

# ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON VEGETARIANISM AND VEGANISM



## **The APPG's 2024 Parliamentary reception: Vegonomics: celebrating the value of British vegan business.**

17 January 2024, Terrace Dining Room A, House of Commons

*(Please note this a paraphrased summary of the speakers' contributions and not a verbatim account.)*

### **Minutes of the APPG meeting**

On Wednesday 17 January 2024 the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Vegetarianism and Veganism (VegAPPG), sponsored by The Vegan Society and Vegetarian for Life, held its annual Parliamentary reception to celebrate the economic, environmental, and ethical benefits of the plant-based sector as well as the opportunities it offers to the British economy during Veganuary and beyond. The event was a resounding success with the room at full capacity and well-attended by parliamentarians. We were also joined by celebrity guest speakers including TV personality and founder of vegan brand Candy Kittens, Jamie Laing, and the inspiring world-record-breaking athlete Fiona Oakes. We were very pleased to showcase the vibrant range of vegan products available in the UK from Vegan Trademark holders such as Walkers, Misfits, Clearspring, Crack'd, Danone, Clive's Pies, One Planet Pizza, Eat Real Snacks and Lola's Cupcakes.

### **Introduction by Christina Rees MP, Chair of VegAPPG**

- Chair of the VegAPPG Christina Rees MP introduced the event by welcoming the attendees which included MPs, Peers and representatives from industry leaders such as ASDA, Quorn, Tesco and Planted.

### **Steve Hamon, CEO, The Vegan Society**

- Steve spoke about the huge growth of demand for plant-based products in the last year, particularly amongst the younger generations, and urged policymakers to ensure the UK does not fall further behind other countries such as Denmark and South Korea whose governments are already taking greater steps to boost their plant-based food industry.
- He outlined several policy asks to help the country follow suit including creating the UK's own governmental plant-based roadmap, introducing environmental labelling on food products, guaranteeing a vegan option on all public-sector menus, removing barriers to innovation such as labelling restrictions, and supporting farmers to transition to plant-based alternatives.

### **Jamie Laing and Edward Williams, Co-founders, Candy Kittens**

- Jamie and Edward shared their journey to becoming the fastest growing vegan confectionary brand in Europe and announced they are calling for the industry to ditch using animal products in their sweets and become more transparent when it comes to labelling ingredients on packaging.
- They highlighted that consumers are more aware of product composition than ever before and want the products they purchase to be sustainable and to reject the exploitation of animals.

### **Fiona Oakes, an elite marathon- and ultra- runner, four Guinness World Records holder**

- Fiona spoke about the health benefits of veganism and the plant-based industry as well as the importance of animal welfare.
- Fiona shared how she decided to use sport as a way to debunk vegan myths and prove that veganism does not prohibit a healthy lifestyle – even when it comes to physically demanding activities such as marathon running.

### **Toni Vernelli, Head of Policy and Communications, Veganuary**

- Toni spoke about the growth and success of the Veganuary movement, with the number of people taking part in the UK each year now estimated to be in the millions.
- She highlighted that Veganuary works extensively with brands to encourage the launches of new menus and products that are expected to continue into the future due to the large numbers of young people embracing a plant-based lifestyle.

For further information on the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Vegetarianism and Veganism, you can visit the website [here](#).

### **About the APPG on Vegetarianism and Veganism**

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Vegetarianism and Veganism (VegAPPG) was formed in December 2016. The VegAPPG is chaired by Christina Rees MP and brings together MPs, Peers, and third sector organisations from across the political spectrum to debate, discuss, and campaign on the key issues that vegetarians and vegans face.