

Interfaith Vegan Coalition

SIKH KIT



DEMONSTRATING THE SIKH IDEALS OF HARMLESSNESS AND UNIVERSAL LOVINGKINDNESS

Sikh ethics, as derived from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (the Sikh holy scriptures, abbreviated as "SGGS"), are focused on broad moral principles (e.g., compassion, justice, mercy), rather than strict rules (including dietary rules).

While eating meat is not forbidden in either Sikh scripture (paraphrased as "Gurbani") or in the Sikh code of conduct (the Rehat Maryada), core Sikh ethical principles, as seen in Gurbani, support a vegan diet.

PART I: FIVE SIKH ETHICAL PRINCIPLES THAT SUPPORT A VEGAN DIET

- 1. Having a vegan diet is a compassionate practice, and the Sikh Gurus placed great importance on compassion**



One can find many passages in Gurbani (the Sikh scripture) that speak of the importance of living a life of compassion and kindness.



SGGS Page 51 Full Shabad

Sat santokh eaiĝ kamĝvai ēh karnī sĝr. Āp chhod sabh hoē rēnĝ jis eēē parabh nirankĝr.

Practice truth, contentment and kindness; this is the most excellent way of life. One who is so blessed by the Formless Lord God renounces selfishness, and becomes the dust of all.

SGGS Page 272 Full Shabad

Barahm giĝnī kī sabh ūpar maiĝ. Barahm giĝnī té kachh burĝ na bhaiĝ.

The God-conscious being shows kindness to all. No evil comes from the God-conscious being.



SGGS Page 508 Full Shabad

Jīa eaiĝ maiĝ sarbatar ramna'n param hansah rīt.

Show kindness and mercy to all beings, and realize that the Lord is pervading everywhere; this is the way of life of the enlightened soul, the supreme swan.

SGGS Page 1354 Full Shabad

Sabea'n rata'n hita'n maiĝ kīrta'n kalī karam krituĝ.

To be imbued and attuned to the Shabad; to be kind and compassionate; to sing the Kirtan - these are the most worthwhile actions in this Dark Age of Kali Yuga.

2. A vegan diet entails no killing of animals, and the Sikh Gurus valued life.



*Jīa badhahu so dharam kar thāpahu adhram kahhu kat bhāī.
You kill living beings, and call it a righteous action. Tell me, brother, what would you call an unrighteous action?*

SGGS 1103

*Jao sabh mēh ek khudā e kahat hao tao kio murgī mārai.
You say that the One Lord is in all, so why do you kill chickens? SGGS 1350*

3. A vegan diet does not involve any exploitation of animals, and the Sikh Gurus and shaheeds (martyrs) throughout Sikh history devoted themselves to fighting exploitation.

*Kabīr jīa jo mārēh jor kar kahte hēh jo halāl.
Kabeer, they oppress living beings and kill them, and call it proper.* SGGS 1375

4. A vegan diet is consistent with the Sikh Gurus' call to live a modest life.

onHee mandai pair na rakhi-o kar sukari Dharam kamaa-i-aa.

onHee dunee-aa torhay banDhnaa ann paanee thorhaa khaa-i-aa.

They do not place their feet in sin, but do good deeds and live righteously in Dharma.

They burn away the bonds of the world, and eat a simple diet of grain and water.

5. A vegan diet, as scientifically demonstrated to be healthier for the body than a diet based on factory farm-produced meat, is consistent with the Gurus' call for Sikhs to eat foods that are good for the body and mind.

O Baba, the pleasures of other foods are false whose consumption makes the body ruined, and wickedness and corruption enter into the mind SGGS 16

PART II: STEPS TOWARDS A VEGAN LANGAR (SIKH FOOD SERVED IN THE TEMPLE AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF WORSHIP)

Gurdwaras (Sikh temples) have historically been lacto-vegetarian. The transition to an almost entirely dairy-free gurdwara is within reach.

1. Invite a dietician or other health professional with familiarity with Punjabi food and the state of health of Punjabis to address the sangat (congregation) and discuss some of the health challenges (diabetes, heart disease) facing the community and the health benefits of a vegan diet.

2. Substitute gheo (clarified butter) with vegetable oils (ideally, olive oil) in the preparation of:

- Daal (lentils)
- Sabzi (vegetables)
- Chapati/Parshada (Indian flatbread)

3. Substitute cow's milk with almond milk

- Kheer (rice pudding)
- Chai (tea)



PART III: RESOURCES AND WEBSITES

"Diet in Sikhism"

"Guru Granth Sahib on Kindness" Sikhiwiki.

"Guru Granth Sahib on Meat" Sikhiwikhi.

"Sikhism on Meat (Gurbani Quotes)" Singh, December 16, 2016.

Singh, Harbir, "Can Sikhs Drink Milk" AskHarbir, April 22, 2016.

Singh, Harj, "Sikhism and Meat" Harj the Vegan, March 29, 2014.

Singh, Jagraj, "Should We Eat Meat" Basics of Sikhi, October 31, 2014.

Singh, Manvir, "The Truth of Industrial Dairy Farming"

Manvir Singh, April 19, 2017.

"Vegetarianism" Sikhiwiki.

PART IV: RECIPES

Vegan kheer

Follow-Up Support for You
For ideas, support, advice, please email:

veganspirituality@idausa.org

activistsupport@idausa.org

