

# Veganism Is Whatâ€™s for Dinner

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**Hampton Creek inks a very lucrative deal with Compass Group to replace several of its offerings with Hampton Creekâ€™s dairy-free alternatives.**

([Newswire.net](http://Newswire.net) -- March 10, 2016) -- Visiting the supermarket these days is a very different experience than it was just a decade earlier. More products on the shelves are being made without traditional ingredients such as butter, eggs, and meat. This shift in ingredients can be attributed to the collective evolution of vegetarianism, health awareness, and environmental sustainability into the dietary and social culture of veganism. Vegans were

originally vegetarians who swore off dairy products, but over time, they developed a philosophy that declared all animal products off limits, including items such as leather that aren't intended as food.

## The Vegan Age

During the 2010s, the vegan philosophy experienced a sudden explosion in recognition and popularity. Specialty stores began to open that catered exclusively to the vegan lifestyle. By the end of the decade, even most mainstream supermarkets had added vegan products to their shelves. The market for vegan products has grown so much that there is now a multinational supermarket chain fully dedicated to sourcing 100 percent vegan foods. More options are being made available to serve this community with no end in sight, making fortunes at the same time as changing the entire conversation about what people eat.

## A New Opportunity

One company that has ridden the vegan trend to big profits is Hampton Creek Foods. The company is a part of the new wave of businesses that seek to leverage Silicon Valley technology innovations to address time-worn challenges. These brash, new organizations that defy categorization represent a bold and aggressive effort to tame the future by slicing old problems with the cutting edge. Hampton Creek is betting its approach can surmount the barriers inherent to replacing time-tested food ingredients with new options that can replicate the older staples' signature characteristics.

## The Egg Dilemma

Take the humble egg, for instance. Eggs have numerous functions in all levels of cuisine that make them indispensable to most chefs. The more egg behaviors a substitute can mimic, the more it can truly serve as a replacement. Hampton Creek is hoping rigorous scientific evaluation of non-animal protein sources in varying combinations will allow them to identify solutions that come ever closer to solving the egg riddle, as well as the problems unique to other foods.

Hampton Creek began its efforts to solve vegan food problems with science in 2011 with seed money from legendary investment firm, Khosla Ventures. The company first set out to tackle the egg problem, culminating in its product Beyond Eggs, which debuted in 2013 to a warm reception that prompted Microsoft founder, Bill Gates, to back Hampton Creek as well. Within a few years, the venture had introduced an eggless mayonnaise replacement called Just Mayo and an egg-free cookie dough unsurprisingly called Just Cookie Dough that's safe to eat raw, thanks to the lack of eggs.

## Applying a Laboratory Ethic to the Dinner Plate

Hampton Creek's success began with a novel approach to food. Rather than simply employing anecdotal information from the vegan community on the usefulness and tastiness of certain alternatives to animal protein, the company decided to apply the scientific method. Scientists became the most important members of the team, with a mandate to leave no leaf unturned in the plant world in a massive undertaking to identify the characteristics different species exhibited individually and in different combinations. As this understanding of plant properties grew, experiments were conducted to uncover the ways in which behavior would change under various conditions.

Heat, blending, introduction of flavor compounds, and even shipping all presented variables that needed to be understood and taken into account. By taking a disciplined tack rooted in the Scientific Method, Hampton Creek ensured it could not only find the alternatives it sought, but also reproduce its results time and again. This enabled them to confidently pursue mass production of vegan-friendly foods that could even fool non-vegan palates. This would prove critical in courting investors as well as distribution partners.

## Networking for Growth

An essential pillar in the success of any company that sells packaged foods is finding strong collaborators to bring their products to consumers. As demonstrated in the [Hamptoncreek CrunchBase](#) profile, the organization didn't neglect the need to identify good partners. The company aggressively courted supermarket chains that were under increasing pressure to offer vegan-friendly ingredients and replacements for popular items.

Hampton Creek's push to establish mutually beneficial partnerships didn't end with supermarkets. In 2015, the company announced it had inked a very lucrative deal with Compass Group to replace several of its offerings with Hampton Creek's dairy-free alternatives.

## Riding the Wave of the Future

As consumers seek more vegan options to satisfy their nutritional and philosophical needs, businesses that can reliably serve those needs will drive the next wave of food-industry growth. Enterprises like Hampton Creek make the soundest investments in this new model because they combine an essential understanding of the core consumer with the discipline and stability of scientific grounding and the aggressive pursuit of new markets and investors.

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