



## **The Vegetarian Society Seedling Symbol – The original and only one to trust!**

### **An introduction....**

The Vegetarian Society seedling symbol was first registered as an official trademark in 1969. By the early 1980's, with the considerable growth in vegetarianism, the seedling symbol was becoming more actively sought. Food manufacturing companies were also beginning to realise the potential of using the symbol on their range of products. Many manufacturers wanted to use the Vegetarian Society seedling symbol, believing their products to be vegetarian. Closer inspection would often reveal that such products contained non-vegetarian ingredients, animal fats or additives. This resulted in the creation of the first set of official Vegetarian Society guidelines concerning the usage of the symbol.

For a product or dish to be approved by The Vegetarian Society it must meet the following criteria:

- Free from animal flesh (meat, fowl, fish or shellfish), meat of bone stock, animal carcass fats, gelatine, aspic or any other product resulting from slaughter.
- Contain only Free range eggs, where eggs are used
- Free from GMO's
- Cruelty free – no animal testing

No cross contamination during the production process. This simple set of guidelines is embodied by The Society's approved logo which guarantees foods are absolutely suitable for vegetarians. Fryers, grills and griddles, work surfaces and chopping boards, utensils and all other kitchen equipment and facilities must be kept separate from non vegetarian foods or cleaned thoroughly.

**This simple set of guidelines is embodied by The Society's approved logo, which guarantees foods are absolutely suitable for vegetarians.**

Millions of people have come to rely upon the symbols unique positioning. No other symbol can give consumers such reassurance and inspire such trust.

The Vegetarian Society Seedling Symbol trademark is now proudly displayed on a diverse range of over 6000 product lines available in the UK and abroad. It is even used by the National Health Service as part of their new hospital food initiative.

The Society continues to work in mutually beneficial partnership with the food industry and is always happy to consult on products or ingredients, to extend the range of food suitable for vegetarians.

Vegetarian Society approval continues to go from strength to strength. It is far more popular and widespread than ever, which can only be good news for vegetarians and food manufacturers alike.

## **The Vegetarian Society - Food & Drink Guild**

As well as appearing on over 6000 product lines, The Vegetarian Society's seedling symbol trademark is also displayed on restaurant, hotel and café menus and on displays in mobile catering units and university and college eateries all over the UK. All as members of the Society's highly influential Food & Drink Guild scheme

This instantly recognisable symbol ensures that when vegetarians are eating out they can dine with complete confidence, safe in the knowledge that recipes and working practices fully comply with The Vegetarian Society's strict criteria concerning vegetarian suitability. Those who own enterprises where vegetarian food is cooked and sold have experienced first hand the very many advantages the symbol offers. It is widely recognised as the best possible way of displaying an establishment's vegetarian credentials.

### **How much does it cost to be a member of The Food and Drink Guild?**

The licence fee is arranged as follow:

£140 + VAT for a catering establishment with up to 50 covers

£170 + VAT for a catering establishment with 50 to 100 covers

The fee for establishments with more than 100 covers, or for multi establishments is negotiable.

### **What would we get for the annual licence fee?**

- Independent approval of your dishes by The Vegetarian Society, who invented the word vegetarian over 150 years ago.
- Use of The Vegetarian Society approved trademark on the menus and associated materials.
- A personalised Food & Drink Guild membership certificate and window sticker.
- **Free of charge** listing for 12 months within The Food & Drink Guild pages in the Society's magazine The Vegetarian and listing on [www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com).
- A **free of charge** classified advert in the Vegetarian magazine.
- **Free of charge** publicity in Network News – our local contact newsletter.
- 25% discount off future advertising in the Society's magazine "The Vegetarian".
- Marketing opportunities throughout the year. The Vegetarian Society is involved with many events including National Vegetarian Week. Once your products are approved, you will receive regular mailings, which detail marketing and networking opportunities.
- Product promotion and competitions on our web site [www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com).

### **How do I apply?**

Simply complete the enclosed application form and return it to us.

All applications undergo strict vetting by the Society and if any process or ingredient is unsuitable, we will suggest suitable alternatives and provide other consultative assistance



## **Vegetarian Society Food & Drink Guild – Application Form Part One**

Joining the Vegetarian Society Food & Drink Guild is easy... following these simple steps.

- 1 Read through the guidelines and kitchen hygiene standards to ensure you understand our criteria.
- 2 Complete all parts of this application form in particular part three.
- 3 Sign the declaration and return your application to the address overleaf.

Your application will undergo a vetting process. If further details are needed, we will contact you immediately.

If any ingredients are unsuitable, we will be pleased to recommend alternatives.

Once your application is approved, you will be send a 12 month contract (a copy of which needs to be signed and returned), artwork of the seedling symbol to use on your menu, a certificate, window sticker and an invoice for the licence fee.

The licence fee is arranged as follows:

£140 + VAT – for a catering establishment with up to 50 covers

£170 + VAT – for a catering establishment with 50 to 100 covers

The fee for establishments with more than 200 covers, or for multi-establishments is negotiable.

An application fee of £50 + VAT is applicable, which is included in the licence fee. Should an application be unsuccessful or be withdrawn, the application fee will be charged.



## Vegetarian Society Food & Drink Guild – Application Form Part Two

Business name

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Address

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Postcode

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Telephone

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e-mail

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Fax

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No of covers:

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How did you hear about the Food & Drink Guild?  
What factors influenced your application?

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Do you employ a Public Relations Agency? If so who?

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### DECLARATION

I have read and understood the guidelines and conditions for use of the seedling symbol trademark and declare that the products listed here will conform to the required standards subject to verification by The Vegetarian Society.

Name

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Position

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Signed

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Date

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for and on behalf of

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After completing both sides of this application in full please return to:

VSUK Trading Ltd.  
The Vegetarian Society  
Parkdale  
Dunham Road  
Altrincham  
Cheshire WA14 4QG

Telephone 0161 925 2000  
Facsimile 0161 926 9182  
E mail fdg@vegsoc.org



## **Vegetarian Society Food & Drink Guild – Application Form Part Three**

### **VEGETARIAN DISHES TO BE APPROVED**

The Vegetarian Society approves individual dishes rather than establishments, so we will need ALL the ingredients of each dish you would like approved. If you use pre prepared ingredients e.g Ragu Bolognese sauce or Tesco's curry paste, we would also need the complete ingredients listing off the jar, even if it states suitable for vegetarians. If you are unsure about the origin of any ingredient, please obtain a product specification from your supplier.

#### **PLEASE LIST INGREDIENTS ON A SEPARATE SHEET**

**Here is an example of the information we require if you want to list ingredients dish by dish.**

Dish to be approved – “Vegetable Curry”

Ingredients:

Tesco's Biryani curry paste (which contains vegetable oil, garlic, water, salt, ginger, cumin, coriander, paprika, acetic acid), tomatoes, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, okra, sunflower oil.

**If your dishes change on a regular basis it is usually easier to send us a list of the store cupboard ingredients used to make the dishes. If you use pre prepared ingredients e.g Ragu Bolognese sauce or Tesco's curry paste, we will also need the complete ingredients listing off the jar.**

**Here is an example of the information we require if you produce a few dishes that use similar / same ingredients.**

Dishes to be approved are “Vegetable Curry, Okra Curry, Onion Bajees”

Ingredients:

Tesco's Biryani curry paste (which contains vegetable oil, garlic, water, salt, ginger, cumin, coriander, paprika, acetic acid), tomatoes, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, okra, sunflower oil, gram flour, onions, asafoetida

If you have any questions regarding ingredients, please do not hesitate to contact the Corporate Relations dept on 0161 925 2000 or email [seedling@vegsoc.org](mailto:seedling@vegsoc.org)



## **VEGETARIAN SOCIETY SEEDLING SYMBOL - GUIDELINES**

Vegetarian dishes must not contain the following:

- animal flesh (meat, fish or shellfish)
- meat, fish, bone stock or stock cubes
- animal carcass fats (including suet, lard or dripping)
- gelatine, aspic, gelatine-based block or jelly crystals
- battery or intensively produced eggs
- royal jelly
- products with ingredients derived from slaughterhouse by products
- ingredients which are genetically modified

### **STUMBLING BLOCKS**

#### **Alcohol**

Many manufacturers of beers, wines and spirits use unsuitable clarifying agents such as gelatine, egg white (usually from battery hens), isinglass (from the swim bladder of the sturgeon) or chitin which is derived from crushed lobster or crab shells. Ask your suppliers for vegetarian alternatives.

#### **Bread**

Bread from commercial bakers may include flour improvers which can be animal derived, or they may use lard to grease tins which would not be acceptable to vegetarians. Check with your baker or supplier.

#### **Cheese**

Traditionally rennet, an enzyme extracted from the stomach of slaughtered calves, is used and is therefore unacceptable. Vegetarian cheese made with microbial (synthesised) or plant based rennet is the perfect alternative and is widely available.

#### **Eggs**

Eggs can be used but must be from a certified free-range egg farm. Battery or intensively produced eggs are not acceptable to The Society.

#### **Fats, Oils and Margarine**

Animal fats and fish oils, except butter, are unsuitable (both in recipes and for greasing tins). Vegetable oil, solid vegetable fat, sunflower or olive oil can be substituted, with the proviso that they do not contain genetically modified ingredients. Some margarine contains E471, whey or vitamins A or E, which may be stabilised with gelatine, or vitamin D, which may come from the lanolin of slaughtered sheep. It is safest to use a margarine which has seedling symbol recognition.

#### **Fruit Juices**

May have been clarified with gelatine. Ask for a product specification from the manufacturer.

#### **Gravies and stock**

Cubes or powders containing meat, poultry or fish extract are not acceptable. Choose vegetable stocks and stock cubes.

## **Honey**

Although royal jelly is not vegetarian, honey is acceptable.

## **Milk and Cream**

Both milk and cream are acceptable.

## **Worcester sauce**

This product usually contains anchovies. Vegetarian versions are available.

A working partnership..... The Vegetarian Society is happy to give further advice on products or ingredients and will work with your company to find suitable alternatives.

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## **KITCHEN HYGIENE**

Work surfaces and chopping boards, utensils and all other kitchen equipment and facilities must either be kept separate from those used for non-vegetarian food preparation, or cleaned thoroughly before vegetarian food preparation.

Please also ensure that fryers, grills and griddles used for preparing non-vegetarian products are thoroughly cleaned.

Fryers must be filled with fresh, uncontaminated oil before vegetarian food is cooked.

We recommend that you keep a separate set of utensils for the preparation and serving of vegetarian meals.

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## **FREE RANGE EGGS**

The Vegetarian Society has seven simple guidelines on free-range eggs. Taken together they constitute a clear policy and give consumers complete reassurance on important animal welfare standards.

1. The farm must be registered with the UK Egg Marketing Inspectorate, or in the case of international free range eggs, must be registered with the originating country's national enforcement authority.
2. Maximum flock size should not exceed 1000 birds per hectare (in line with EU criteria).
3. Poultry houses should provide:
  - an area of dry litter.
  - perches for birds to roost.
  - sufficient windows for the house to be used without electric light.
4. No de-beaking of birds.
5. No use of artificial yolk colourants, slaughterhouse waste or animal by-products.
6. No eggs to be bought in from other farms.
7. Adequate records to be kept and made available to prove traceability. These should show hen numbers, egg production and sales split into individual outlets as well as the size of the egg.



## **Marketing Opportunities – Promoting your business**

Product approval by the Vegetarian Society provides excellent PR and networking opportunities for your company and products, The Society is regularly contacted for advice on many food issues, which usually leads to a recommendation of our clients approved products. Experience has also shown that seedling symbol approval leads to extensive press coverage and interest from both consumer and trade media.

### **Certification**

Once you are approved by The Vegetarian Society you will receive a Food and Drink Guild Members certificate to display in your establishment along with a window sticker.

### **The Vegetarian magazine**

The Vegetarian Society's own magazine, The Vegetarian is sent to all corporate clients and members of the Society, it currently has a readership of around 30,000. Every issue has the Food and Drink Guild Pages which lists all of our Food and Drink Guild Members **free of charge**. As a new client you will have the opportunity to feature a write up in the Food and Drink Guild pages of the magazine. We also offer clients a 25% discount when advertising in The Vegetarian and priority for premium spaces.

### **Website Listings on [www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com)**

You will be listed on our Approved Catering pages of the website. Here you can have an image and up to 150 words text about your business. We also provide a link to your website on your page and if you would like to offer Vegetarian Society members discount then we can detail that here too. The listings can be updated at any time and you can feature offers or events you are currently holding, all you need to do is email us and we will update it for you.

### **Promotion at trade and Consumer Exhibitions**

We always do whatever we can to promote the companies and establishments we approve. We exhibit at a number of trade and consumer shows throughout the year all over the UK. Feel free to send us any leaflets or brochures you would like us to distribute at these events on your behalf. We do however have limited space for brochure display, which is on a first come first served basis.

### **[www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com) (competitions and product giveaways)**

A competition or product give away is the ideal way to make the most of this low cost promotional tool. All we ask is for you to donate a prize to the value of at least £100; this gives visitors to our site the incentive to enter. Most competitions/give-aways on [www.vegsocapproved.com](http://www.vegsocapproved.com) generate at least 1500 entrants, one recent competition received an amazing 16000 entries, which can then

be used by your company for future marketing mailings. We find this is a very cost-effective way to generate further consumer contacts.

### **Leaflet distribution**

Why not insert a leaflet into our magazine, The Vegetarian? We have very competitive rates for leaflet insertion, which can be specifically targeted in either, our members mailing or directly to our corporate clients.

### **Classified Adverts**

When you renew with us again we will offer you the chance to have a free classified advert in the magazine. We offer this every year at renewal.

### **National Vegetarian Week**

The Vegetarian Society's annual awareness campaign is the most important date in The Vegetarian Society & UK vegetarian food industry calendar. With over 10 year's experience of; raising the public profile of vegetarianism, promoting the vegetarian diet and generating extensive press coverage. There are a variety of marketing and sponsorship opportunities available for getting your company involved in this high profile, independent national campaign on food, diet and health.

### **The Vegetarian Society Awards**

The aim of our Awards is to acknowledge good practice from those companies and organisations catering for vegetarians, raise standards, provide examples of good practice that encourage further improvements in provision for vegetarians and to raise money to support our vital work. Once again there are a variety of sponsorship opportunities available for those companies wishing to support the very best in vegetarian food and catering by getting involved in the awards.

### **Joint marketing campaigns**

We really value the relationship we have with our clients and are always looking for ways to benefit both your organisation and the Society. Without you, the Society cannot carry out its vital educational work, promoting the benefits of a vegetarian diet.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you would like to discuss the possibility of a joint marketing campaign.