

## **Press release**

Association Végétarienne de France (French Vegetarian Association)

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### **MALNUTRITION AND VEGANISM: NO CONNECTION**

A vegan couple in France whose 11-month-old daughter died in March 2008 are to be tried this week for “neglect and food deprivation.” The Association Végétarienne de France (AVF) considers that the systematic emphasis on this couple’s vegan diet creates unfair implications. It points out that there are millions of vegan families around the world whose children have been vegan since birth and are in perfect health. Sensationalizing an isolated case stigmatizes the entire vegan community, whose members are generally well-informed about nutrition.

There is no connection between the ignorance of one couple who failed to provide proper care for their child and veganism, a practice which excludes the consumption of meat and other animal products.

The AVF also calls attention to the fact that, contrary to the categorical and unfounded assertions of certain French healthcare professionals, a well-planned vegan diet supplies complete nutrition and promotes good health at all stages of life. This was the conclusion of the American Dietetic Association, the world’s largest organization of dietitians, after its exhaustive review of the medical literature in 2009. It is also the position of the APSARes (Association de Professionnels de Santé pour une Alimentation Responsable), a French organization of healthcare professionals dedicated to responsible nutrition.

Vegetarian and vegan diets are poorly understood by a large number of French medical professionals, who therefore have difficulty providing reliable advice and information to families who adopt this way of eating, which is more common in other European countries and North America. This state of affairs probably helped to bring about this tragedy.

The AVF stands ready to assist anyone wishing to meet French families whose children have been vegan from birth and are in excellent health. It is also able to put interested people in touch with healthcare professionals who specialize in vegetarian and vegan nutrition.

More information (in French) is available at [www.vegetarisme.fr](http://www.vegetarisme.fr)