



*Go Vegan!*

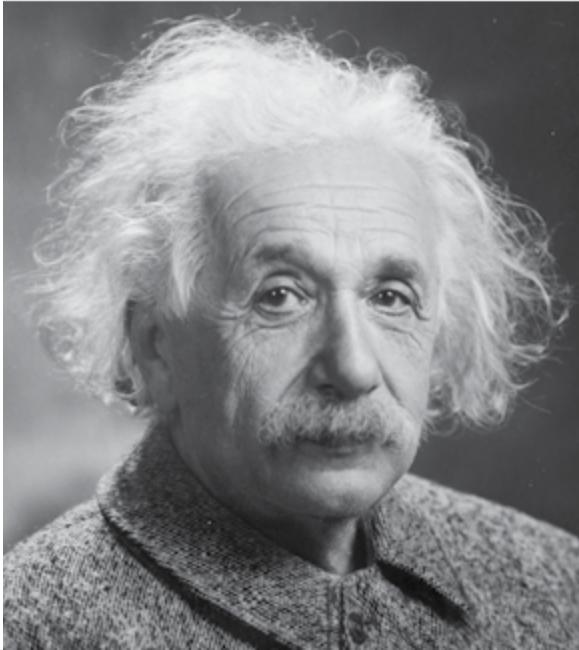
Great

Vegan Thinkers

of History

People sometimes view veganism as a new trend - emerging from social media and iphones. Not true! Veganism is documented to have been around since Christ's time. And seeds were planted centuries ago by great thinkers who have contributed in one way or another to our evolution.

These historical figures illuminate us with their ideas, discoveries, and masterpieces. They changed history forever, and paved the way for vegan going mainstream now.

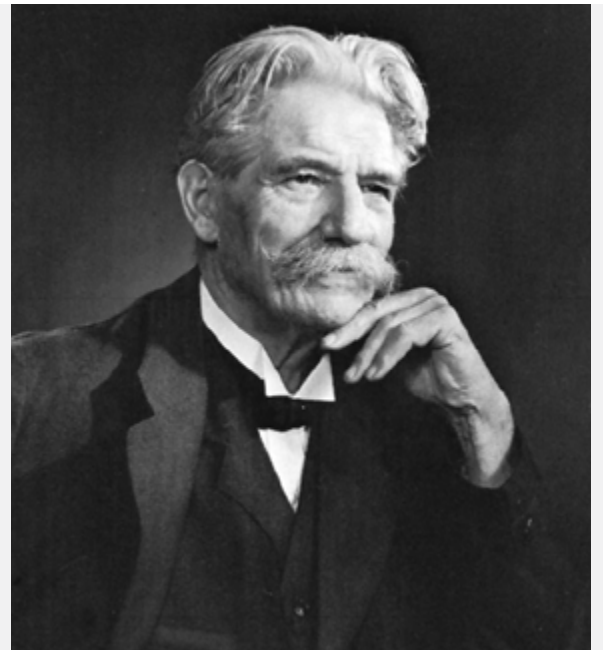


## Albert Einstein

Nobel Prize winner regarded as the father of modern physics & the most influential physicist of the 20th century. He was a firm believer in animal rights- “If a man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals.” “Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet. Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty.” (1)

## Albert Schweitzer

Born 1875 in the province of Alsace-Lorraine in the German Empire, is mostly remembered for his work in Africa as a missionary. He was also a theologian, organist, philosopher, and physician. He set in motion important ideas concerning our ethical treatment of animals and played an important role in the evolution of our concept of animal rights. “Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace.” (1)



## Buddha (Philosopher)

“One should not kill a living being, nor cause it to be killed, nor should one incite another to kill. Do not injure any being, either strong or weak, in the world.” (1)



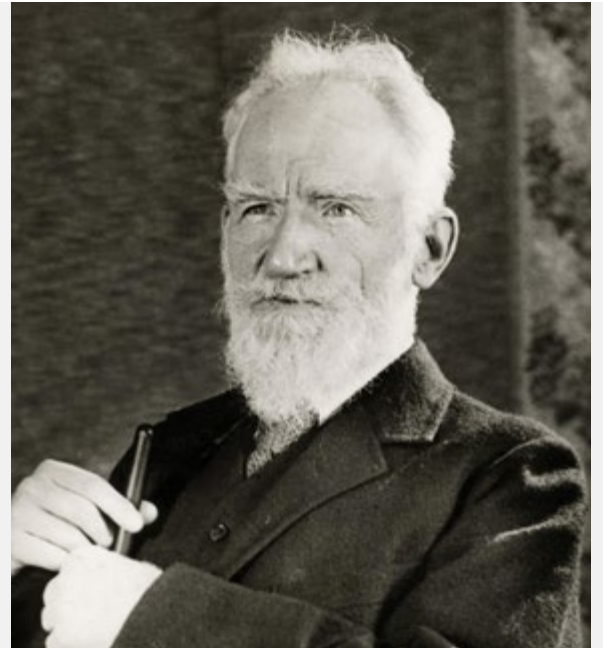


### Clara Barton

(Founder American Red Cross) Clara Barton was an educator, nurse and founder of the American Red Cross. She was a vegetarian and loved all animals, especially cats. (1)

### George Bernard Shaw

Irish author and playwright, George Bernard Shaw, was a strict vegetarian and openly criticized humans for their consumption of meat, describing them as the “living graveyards of murdered beasts”. “Why should you call me to account for eating decently? If I batted on the scorched corpses of animals, you might well ask me why I did that.” (1)



### Henry David Thoreau

One of America’s most famous writers, and is remembered for his philosophical and naturalist writings. “ I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilized.” (1)





## Henry Stephens Salt

An English writer and campaigner for social reform in the fields of prisons, schools, economic institutions, and the treatment of animals. He was a noted ethical vegetarian, antivivisectionist, socialist, and pacifist, and was well known as a literary critic, biographer, classical scholar and naturalist. He is credited with being the first writer to argue explicitly in favour of animal rights in his book *Animals' Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress*, and in *A Plea for Vegetarianism*. As man is truly "humanized", not by schools of cookery but by schools of thought, he will abandon the barbarous habit of his flesh-eating ancestors, and will make gradual progress towards a purer, simpler, more humane, and therefore more civilized diet-system." (1)

## H.G. Wells

A Victorian author most famous for his science-fiction novels *War of the Worlds* and *The Time Machine*.

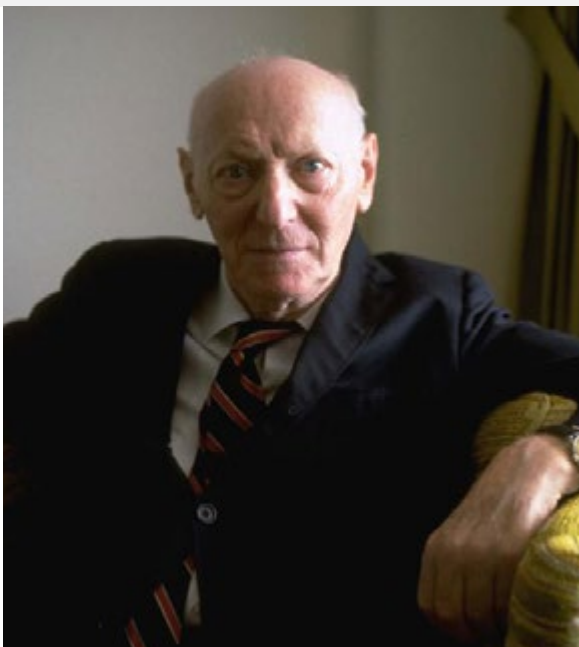
"The too obvious fact that a large portion of animals are carnivorous neither proves nor justifies the carnivorousness of the human species." (1)



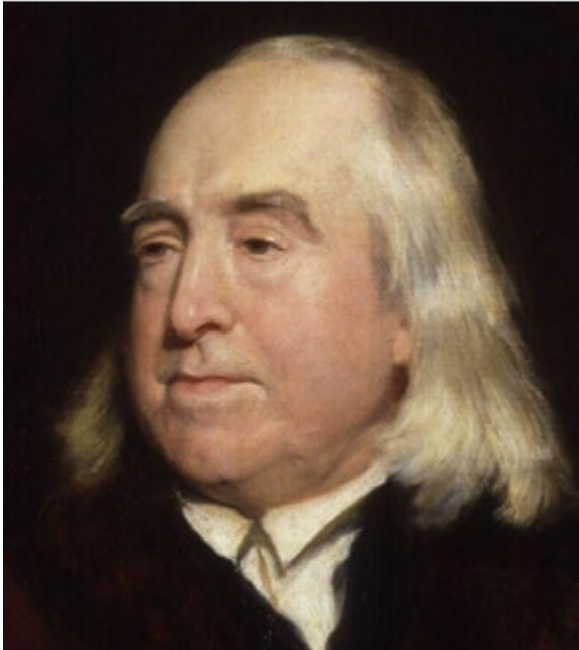
## Isaac Bashevis Singer

A Polish-born Jewish-American He was a leading figure in the Yiddish literary movement, writing and publishing only in Yiddish, and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1978.

"When a human kills an animal for food, he is neglecting his own hunger for justice. Man prays for mercy, but is unwilling to extend it to others." (1)







## Jeremy Bentham

A British philosopher, jurist, and social reformer. He is widely regarded as one of the earliest proponents of animal rights, and has even been hailed as “the first patron saint of animal rights”. He argued that the ability to suffer, not the ability to reason, should be the benchmark, or what he called the “insuperable line”. If reason alone were the criterion by which we judge who ought to have rights, human infants and adults with certain forms of disability might fall short, too.

“The day may come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withheld from them but by the hand of tyranny. The question is not, can they reason? Nor can they talk? But, can they suffer?” (1)

## John Wesley

An Anglican divine and theologian who, with his brother Charles Wesley and fellow cleric George Whitefield, is credited with the foundation of the evangelical movement known as Methodism.

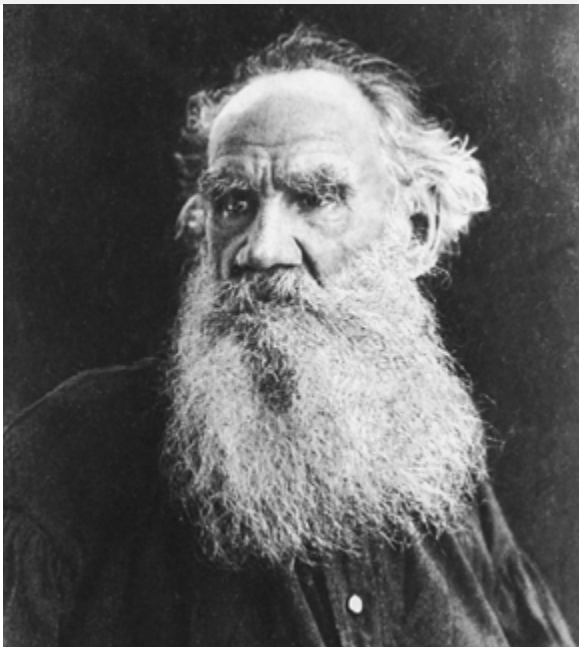
“Since the time I gave up the use of flesh-meats and wine, I have been delivered from all physical ills.” (1)



## Leo Tolstoy

Russian author, he wrote the acclaimed novels War and Peace, Anna Karenina and The Death of Ivan Ilyich.

“A man can live and be healthy without killing animals for food; therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite. And to act so is immoral.” (1)





## Leonardo da Vinci

Genius artist, inventor and scientist.

“The time will come when men such as I will look upon the murder of animals as they now look on the murder of men.” “My body will not be a tomb for other creatures.”

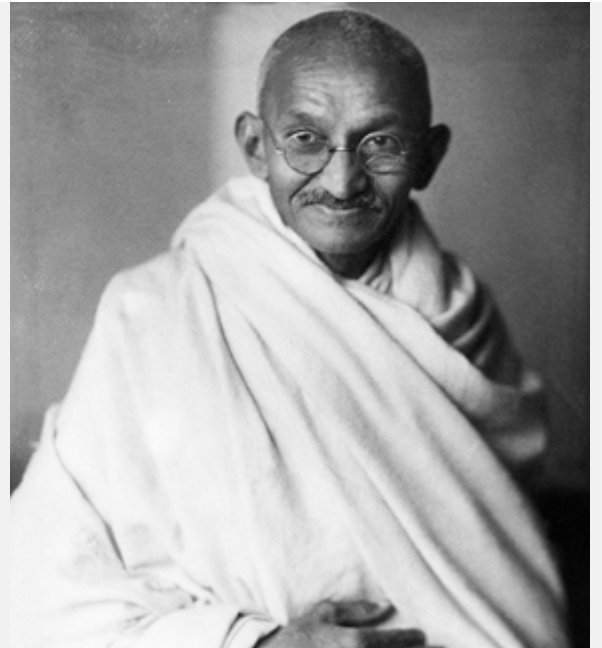
(1)

## Mahatma Gandhi

Led India to independence and inspired movements for non-violence, civil rights and freedom across the world.

“I do not regard flesh-food as necessary for us at any stage and under any climate in which it is possible for human beings ordinarily to live. I hold flesh-food to be unsuited to our species. To my mind, the life of a lamb is no less precious than that of a human being. I should be unwilling to take the life of a lamb for the sake of the human body.”

(1)



## Mary Shelley

English novelist, short story writer, dramatist, essayist, biographer, and travel writer, best known for her Gothic novel *Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818). She also edited and promoted the works of her husband, the Romantic poet and philosopher Percy Bysshe Shelley. Mary and Percy were both vegetarians, and strong advocates for animal rights.

“Live, and be happy, and make others so.” (1)





## Nikola Tesla

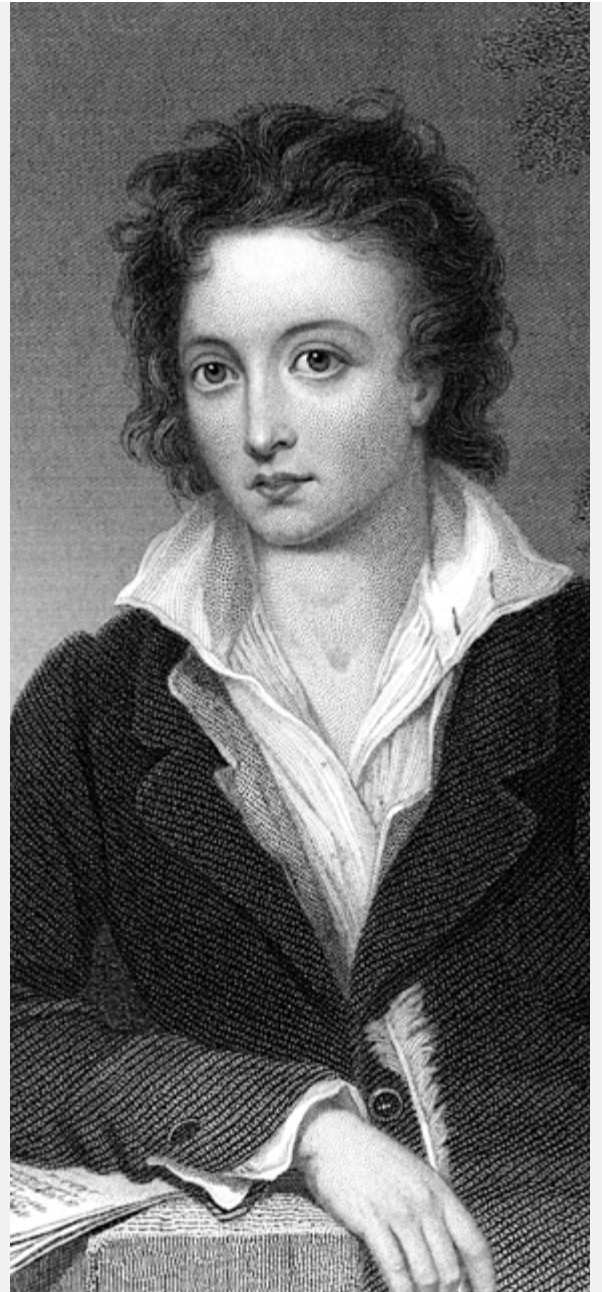
Serbian-American inventor Nikola Tesla contributed to the development of the alternating-current electrical system that is widely used today and discovered the rotating magnetic field (the basis of most AC machinery). "It is certainly preferable to raise vegetables, and I think, therefore, that vegetarianism is a commendable departure from the established barbarous habit. Every effort should be made to stop the wanton and cruel slaughter of animals." (1)

## Percy Bysshe Shelley

Author, playwright, and poet, known for his lyrical and long-form verse. is one of the most highly regarded English Romantic poets of the 19th century. He was a staunch advocate of vegetarianism, and authored several works on the diet and spiritual practice, including *A Vindication of Natural Diet* (1813). He argued that eating meat was unnatural and he maintained that diseases and immorality arose from mankind's "unnatural habits of life". A meatless diet was the best regimen for maintaining a healthy and disease-free lifestyle. He wrote that human diseases could be decreased by a return to a natural vegetable diet. Shelley used comparative anatomy to show that the human digestive system resembles that of frugivorous or plant-eating animals. He presented examples of how a vegetarian diet resulted in longevity and an increased lifespan.

"If the use of animal food be, in consequence, subversive to the peace of human society, how unwarrantable is the injustice and the barbarity which is exercised toward these miserable victims. They are called into existence by human artifice that they may drag out a short and miserable existence of slavery and disease, that their bodies may be mutilated, their social feelings outraged."

(1)







## Plutarch

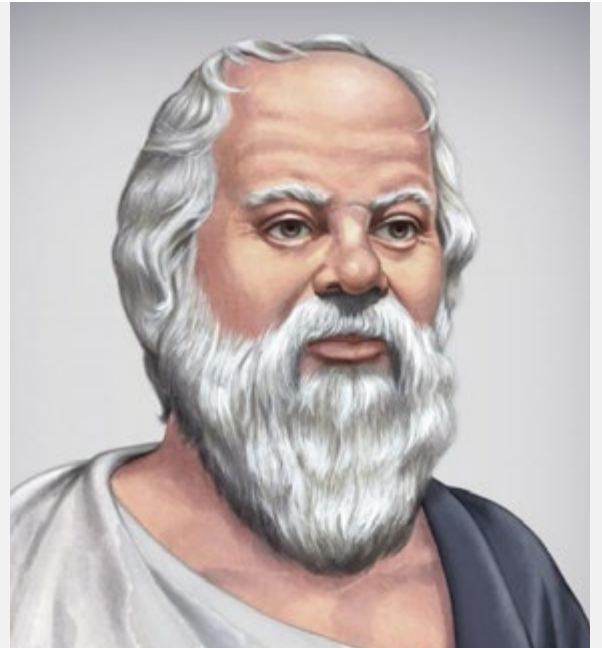
A Greek historian, who later became a Roman citizen, a biographer and essayist. He was born 46 -120 AD. He also authored a number of treatises on matters of ethics, on topics such as education, marriage, religious observances and reason in non-human animals and the practice of ethical vegetarianism.

“I rather wonder both by what accident and in what state of soul or mind the first man touched his mouth to gore and brought his lips to the flesh of a dead creature, he who set forth tables of dead, stale bodies and ventured to call food and nourishment the parts that had a little before bellowed and cried, moved and lived. How could his eyes endure the slaughter when throats were slit and hides flayed and limbs torn from limb? How could his nose endure the stench?” (1)

## Socrates

Athenian philosopher, believed that philosophy should achieve practical results for the greater well-being of society. He attempted to establish an ethical system based on human reason rather than theological doctrine. He pointed out that human choice was motivated by the desire for happiness. Ultimate wisdom comes from knowing oneself.

“Would this habit of eating animals not require that we slaughter animals that we knew as individuals, and in whose eyes we could gaze and see ourselves reflected, only a few hours before our meal?”. “Thou should eat to live; not live to eat.” (1)



## St. Francis of Assisi

Abandoned a life of luxury for a life devoted to Christianity after reportedly hearing the voice of God, who commanded him to rebuild the Christian church and live in poverty. He is the patron saint for ecologists.

“If you have men who will exclude any of God’s creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who deal likewise with their fellow men.” (1)





## William Blake

William Blake was a 19th century writer and artist who is regarded as a seminal figure of the Romantic Age.

“All wholesome food is caught without a net or a trap.”

(1)

## Pythagoras

In addition to being a brilliant mathematician, Pythagoras was one of the most famous and influential ancient Greek philosophers. He and his followers were also famous for being vegetarians. In fact, the term “Pythagorean diet” was used instead of “vegetarian” for many years. (2)



## Plato

Many Greek philosophers were vegetarian, including the famous thinker Plato. He believed that a society that eats meat requires more doctors. Of course, we now know this to be true. He also said, “The gods created certain kinds of beings to replenish our bodies. ... They are the trees and the plants and the seeds.” (2)





### Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks, the civil rights activist known for refusing to give up her bus seat, was a vegetarian for over 40 years. In the book *Positive Energy*, doctor and author Judith Orloff includes an interview with Rosa Parks in which she says: “For over forty years, I’ve been vegetarian. Growing up, my family had little money—I had health problems early in life because of poor nutrition. Eating healthy is a priority for me.” (2)

### Coretta Scott King

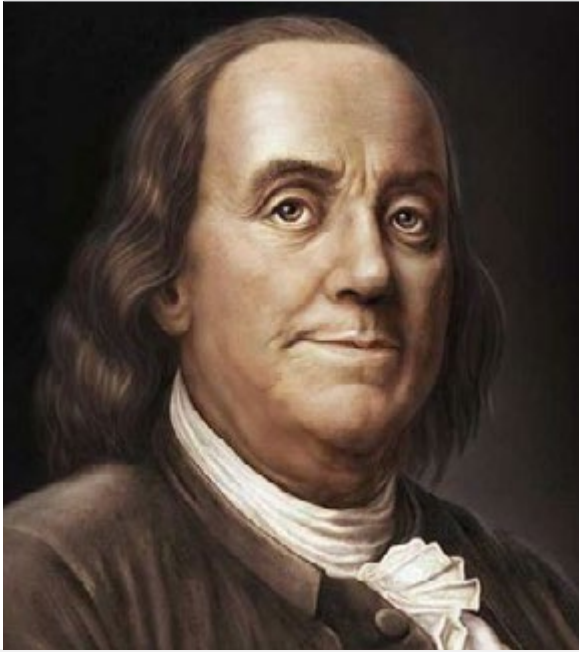
A champion for women, people of color, and the gay community, but she also spent the last 10 years of her life as a vegan because she knew that animal rights was a social justice issue too. (2)



### Cesar Chavez

An influential labor leader and vegetarian, Cesar Chavez co-founded the National Farm Workers Association. In 1992 Chavez said: “We know we cannot defend and be kind to animals until we stop exploiting them—exploiting them in the name of science, exploiting animals in the name of sport, exploiting animals in the name of fashion, and yes, exploiting animals in the name of food.” (2)





## Benjamin Franklin

Diplomat, political activist and inventor, who discovered electricity and invented the Franklin stove. He has often been referred to as 'America's renaissance man' and was emblematic of the fledgling American nation. He wrote in his autobiography that he became a vegetarian when he was 16 years old. "Flesh eating is unprovoked murder." (3)

## Louisa May Alcott

Little Women author Louisa May Alcott was raised vegan before the word existed. Her father Amos Bronson Alcott turned to the lifestyle after reading Pythagoras and attending a series of health reformer Sylvester Graham's lectures on the "Science of Life." For a short while, the Alcotts even lived in the communal environment of Fruitlands. There, not only did they eschew meat, but also didn't use dairy products, wool, leather, or cotton (as a product of slavery). (4)



## Ovid (43 BC-AD 17 or 18)

We know that the Roman poet Publius Ovidius Naso, known as Ovid, followed a vegan-like diet because he wrote about the dietary beliefs of another ancient figure: the Ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras. Like Pythagoras, Ovid was a stoic who believed that one's conduct should be harmonious with the natural world. The poetry of Ovid is noted for its emotion and eroticism. For reasons that are lost to history, he spent the last decade of his life in exile in present day Romania, where he is hailed as a national literary hero. (5)





### Abu al-Ala al-Ma'arri

The Arab poet and philosopher al-Ma'arri is a fascinating character who believed in principles of justice and compassion which he extended to the animals and the natural world. He was blind and lived in relative isolation hailing from a region that today belongs to Syria, where his beliefs continue to be controversial. He was an ascetic who decried violence, including killing of any kind. In his writing, he denounces eating animal flesh or drinking milk (5)

### Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)

Susan Anthony, a Quaker, believed in all forms of social justice, including suffrage, women's rights and the abolition of slavery, which was nearly unheard of in her time. She was also active in the animal welfare movement of the 19th century, speaking at the first meeting of American Vegetarian Society. Her struggle was met with considerable opposition but by her 80th birthday, she would be invited as an honored guest of the President William McKinley at the White House. She is the first woman and the only non-meat eater ever to have her likeness grace US currency. (5)



### Reference:

1. <https://www.viva.org.uk/vegan-vegetarian-historical-figures>
2. <https://mercyforanimals.org/10-historical-figures-you-wont-believe-were>
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