



## **Tips for Organizing a Successful VegFest**

1. Finding a venue is the most important part--getting a parks department employee who will help with the park rental and the permitting is important.
2. Make sure you have a good team that works well together--too many people will get in each other's way, and if it's too few people it's too much work. Having 4-5 core organizers plus 5-6 solid volunteers (and 20-30 experienced "day-of" volunteers) will work well.
3. The committee (core organizers) should consist of a minimum of three core volunteers: one to handle sponsors/vendors, one to handle logistics, and one to handle promotions. Other key volunteers can handle the food court, music, artists, and animal rescues.
4. Vegan Earth Day events can be just as effective as Veg Fests--it's not as focused, but it reaches a wider audience.
5. For a VegFest to be financially self-sustaining, you **MUST** get vendors behind the event. Once they understand the value, they'll be willing to pay solid fees that provide a decent budget for the overall event. Finding an inexpensive park is nice, but sometimes it's worth paying extra to hold the event at the city's flagship park.
6. The fees for sponsors and vendors should be carefully determined by comparing fees of other local events and other national veg fests, and input from key vendors.
7. Most vendors you'll recruit are for food. Local vegan or vegetarian restaurants are preferred. If additional ones are needed, then vegetarian-friendly restaurants would work. Caterers could also work.
8. Other vendors to look for are health professionals (alternative doctors, chiropractors, and acupuncturists), holistic living products, solar energy companies, religious groups, animal rights groups, animal rescue groups, and artists. You may have vendors that apply which may or may not seem appropriate for a vegetarian festival. Those are judgment calls, but you may want to accept them as long as they abide by the terms and conditions of the event.
9. Set up a good communication system with your vendors and potential vendors. A service such as Constant Contact is ideal for this.
10. Look for ways of collecting as many e-mail addresses as possible in order to inform the community of the event and encourage vendors to sign up.
11. Promotions should consist of local newspapers, health related magazines, online announcements, radio ads, etc. If possible, do sponsor/vendor trades instead of paying for advertising.
12. Keeping costs down is important. Some of the most successful VegFest organizers are able to control expenses by finding musicians who will play for free and only covering limited travel expenses for speakers. Some organizers work to establish connections with members of the community who will let them borrow gear and equipment.