



Meet your movement:
These 20 young
activists are the faces of
vegetarianism's future.

under



If the stereotypically disheveled, lazy, apathetic, youth-gone-wild teenager is the first image that comes to mind when you think about the under-30 set, you clearly haven't met any of the following activists — all of whom are working to spread vegetarianism in their own unique ways. These innovative leaders are as savvy and smart as they are inspiring; whether they're rubbing elbows with Hillary Clinton, starting their own businesses, or expanding their nationwide animal-rights organizations, this crop of up-and-comers paints a bright picture for the future.

Jasmin Singer

Hometown: New York, NY

Age: 29

Why we're watching: The newly appointed National Advocacy Organizer for Farm Sanctuary barely has time for quick belly-rub breaks with her rescued pit bull, Rose, during her hectic workdays. Singer's new job description is as multifaceted as her background; speaking engagements, corresponding with activists nationwide, organizing charity walks, and giving educational veg workshops are all in a day's work for the former actor/writer/comic. She recently played the role of creative consultant for the forthcoming documentary *Glass Walls*, and worked with the League of Humane Voters to ban the production of foie gras in New York State. She says, "It was an honor to be one of the voices on the forefront of such an important cause, and to be able to stand alongside some of my mentors—John Phillips and Patrick Kwan." What's next? Making the entire world vegan by the time she turns 30, of course!

Year I went vegan: 2003

If I were president I'd: appoint Gene Baur as Secretary of Agriculture

MySpace or Facebook: Facebook, all the way! It's actually a really terrific networking site for grassroots activism



Meili Swanson

Hometown: Johns Creek, Ga.

Age: 15

Why we're watching: After discovering the dark truth about animal testing in 6th grade, Meili Swanson started volunteering with the Georgia Animal Rights & Protection group (GARP). Her involvement blossomed into the founding of Teen GARP, a peer-to-peer youth organization devoted to educating and empowering teens on all facets of animal rights. Incredible dedication and passion earned her the Young Animal Activist award at the 2008 Animal Rights National Conference, an honor that she considers her biggest accomplishment. Between Teen GARP, academics, cross-country running, and songwriting, Swanson is working toward her diploma with aspirations of a future in law or politics, advocating for animals in either discipline. "Wherever my life takes me, I plan on forever being involved with animal rights!" says Swanson.

Year I went vegan: January 1, 2008—my New Year's resolution

What I hope to accomplish before I'm 30: I would love to create an animal sanctuary for abused and neglected animals

Personal hero: My mom; she is the reason I am able to do everything I can for the animals



Ramsey Sprague

Hometown: Fort Worth, Texas

Age: 25

Why we're watching: Forget sleep—Sprague's work ethic trumps the need for shut-eye. Involved with vegan-food favorite Spiral Diner since it first opened, Ramsey's role as promoter, manager, and jack-of-all-trades plays an integral part in the restaurant and bakery's thriving success. In tandem with the opening of Spiral, Sprague helped launch 1919 Hemphill, a community center and music venue for Fort Worth's growing politically progressive community. The center provides a space for local animal-rights organizations to share literature, network within the community, and build a strong grassroots movement. Sprague focuses on providing a voice to those who cannot speak for themselves through advocating for animal rights, human rights, and the environment. "Our ability to understand each other is profound," says Sprague, "and our stories don't go away just because they aren't convenient to one worldview or another."

Year I went vegan: 2002

Why activism: What else is there other than our voices?

Favorite book: *Toolbox for Sustainable City Living* by Scott Kellogg and Stacy Pettigrew



Drew Winter

Age: 22

Hometown: East Lansing, Mich.

Why we're watching: About being voted 2007's Sexiest Vegetarian Next Door, Winter says, "If you ever win a trip to Hawaii, give it to your parents. They'll only see Maui once, but you can guilt-trip them for the rest of your life. Graduate school suddenly doesn't seem so expensive ..." In his upcoming second year as president of Michigan State University's Students Promoting Animal Rights, Winter intends to see more veg options served and labeled in all school cafeterias, and to open the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee's meetings to the public. This on-campus, animal-rights agent has a multifaceted plan for the future, which includes potentially penning a novel or two, and will very likely see some contribution to scholarship. In the meantime, Winter finds inspiration in those who are willing to do the nitty-gritty work of activism: "A lot of people complain about what's going wrong, but it's really special when you meet someone who wants to get up at 6am to hand out leaflets, write letters, or meet with people who likely just want you to go away."

Year I went vegan: 2006

Personal hero: Noam Chomsky

MySpace or Facebook: I prefer human contact **VN**

