

WHERE'S THE BEET?

By Kristin McNulty
THE BATTALION

No double-meat cheeseburgers, no Little Smokies sausages and no lamb chops can be found on Ariana Nizza's plate. Instead, she will be enjoying everything but meat.

"I was dared to be a vegetarian by my best friend in the third grade, and I just got used to it," said Nizza, a sophomore business major.

It was in Nizza's third grade classroom where she said she learned the truth about hamburger processing.

"I was a growing girl, so I usually ate one hamburger a day," she said.

However, her burger binge came to a halt when her friend called her an animal killer and dared her to put her carnivorous ways aside.

According to a national survey conducted in April of 2000, 63 percent of vegetarians choose not to consume meat because of

their concern about cruelty to animals. Some vegans even go so far as not wearing clothes made from animals.

"I am aware of some clothes being made from animals, but it's not going to stop me from buying a leather jacket. I don't let it go that far," Nizza said.

The biggest challenge for Nizza is not deciding whether to buy wool socks, but recognizing meat in foods before she eats them.

"Sometimes I will eat dinner at a friend's house and there will be meat mixed in with what we are eating, and I will accidentally eat it," she said.

A much bigger concern that faces vegans is the lack of protein that results from cutting meat from their diet. Lack of protein lowers the immune function in the immune system and increases the chance for numerous diseases to enter a person's body.

Jordan S. Rubin, author of "PATIENT Heal Thyself," said fruits and vegetables are incom-

plete sources of protein because they lack one or more essential amino acids found in meat.

Rubin recommends that vegans use a supplement called Goatein, a protein powder made from organically produced goat's milk.

"Energy production and fat burning are stimulated to take place upon ingesting Goatein, along with strengthening one's immune system," Rubin said.

Because of vegetarians' concerns about animal cruelty and a healthier way of living, some resort to a more organic lifestyle.

Jen Atkins, an employee of Brazos Natural foods, says the organic food industry is mainly supported by vegans, who don't consume any sort of animal products.

"Most vegans support the organic food industry because they know that organically raised animals are treated more humanely. They also support a more balanced way of farming that is healthier not only for

themselves but for the ecosystem as well," Atkins said.

Brazos Natural Foods in Bryan sells everything from food to organic deodorant. It guarantees that its products have not been genetically engineered or modified in any way.

"About one-third of our customers are Aggies and professors. They come here because we have what they need," Atkins said.

She said vegans do not get the full intake of enzymes that most genetically modified food products provide. The organic foods that Brazos Natural Foods offer are high in enzymes, and the proteins are not modified.

Even though Nizza admits she is not up to par on her protein intake or



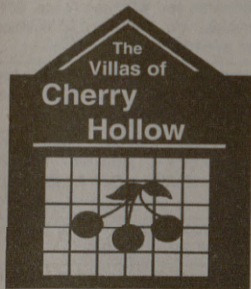
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enzyme balance, she feels she is doing her part in supporting what she believes in—stopping cruelty to animals.

"Being a vegetarian changed me," Nizza said. "I now care

more about the world around me. I am more conscious about issues like littering and second-hand smoke," she said. "I will never go back to eating meat."

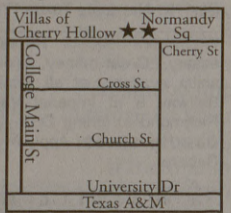
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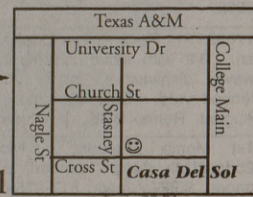
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