

## Soybeans provide healthy alternative

Last week I came across a news item that would convince even the most recalcitrant meat-eater to give up dead animal flesh.

The Multinational Monitor reports that a new streamlined beef inspection system at slaughterhouses nationwide is allowing diseased meat to enter the market at an alarming pace. A Department of Agriculture plan designed to increase speed relies on beef-company employees to perform the majority of inspections and restricts government inspectors' ability to spot check the processing line.

The Monitor reported that in March, some 21 whistle-blowing federal inspectors sent an open letter to Congress. They cited the acceptance of meat infected with measles and tapeworms and an eightfold increase in contamination of meat that goes into products like ground beef. The inspectors also noted "carcasses which fall on the floors ... which have blood, cattle feces, urine, ingesta, hair, puss from abscesses, grease, dirt, spit and tobacco (on them)."

Whoohoo, excuse me while I retch! Of course meat is already a nightmare long before it reaches the slaughterhouse. Meat is rotting flesh loaded with fat, cholesterol, growth hormones, antibiotics, pesticides, animal suffering and global ecological devastation.

The great news is that there is a smorgasbord of healthy alternatives to meat, chicken, dairy and other unhealthy and ecologically destructive animal products.

One outstanding choice is the soybean, the world's foremost provider of protein and oil.

Tofu is the curd made from soybean milk. It is receiving much attention now, although this protein-rich food has been a nutritional mainstay of the East-Asian diet for over 2000 years. Tofu is a good place to start for Americans looking for healthy alternatives to meat, and adapts well to summertime barbecues.

Foods made from soybeans include tofu, salad and cooking oils, margarine, "Soysage," lecithin, soy milk, "Pizsoy," tempeh, soy flour, soy ice cream like "Tofutti" and "Ice Bean" and other tempting delights.

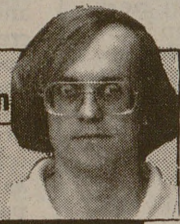
Tofu is low in calories, saturated fat and sodium. Like all plant foods, tofu contains no cholesterol, which is present in all animal products. Tofu also contains all of the eight amino acids necessary for human nutrition that are not produced in the body.

There is no drawback to tofu's not having a real taste of its own. (Raw meat hardly possesses an appealing flavor either.) Tofu's appeal is its ability to work as a sponge, magnetically absorbing and passing on the many delicious tastes, colors and aromas of other ingredients.

Tofu can be crumbled on salads and in lasagna and manicotti. Tofu can also be stir fried, grilled, mashed, deep fried, barbecued on kebobs, scrambled and can even be mixed into bread and pizza doughs.

Today tofu comes in consistencies ranging from soft to extra firm, and is widely available in stores.

Michael Worsham  
Columnist



Soybeans are a legume, a type of plant that has nodules containing nitrogen-fixing bacteria on its roots. Legumes, along with whole wheat grains, vegetables and fruit, make up the new four food groups developed by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine.

The new four food groups replace the old four which were drafted by the Department of Agriculture in 1956 with far too much help from the meat and dairy industries. Since then, overwhelming medical evidence has accumulated showing that an animal-based diet is the chief cause of heart disease, stroke, many cancers, arthritis, osteoporosis, diabetes and obesity. (Ever seen a fat vegetarian?)

Much of this evidence is laid out in detail in "Diet For a New America," the Pulitzer Prize nominated book by a former heir to the Baskin-Robbins fortune, John Robbins. Some researchers at Texas A&M have the dubious distinction of having accepted \$50,000 from the National Cattlemen's Association to try and refute this groundbreaking book, which a Washington Post reviewer found "profoundly fulfilling and deeply moving." Obviously, there is much more room for denial than for "moving" feelings in the animal slavery industry.

As versatile as it is, tofu is just one product made from one type of legume, which itself is just one of the four (new) food groups. One should explore the universe of tasty plant-derived foods, as diversity is the key to enjoying any cultural endeavor.

To start exploring for free, call Nobull Foods at 1-800-828-7648 for a free sample of BBQ FIB RIBS. I'm still waiting for my sample of FIB RIBS, which are made from whole wheat flour and peanut butter, and can be eaten hot or cold, I'm told. For a discussion of vegetarianism, tune in to KANM (cable-TV only) this Wednesday at 6:00 PM.

An Austin tofu ice cream dealer recently said his family eats 25 pounds of tofu per week, which may be overdoing it. Vegetarians can get by quite well without any tofu. Unless it is aseptically packaged, tofu has to be kept refrigerated, and it is very time-consuming to make at home directly from soybeans. However, tofu's ability to be incorporated into an incredibly wide array of recipes has made it a staple in my diet for the foreseeable future.

If you are still eating meat, give tofu a try. You have nothing to lose but your bad health, and a variety of new, inexpensive, healthy and tasty eating experiences to gain.

Michael Worsham is an environmental engineering graduate student.



## Can't live with it ...

The dream for a credit card turns into a nightmare

Reagon Clamon

Columnist

The dream is always the same ... I'm walking down University Drive and I'm all alone. I'm also wearing nothing but a sombrero with "Six Flags" stitched across the front, but that's not important right now. What is important is that I'm starving. I feel as though I haven't eaten in days. Luckily, I have a wad of cash clutched in my hand, and I just happen to be standing under the Skaggs Alpha Beta sign.

I rush inside, and the customers there look at me in shock, but it doesn't phase me: I just don't have time to take the hat off. I fill my arms with canned pasta and frozen pizza and rush to the first check-out counter. The man there doesn't ring me up, though. He says, "I'm sorry sir," and points to a sign above the cash register. The sign says, "No Cash, Credit Cards Only." Puzzled, I look around for another line, but they all say the same thing. I panic and try to force my money on the pasty-faced cashier, but he just scowls at me. "Your cash is no good here. Don't you know you've got to have a credit card to live in this country? ... And get some clothes on!"

This is my nightmare. It has haunted me since I became an independent member of society and realized that it's practically impossible to exist without a credit card. I resisted for years, bragging to my friends that I always paid in "hard" cash and I didn't need wimpy plastic.

Somewhere along the way, though, cash became unpopular. Credit cards were suddenly cool. What was once a rich man's pleasure had suddenly become a post-adolescent's ticket to popularity. Before I knew it, everyone's wallets were brimming with Visa, Mastercard and American Express. Most of my friends had at least one. My boasts of cash purchases

were replaced with taunts from my friends for being a credit "virgin."

"Reagon doesn't have one! He'll never



get one!" The pains I had to endure to remain financially pure were too much. I finally decided I would go for it.

If credit was such a wonderful experience, then I wanted it, too. It wasn't as easy as it looked, however. My sister had once used my name to sign up for a record club and ran up a \$150 bill, leaving me holding the bag. I was three at the time. The great gods of credit have no mercy, however, and I've carried that scandal with me to this day in the form of an "undesirable" credit rating. So, getting my hands on some cool plastic proved extremely difficult. I applied and reapplied, receiving nothing but rejection, sometimes outright insults, and one opportunity to join the KTVT Kids Club, where, as a cardholder, I would

be entitled to discounts on ice cream sundaes and Teenage Muntant Ninja Turtle dolls. I gave up.

Then, when I least expected it, I received a letter from Chase Manhattan. I ripped it open like a kid on Christmas morning, and out fell the stuff of my dreams. I stared at it, watching the little holographic bird on the front of the card flap its wings up and down. Then, I crammed it into my wallet and headed for the mall. Life was good.

That was six months ago. I now realize that Satan is the president of Chase Manhattan. He raises my limit from his office in hell and laughs as I struggle to reach it. He gives me unlimited credit when I walk into a record store or stereo shop; then denies my card when I'm stranded at a gas station in West Texas.

I sometimes yearn for those musty, old, green bills, and I shed a tear for my lost innocence; but I can never go back. I left my boring, old financial life behind for the agony and ecstasy of credit; traded in safety for the lustful pleasure of a quick and painless purchase.

Oh, well. I guess I sold my soul to Chase Manhattan. I suppose, eventually, the 19.8 percent interest rate will overtake me, smother me and send me straight to hell. I'll plunge into the lake of fire clutching a pair of \$70 Bugle Boy pants from Miller's Outpost in one hand, my Chase Visa in the other. And of course, there will be thousands of Seven-Elevens in Hell. I'll walk into one of them, get a Big Gulp and flash my card. The pasty faced clerk will look up at me, smile and say, "We don't take credit cards. Don't you have any cash?"

Reagon Clamon is a junior agricultural journalism major

## MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

### Thoughts on new bike lanes

EDITOR: I would like to address some thoughts to the matter of bike lanes on campus. I bike to campus everyday (unless it's raining), so I think I am qualified to speak out on this subject.

First of all, I would like to thank whoever is responsible for all of the nice, new bike lanes on campus. I have been biking for many years on this campus, and until recently there were very few bike lanes.

However, there is a problem. The person responsible for the new bike lanes has gone a little overboard. There is no need for bike lanes on Lamar Street (the street that runs in front of the main entrance to the MSC). That has never been a crowded street, and I have never felt like I was competing with automobiles for space on that street. However, as someone who does drive to meetings at night in the Rudder/MSO complex, I can tell you that by removing all of the parking along one side of Lamar Street, you will be causing problems when the Fall semester starts.

One further point about Lamar Street: If you truly want to put a bike lane there, why do shuttle

buses still park there and block the bike lane? Additionally, I'm not sure what the name of the street that runs by the YMCA and the Health Center is called (Jones or Lamar, my map does not say), but by removing the temporary parking there, you will cause severe problems for anyone who wishes to use the Health Center. I have not used the Health Center that much, but I know the few times I did need to use it, I was not up to walking from across the tracks. This is also another place that bike lanes really aren't necessary.

Jesse Spears  
graduate student

### Stop whining about towing

EDITOR: Just a note to express my disgust at all the whiners complaining about their cars being towed from behind Northgate.

I realize that parking at Northgate is a problem. There are many businesses and little parking. The parking lot in question is being leased by two

Northgate business owners. When they first acquired the lease, they offered other Northgate businesses a share of the lot if they would help pay for the lease. The other businesses declined.

Because parking is at a premium at Northgate, it is necessary to regulate the parking to insure that those using the lot are patronizing the businesses that are paying for the parking lot. It costs money to pay a man to watch a parking lot, but it is necessary to insure that as many customers as possible have a place to park. When someone parks and then goes to class (or another business) instead of one of the businesses that pays for the lot, they are stealing a parking place from a true customer.

The person who irritates me most is the one who referred to the lot attendant as "grease spot" and suggested that violators walk through the Chicken or Duddley's then go out the front door to their real destination. Grow up! How can anyone have any respect for someone who resorts to namecalling when a person is only doing his job? You know absolutely nothing about this man except that he takes his job seriously. As for your plan for beating the rap, it won't work. It's been tried, and the person illegally parked was towed.

It is clearly stated on the signs which businesses' customers have the right to park in the controversial lot. If you can't read the sign, find someone who can and let them explain it to you.

If you are going to patronize the businesses which the lot is designated for but must first go elsewhere, then by all means go to Mr. "Grease Spot" and explain to him what you are doing. I am sure that if all you are going to do is go get some money, run a quick errand or meet someone quickly somewhere else, he will allow a reasonable time for you to return before a tow truck is called. Has this been tried by anyone other than myself? This doesn't mean go somewhere else to have a few drinks and maybe lunch and then go to the Chicken or Duddley's; both of these establishments serve cold drinks and good food, I know they would appreciate your use of their establishments for your drinking and dining pleasure.

So why don't you whiners face the fact that you messed up and got caught. Next time try to be a little more adult about the whole thing.

Larry Odom '88