and you can actually see that vegetarian foods contain more nutrients and less cholesterol. The listings are based on a 100 gram serving of each, and the source of the data listed here is the USDA Nutrient Database, so it is very reliable. Many people think that they may not get enough calcium, protein, and iron from vegetables. However, from the chart, it is clear that sesame seeds contain 975 mg of calcium, tofu contains 683 mg of calcium, and soybeans contain 277 mg of calcium. People usually believe that milk contains much calcium, but it still has less calcium, 193 mg to be exact, than sesame and soybeans. Also, fish and eggs all contain less than 60 mg calcium, which is 15 times less than sesame. Besides, you can see that most vegetarian food contains low percentage of saturated fat. Unsaturated fat is important for our health and may help us to eliminate saturated fat in our bodies, which can therefore prevent us from receiving cardiovascular diseases. On the contrary, most animal foods contain high

percentage of saturated fat such as milk, it contains more than 50% of saturated fat in its total fat. So, like other animal foods, even though milk is a nutritious food, it may also cause some serious health problems. As for cholesterol, you can see that whether it is sesame or soybeans, neither contains any cholesterol. On the contrary, animal foods all contain cholesterol, especially fried eggs which contain 459 mg cholesterol, and like saturated fat, may also cause cardiovascular diseases. Americans consume too much animal foods, and that's why 8 out of every 10 Americans suffer from heart disease or cancer at some point in their lifetime. As for protein, you can see sesame and tofu both contain more protein than fish and eggs, and soybeans contain more protein than fish. As for mineral, most nuts and beans contain a lot of it. For example, sesame and soybeans both contain more Magnesium than milk, fish, or eggs.

Source	Calcium mg	Fat g		Chol. mg	Protein g	Mag. mg	Iron mg	Fiber g
		Total	Saturated					
Sesame seeds	975.00	49.67	6.96	0.00	17.73	351.00	14.55	11.80
Tofu, raw, firm,	683.00	8.72	1.26	0.00	15.78	58.00	10.47	2.30
Soybeans,	277.00	19.94	2.88	0.00	36.49	280.00	15.70	9.30
Milk, sheep	193.40	7.00	4.60	27.00	5.98	18.36	0.10	0.00
Finfish,	60.00	2.94	0.42	41.00	26.69	107.00	1.07	0.00
Egg, whole, cooked, fried	55.00	15.00	4.17	459.00	13.54	11.00	1.56	0.00

Chart IV: USDA Nutritive Value Chart

Due to the high percentage of saturated fat and cholesterol in animal products, they cause cardiovascular diseases, and also many other health problems. Meat may contain many chemicals, such as antibiotics, hormone, pesticide. Also, there are many kinds of unhealthy substances within it, such

as saturated fat, cholesterol, and many parasites and diseases, such as bird flu, mad cow diseases, may hide in it. Because of the problems listed above, a non-vegetarian lifestyle may cause heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, pimples, arthritis(sore joints), osteoporosis, obesity, and constipation.

On an animal farm, most animals are treated in an inhumane and unsanitary way. Animals eat, sleep, and excrete in the same crowded place, and some of them even have to eat their own excrement, or are fed by food mixed with chemicals and garbage. Therefore, most of them get sick before being sent to the slaughter house. These animal farmers use a lot of antibiotics to avoid these animals' death before they are killed. Misuse of antibiotics to feed animals causes many international infective diseases. Many bacteria not only become resistant to medicine, but also become more terrible. In 1918, bird flu caused 20 million deaths in Spain, and the death rate was only 1%. Today, the virus mutates, and the death rate has reached to 76%. Therefore, many people think that bird flu, mad cow disease, and other terrible diseases are natural disasters, but actually they are man-made disasters. If people don't change the way of raising domestic animals, the disasters will become more and more serious.

Hormone is also a big problem. Animal farmers use much hormone to make animal grow dramatically fast, and make more money. However, these chemicals go into our bodies through food, and create big problems. For example, my friend complained to me that her ten-year-old daughter began her menses this summer, and she really worries that her daughter may not grow taller. She also told me that her daughter's classmates face the same problem. It not only may limit children's growth, but also may cause a big problem—cancer.

Some people may think vegetables contain too much pesticide. Actually, the higher the position in the food chain, the more pollutants you may accumulate. Pesticide authority Lewis Regenstein claims, pesticide accumulates in the fatty tissues of animals is 14 times greater than fruits and vegetables; and dairy products is 5 1/2 times more polluted.

When having a strong argument with others, people may feel dizzy, stomach ache, and other bad feelings, and this is because that negative emotion creates a certain toxin. It's the same when animals are killed; their pain, anger, and terror are much stronger than ours during an argument, and much more toxins are created. In Chart IV, we have seen that vegetarian food contain more calcium. And that's why plant-eating animals are gentler. If one is insufficient for calcium, his temper will be more unstable, so eating too much meat and too less vegetable is more liable to make people have bad temper. Besides, the free radical within the meat may age your cells and organ, and create pimples.

(To be continued)

