

IMPOSSIBLE™

PETA: The Unofficial Correction

07.30.18

The screenshot shows the PETA website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Programs', 'Support PETA', and 'Report Cruelty to Animals'. The main header features the PETA logo and the slogan 'ANIMALS ARE NOT OURS' with a sub-slogan 'to eat, wear, experiment on, use for entertainment, or abuse in any other way.' Below this is a menu with 'Features', 'Videos', 'Action', 'Blog', 'Issues', 'Living', 'Shop', 'Investigations', 'Media', 'About', and a 'Donate Now' button. The article section is titled 'Why It's Impossible for PETA to Get Behind the Impossible Burger' and includes social media sharing icons, a byline 'Written by PETA | July 27, 2018', and a sub-headline 'The Bad News'. The main text discusses Impossible Foods' testing of a burger ingredient on rats. A sidebar on the right contains 'Connect With PETA' (with 5.3M likes and 1.05M followers), a 'SUBSCRIBE TO PETA E-NEWS' form, a 'Search This Section' box, and 'Recent Posts' including 'Trophy Hunters Given Over 30 Permits to Import Exo...' and 'Zoo Reportedly Paints Donkeys as Zebras, Proving I...'. At the bottom of the article, it says 'RATS MAKE THE BEST COMPANIONS' with a smiley face icon.

Propaganda vs. facts

After PETA's own members questioned the organization's year-old smear campaign against Impossible Foods, some of PETA leaders inexplicably doubled down, publishing a defamatory blog post July 27, 2018. It's full of lies and deceptive claims, which damage PETA's credibility in a time when facts are vitally important. In our unofficial correction, you can read PETA's propaganda on the left, and Impossible Foods' response on the right.

Why It's Impossible for PETA to Get Behind the Impossible Burger



Written by PETA | July 27, 2018

The Bad News

Impossible Foods' slogan, "Made from Plants," is missing one huge and disturbing detail: "tested on animals." That's right, Impossible Foods, the maker of the Impossible Burger, decided voluntarily to test one of its burger ingredients—soy leghemoglobin—by feeding it to a total of 188 rats in three separate tests, killing them, and cutting them up, none of which it has ever been required to do in order to market its products. And the company did it after disregarding advice from a PETA scientist who said that there's no need to hurt and kill animals to test its burger.

Impossible Foods' own website touts, "Feel good about biting into an Impossible Burger," but we can't. How could anyone feel good about eating something from a company that chose to feed caged rats "massive doses" of a substance before they were killed and their bodies were cut up?

Important Context

In the last year, Americans ate almost 10 billion pounds of ground beef from cows. If Impossible Foods had replaced all of that consumption with plant-based meat, in that short time 20 million sentient cows would be spared slaughter.

Impossible Foods Response

Impossible Foods was determined to avoid rat studies, but the FDA expects them and rejected our initial efforts to obtain a "no questions" letter without them. Because a "no questions" letter is the ultimate "stamp of approval" for safety and consumer confidence, and effectively necessary if we are going to bring plant-based meats to the world, this forced us to conduct a limited rat-feeding study to serve the greater good for animals, for humanity and for the planet.

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Impossible Foods Response

This is a lie; Impossible did not disregard PETA's advice but rather actively solicited and adhered to it. Before performing animal trials, Impossible sought advice from many sources, including PETA, to understand options for avoiding animal testing. Impossible Foods received advice and resources from a PETA scientist on how to design an animal trial that was as ethical as possible. We engaged with PETA Senior Laboratory Oversight Specialist, Dr. Alka Chandna, who told us in 2015 "We [PETA] have some documents aimed at helping companies select CROs. I've attached one document (a checklist) and have summarized the information of other documents below... I'm very happy to send you papers on these various welfare considerations pertaining to the living and dying conditions of animals in laboratories."

Impossible Foods Response

This is disingenuous. We reluctantly did *one* set of tests for the FDA GRAS notice, using the minimum number of rats and the most humane conditions based on advice from PETA's management. There were no additional tests, and we have always been completely transparent about everything we did to evaluate the safety of our product and ingredients. We hope never to have to conduct additional tests on animals. But if we are forced to make a choice between avoiding animal testing altogether and conducting a laboratory test that will help save the lives of millions more wild and domestic animals, we will do what is best for animal welfare and the world.

We were legally allowed to sell our product under FDA regulations by providing evidence and expert opinion that it is safe to consume. But some large chains and several foreign countries would sell our product only when we received a "no questions" letter from the FDA, which required a rat-feeding study. We spent almost two years attempting to persuade FDA to grant us the "no questions" letter without doing any animal-feeding studies, to no avail. So we made the necessary choice to minimize harm to animals and maximize benefit to the world.

For more information, read '[The Agonizing Dilemma of Animal Testing](#)', a 2017 letter from our CEO.

[Rats kept in laboratories](#) are typically confined to plastic shoebox-sized containers stacked against a wall. They're deprived of proper social interaction, and—for good reason—they're terrified of the humans who hurt them. Studies show that their hearts race in fear even at the sound of the laboratory's doorknob turning.

Cows aren't burgers, and rats aren't tools to be used for research.

After finding out about the first experiment many months ago, PETA questioned Impossible Foods founder Patrick Brown. Although he admitted that the test didn't have to be conducted, he refused to commit to never commissioning other tests on animals in the future. Now we've found out that he quietly arranged for two more after shrugging off PETA's offer to advise the company regarding how to avoid any tests on animals.

More Bad News

Impossible Foods' big claim to fame is that there's heme in its burgers. Well, here's a shocker: This heme comes from soy leghemoglobin and contains more iron than that found in the heme of a similar serving of red meat. **Having too much iron in your blood can mean a greater risk of developing cancer, especially for men and postmenopausal women.** There's no need to consume heme, since the body makes its own to be used in hemoglobin—which helps transport oxygen in red blood cells.

The Impossible Burger is also more than 50 percent fat, and most of that is *saturated fat*. In short, the Impossible Burger is probably the unhealthiest veggie burger on the market.

Impossible Foods Response

This is complete fabrication. There is no credible evidence implicating heme as a risk factor for cancer. Also, the implication that you don't need to consume iron is wrong and dangerous. A large fraction of the US has iron deficiency anemia: prevalence is 2 percent in adult men, 9 to 12 percent in non-Hispanic white women, and nearly 20 percent in black and Mexican-American women. Globally, more than a billion and a half people, mostly women and children, have clinically significant iron deficiency.

For more information, please read this [blog post on heme and health](#).

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Impossible Foods Response

Totally false. Only 17% of the burger is fat -- a lower fraction than in most ground beef made from cows. You can see the full nutrition panel in [our FAQ](#).

Impossible Foods Response

Completely untrue, unfounded and defamatory.

The Good News

It's not all doom and gloom. Well, it is for the Impossible Burger, but not for you. There are **countless vegan burger options** available in grocery stores and restaurants. The game-changing **Beyond Burger**, for example, is delicious and now available in countless supermarkets and eateries!



Impossible Foods Response

We applaud “vegan burger options.” If they were truly reducing animal meat consumption, Impossible Foods wouldn't need to exist. But meat loving consumers want *meat*, not “vegan burger options.” So Impossible Foods figured out how to make uncompromisingly delicious meat from plants.

Do animals a favor—choose a vegan burger that comes from a company that does not, has not, and will not ever test on animals. Click below for helpful guides:

OUR FAVORITE
VEGAN BURGER
BRANDS

THE BEST AND
WORST BURGER
CHAINS

And remember: Being vegan doesn't just mean not eating certain things—it's a lifestyle. It means always choosing compassion. Cows, rats, and humans—we're all living beings who deserve equal consideration. The folks behind the Impossible Burger may not get this, but we're sure that you do. Click below for a free guide regarding how to save nearly 200 animals every year:

LIVE VEGAN: ORDER YOUR FREE
VEGAN STARTER KIT



Donate Now »

Impossible Foods Response

And if you're looking for real meat from plants, choose the Impossible Burger!

You can find the [nearest restaurant selling the Impossible Burger here](#).