



## **The Vegetarian Society Seedling Symbol – The original and only one to trust**

### **An Introduction...**

The Vegetarian Society seedling symbol was first registered as an official trademark in 1969. By the early 1980s, with the considerable growth in vegetarianism, the seedling symbol was becoming more actively sought out. Food manufacturing companies were also beginning to realise the potential of using the symbol on their range of products. Many manufacturers wanted to use The Vegetarian Society seedling symbol, believing their products to be vegetarian. Closer inspection would often reveal that such products contained non-vegetarian ingredients, animal fats or additives. This resulted in the creation of the first set of official Vegetarian Society guidelines concerning the usage of the symbol.

### **Our criteria..**

For a product to be approved by The Vegetarian Society it must meet the following criteria:

- Free from animal flesh (meat, fowl, fish or shellfish), meat or bone stock, animal or carcass fats, gelatine, aspic or any other ingredients resulting from slaughter.
- Contain only free range eggs, where eggs are used
- Free from GMOs
- Cruelty free – no animal testing
- No cross contamination during the production process. If the production line is shared with non-vegetarian products, thorough cleaning must be carried out before vegetarian production commences. This extends to all associated machinery, equipment, utensils, surfaces and clothing, which must remain free from non vegetarian ingredients before vegetarian products are touched, prepared, produced or packaged. Strict procedures must be in place to ensure packaging mix-ups and other errors do not occur.

### **This simple set of guidelines is embodied by the Society's approved logo which ensures foods are absolutely suitable for vegetarians.**

Millions of people have come to rely upon the symbol's unique positioning. No other symbol can give consumers such reassurance and inspire such trust.

The Vegetarian Society seedling symbol trademark is now proudly displayed on a diverse range of over 6000 product lines available in the UK and abroad. It is even used by the National Health Service as part of their hospital food initiative.

The Society continues to work in mutually beneficial partnership with the food industry and is always happy to consult on products or ingredients, to extend the range of food suitable for vegetarians.

Vegetarian Society approval continues to go from strength to strength. It is far more popular and widespread than ever, which can only be good news for vegetarians and food manufacturers alike.

## Who else has their products approved by The Vegetarian Society?

Many reputable companies including:

McDonalds Restaurants  
Kettle Foods  
Hain Celestial (Linda McCartney Foods)  
Premier Foods (Quorn brand)  
Lush (hand made cosmetics)  
Dalepak (vegetarian ranges)  
ACDO washing powders  
Burger King  
Coors Brewers (Grolsh)  
Cauldron Foods ..... and many more

## How much does it cost to have my products approved by The Vegetarian Society?

Vegetarian Society approval costs from £326.30 per year (depending on the quantity of products to be approved and the annual turnover of the products).

This is extremely cost effective when compared with the cost of other marketing activities. On receipt of the enclosed application form, we will review your application and contact you with a quotation for approval.

## What would we get for the annual licence fee?

- Independent approval of your products by The Vegetarian Society, who invented the word vegetarian over 150 years ago.
- Use of The Vegetarian Society approved trademark on the packaging of all approved products.
- 25% discount when advertising in the Society's magazine "The Vegetarian".
- **Free of charge inclusion within "VegsocApproved.com"**.  
**VegsocApproved.com** is an A5 mini magazine which is inserted into the Society's magazine "The Vegetarian" and independently distributed at both trade and consumer exhibitions promoting products which are approved by the Society.
- **Support from our Public Relations team.** Each month our P.R team contacts all the leading industry magazines to let them know about the latest approved products. Product promotion by the Society is often regarded as news rather than sales product and as a result attracts interest from the media.
- **Free of charge product listing** on our web site [www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com) with a link back to your website.
- Marketing opportunities throughout the year. The Vegetarian Society is involved with many events including National Vegetarian Week. Once your products are approved, you will receive regular mailings, which detail marketing and networking opportunities.
- Product promotion and competitions on our web site [www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com)  
A recent competition on our website received an amazing 16000 entries. Contacts gained via competitions are passed back to our clients for future marketing.

## How do we apply for Vegetarian Society approval?

Simply complete and return the enclosed application form and we will contact you with a quotation for accreditation.



**Vegetarian Society Approved - The original and only one to trust**  
**Application Form**

**Part One**

- Step 1 Please attach a complete ingredients list for each product you would like approved, whether required by legislation or not. Please ensure you state the origin of items such as rennet in cheese, finings in wine etc. and include all ingredient data sheets where possible.
- Step 2 Please state below:  
**Number of product (s) /ranges** .....  
**Estimated annual turnover of product (s) to be approved is £** .....
- Step 3 Please state which month you would like your trademark licence to commence <sup>1</sup> .....

**Part Two**

**Please complete the company details below**

Company ..... Contact Name .....

Address ..... Position .....

..... Signed .....

..... Date .....

Postcode ..... Tel Number .....

E-mail ..... Fax .....

Website .....

**Part Three - Marketing information**

Where will your product (s) be available from.....

Who is the person responsible for marketing or PR Agency.

Name ..... Tel Number .....

E-mail .....

It is important we have this information so your company can maximise any marketing opportunities The Vegetarian Society has to offer.

## **Part Four - Our policies and guidelines**

The seedling symbol trademark (est. 1969) ensures that vegetarian consumers buy with confidence. This is because the seedling symbol is renowned world wide as the only vegetarian logo to recognise the ethical preferences of vegetarians.

### **Guidelines**

The seedling symbol cannot be used on any products containing the following:

- Animal flesh (meat, fowl, fish or shellfish)
- Meat, fish or bone stock/stock cubes
- Animal carcass fats (including suet, lard or dripping)
- Gelatine, aspic, gelatine based block or jelly crystals
- Battery or intensively produced eggs.
- Royal Jelly

The Vegetarian Society is happy to give further advice on products or ingredients and is happy to work with your company to find suitable alternatives.

### **Our Policies**

#### **Animal Testing – Cosmetic and Household Products**

*All cosmetic and household products (including ingredients) must not be tested on animals. The Vegetarian Society will only approve cosmetic and household products from companies that do not commission any such experiments and do not buy ingredients from companies who test or commission others to test on animals.*

All companies which use The Vegetarian Society approved trademark will complete an annual declaration that they do not test on animals. The Society asks each individual company to inform us of its own animal testing cut off date and prefers cosmetic products to comply with the Humane Cosmetic Standard. Please contact the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) for details of product approval to the Human Cosmetic Standard.

British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection  
16a Crane Grove  
London, N7 8NN  
Tel: 0207 700 4888  
[www.buav.org](http://www.buav.org)

#### **Animal Testing – Food Products**

The Society will not approve any new food product for sale in the UK for which the producing company has carried out or commissioned animal testing, either for the finished product or any ingredient unless such testing was a proven and unavoidable legal requirement.

#### **Genetically Modified Ingredients**

Genetically modified ingredients or products containing genetically modified ingredients are not acceptable to The Vegetarian Society. The Society believes it is impossible to guarantee that such products are completely in accordance with the Society's vegetarian principles. However, vegetarian rennet used in cheese making is exempt (*for more details see the FAQ sheet included with this form*).

Please enclose a copy of your GM policy with this application form.





### **Marketing Opportunities – Promoting your business**

Product approval by the Vegetarian Society provides excellent PR and networking opportunities for your company and products, The Society is regularly contacted for advice on many food issues, which usually leads to a recommendation of our clients approved products. Experience has also shown that seedling symbol approval leads to extensive press coverage and interest from both consumer and trade media.

### **“The Vegetarian” magazine**

The Vegetarian Society’s own quarterly magazine, “The Vegetarian” is sent to all corporate clients and members of the Society; it currently has a readership of around 30000. We also offer clients a 25% discount when advertising in The Vegetarian and priority for premium spaces.

### **“VegsocApproved.com”**

“VegsocApproved.com” is a full colour 20 page A5 mini mag which is inserted into “The Vegetarian”, with dual appeal to both consumers and manufacturers; it features only Vegetarian Society approved products. Produced quarterly, clients have the opportunity to feature their products **free of charge** within the magazine. The supplement is also freely distributed at both trade and consumer exhibitions throughout the year.

### **Feature your products FREE OF CHARGE on our online directory of Vegetarian Society approved products**

Due to popular demand we have launched a fully searchable database of approved products as part of our website [www.VegsocApproved.com](http://www.VegsocApproved.com). We would like you to tell us more about your products so we can promote them to your advantage. Only products which are approved by the Society can appear on the website.

### **Trade and consumer exhibitions and corporate events.**

The Society is involved with many events throughout the year including National Vegetarian Week, We can often negotiate preferential exhibiting rates at many exhibitions throughout the year. As a corporate client you will receive regular mailings which detail these exciting opportunities.

### **Product promotion at exhibitions**

We always do what ever we can to promote the products we approve. Don’t forget to send us packaging samples to display on our exhibition stand, as we exhibit at many trade and consumer shows each year. We also have limited space for brochure display, which is on a first come first served basis.

### **Competitions and product giveaways on [www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com)**

A competition or product give away is the ideal way to make the most of this low cost promotional tool. All we ask is for you to donate a prize to the value of at least £100; this gives visitors to our site the incentive to enter. Most competitions/giveaways generate at least 1500 entrants. A recent competition on our site generated an amazing 16000 entries,

which can then be used by your company for future marketing mailings. We find this is a very cost-effective way to generate further consumer contacts.

### **Leaflet distribution**

Why not insert a leaflet into our magazine, The Vegetarian? We have very competitive rates for leaflet insertion, which can be specifically targeted in either, our members mailing or directly to our corporate clients.

### **On pack promotions/offers**

The Vegetarian Society is able to provide membership and Cordon Vert Cookery School course offers for on pack promotions. In addition there are opportunities to promote recipes developed by the Cordon Vert Cookery School using your products.

### **Recipe development using approved products**

The Vegetarian Society's Cordon Vert Cookery School is experienced in developing recipes for commercial organisations for a range of uses. e.g. on pack, restaurants, new product development, editorial etc. The School can develop recipes to the Society's definition of vegetarianism to include the clients' product/ingredient or other requirements. Recipes are developed by experienced chefs/tutors, fully tested and are the copyright of the client.

### **National Vegetarian Week**

The Vegetarian Society's annual awareness campaign is the most important date in The Vegetarian Society & UK vegetarian food industry calendar. With over 10 years experience of; raising the public profile of vegetarianism, promoting the vegetarian diet and generating extensive press coverage. There are a variety of marketing and sponsorship opportunities available for getting your company involved in this high profile, independent national campaign on food, diet and health.

### **The Vegetarian Society Awards**

The aim of this event is to award good practice from those companies and organisations catering for vegetarians, raise standards, provide examples of good practice that encourage further improvements in provision for vegetarians and to raise money to support our vital work. Once again there are a variety of sponsorship opportunities available for those companies wishing to support the very best in vegetarian food and catering by getting involved in this event.

### **Joint marketing campaigns**

We really value the relationship we have with our clients and are always looking for ways to benefit both your organisation and the Society. Without you, the Society cannot carry out its vital educational work, promoting the benefits of a vegetarian diet.

Please feel free to contact us at any time if you would like to discuss the possibility of a joint marketing campaign.



## **Frequently asked questions**

### **What is the Vegetarian Society?**

The Vegetarian Society was formed in 1847, it is an independently funded charity and is the oldest vegetarian organisation in the world. Apart from inventing the word vegetarian, the Society is the UK's (and probably the world's) leading authority on vegetarianism.

### **What is a vegetarian?**

A vegetarian is someone who has a diet, which excludes meat, poultry, game, fish and any other slaughterhouse by products.

### **Why should I have my products approved by The Vegetarian Society?**

The Vegetarian Society Seedling (V) Symbol trademark was first registered as an official trademark in 1969 and is currently the only vegetarian symbol which is legally governed by a trademark licence agreement. It is also the only vegetarian symbol to be used by the NHS as part of their hospital food initiative. Unfortunately many food manufacturers do not understand the potential stumbling blocks with the vegetarian diet (e.g. many manufacturers think fish is an acceptable part of the diet or forget about animal rennet in cheese products). These misunderstandings make manufacturers own V symbols worthless. Recent research has proven that over 82% of consumers recognise and trust the Vegetarian Society Seedling Symbol as a guarantee of vegetarian suitability.

### **If we are not interested in targeting the vegetarian market with our products, why would we need the Seedling Symbol on our products?**

Your company would be foolish not to target the vegetarian market. Vegetarianism is the fastest growing diet preference in the world. You don't have to be vegetarian to appreciate products approved by the Society. As consumers are become more and more aware of what they eat and drink the demand for vegetarian food is increasing.

For example:

- Did you know that most wine is produced using isinglass. Isinglass is derived from the swim bladders of fish. Vegetarian Society approved wine must not contain isinglass.
- E120 (cochineal) red food colouring is commonly found in children's sweets. E120 is actually produced from crushed beetles. You must admit, you don't need to be vegetarian to appreciate not eating crushed beetles.

Any product approved by the Society must be free from any additive, which is derived from slaughter, including e numbers. That is why The Vegetarian Society seedling symbol is the original and only one to trust!

### **Is alcohol vegetarian?**

Yes, although some beers, wines and spirits use non vegetarian clarifying agents such as gelatine, egg white (usually from battery hens), isinglass (from the swim bladder of the sturgeon) or chitin which is derived from crushed lobster or crab shells. Please check with your supplier and if needs be, ask about alternatives. We can supply a list of vegetarian beers free of charge.

### **What about cheese?**

Rennet, an enzyme from the stomach of slaughtered calves, has been and in some cases continues to be used in cheese making. This is not acceptable to the Society. Vegetarian cheese made with synthesised rennet is widely available and makes a perfect alternative.

**Is butter acceptable?**

Yes, but other animal fats and fish oils are not. Vegetable oil, solid vegetable fat, sunflower or olive oil can be substituted, with the proviso that they do not contain genetically modified ingredients.

**What about margarine?**

Some margarine contains E471, whey or vitamins A, D or E, which may be derived from non-vegetarian sources. It is safest to use a margarine which has Vegetarian Society approval.

**Is honey acceptable to vegetarians?**

Yes, Although royal jelly is not vegetarian, honey is fine.

**Are all fruit juices vegetarian?**

Most are. Some however may have been clarified with gelatine.

**Can we use whey or whey powder?**

Yes, provided it has come from a vegetarian cheese making process which utilised synthesised rennet.

**Is Worcester sauce vegetarian?**

Sorry, this usually contains anchovies. There are however vegetarian versions available.

***The Vegetarian Society is always pleased to advise on suitable alternatives for any ingredients which may not be vegetarian.***

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**Free Range Eggs**

The Vegetarian Society has seven simple guidelines on free-range eggs. Taken together they constitute a clear policy and give consumers complete reassurance on important animal welfare standards.

- 1 The farm must be registered with the UK Egg Marketing Inspectorate, or in the case of international free range eggs, must be registered with the originating country's national enforcement authority.
- 2 Maximum flock size should not exceed 1000 birds per hectare (in line with EU criteria).
- 3 Poultry houses should provide: an area of dry litter, perches for birds to roost, sufficient windows for the house to be used without electric light.
- 4 No de-beaking of birds.
- 5 No use of artificial yolk colourants, slaughterhouse waste or animal by products.
- 6 No eggs to be bought in from other farms.
- 7 Adequate records to be kept and made available to prove traceability. These should show hen numbers, egg production and sales split into individual outlets as well as the size of egg.