



## World's first vegan-friendly and climate-conscious Exchange Traded Fund opens for trading

**Animal advocates and environmentalists now have an ethical stock investment option that is both cruelty-free and fossil fuel-free, with the launch of VEGN ETF by Beyond Investing onto the New York Stock Exchange on September 10, 2019.**

*Tampa, Florida: August 12, 2019*

Animal lovers and people who care about saving the planet are rightly proud of their efforts to embrace plant-based eating, reduce their use of plastic, or implement a range of energy-efficient measures at home or work.

But until now, vegans and environmentalists have had little choice but to profit from animal cruelty and environmental devastation through their investment options. While interest in socially responsible investing (SRI) continues to grow, the availability of financial products that explicitly reject animal exploitation has been limited, if not completely absent in most markets.

The listing of the **US Vegan Climate Exchange Traded ETF (ticker VEGN)** on September 10, 2019, onto the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) is set to change that.

An ETF (short for Exchange Traded Fund) is an investment fund which is traded throughout the day on stock exchanges via banks, online brokers and roboadvisors. It goes up or down in value according to the price movements of stocks in the particular index it tracks.

The US Vegan Climate ETF, the first of its kind in the world, has been created by **Beyond Investing**, a team of experienced vegan finance professionals in the US, Switzerland and the UK. It will track the US Vegan Climate Index (ticker VEGAN) launched by Beyond Investing in June, 2018. This Index takes the Solactive US Large Cap index (a proxy for the S&P 500 Index<sup>1</sup>) and excludes any stocks whose activities are incompatible with a vegan and climate-conscious approach to investing, replacing damaging stocks with midcap alternatives that meet its ethical criteria.

This means the fund avoids investing in companies whose business models rely on animal exploitation – predominantly testing and animal-derived products – as well as removing fossil

fuel and environmental threats such as plastic and agrochemicals, which are harmful to wild animals.

“Our aim is to help vegans and animal activists take the pain out of their portfolios,” explains **Claire Smith**, CEO of Beyond Investing. “So many compassionate people go to great efforts to avoid buying products that contain animal ingredients or have been subject to cruel testing, but when it comes to their investment options, they’re actively, albeit often unwittingly, supporting companies and industries that exploit and torture animals. Our ETF offers them the opportunity to invest in line with their values. And because we love humans as much as other animals, we have defense and human rights screens as well.”

Compared against the unscreened Solactive US Large Cap Index, the Vegan Climate Index has 61% less carbon, 89% less waste and 83% less water (as calculated on 30 June 2018 by Impact Cubed<sup>2</sup>).

Being stock exchange listed, VEGN – which has been designed to provide an alternative to a diversified US large cap index tracker – is accessible to investors in most countries, with one notable exception being the EU where the new Packaged Retail Investment and Insurance-Based Products (PRIIPs)’s Regulation has caused US ETFs to be removed from brokerage platforms for retail investors<sup>3</sup>. To remedy this, Beyond Investors is currently designing an EU-acceptable structure.

Regarding pensions plans, Smith says that for those who have flexibility to select their own investments, it should be possible to include the US Vegan Climate ETF, although people may have to request that their pension provider add it as an option on their platform.

With a total expense ratio of 0.60% the ETF fees reflect the huge amount of research and the creation of a proprietary data set, policies and rules as to what may or may not go into the index and a construction methodology to avoid concentration.

“It requires a lot of detailed work to ensure that all relevant information is collected and analyzed,” explains Smith. “Plus we’re building the index in a robust fashion and providing impact metrics, which demonstrate its social and environmental benefits. These are just some of the ways in which Beyond Investing seeks to differentiate itself from other providers. Once the ETF is launched, we plan to engage with companies to encourage them to make their business practices to be more animal-friendly, by removing animal products from their business lines and improving their services to vegans.”

Smith is also the co-founder of the **Beyond Animal** integrated digital platform, which aims to accelerate the growth of the global vegan economy. She invests directly in vegan and cruelty-free start-ups via **Beyond Impact**, a venture capital advisory firm she runs.

Heading US sales of the new ETF is **Debra Bouton**, an animal activist and former private wealth manager at **Morgan Stanley**.

The US Vegan Climate ETF will list live on the NYSE on September 10, 2019 with the ticker VEGN. The Lead Market Maker is Wolverine Trading and 15 other Authorised Participants (as indicated below) will be able to trade VEGN.

For more information, visit [www.veganetf.com](http://www.veganetf.com).

### Ends

1. S&P 500 Index is an unmanaged index and is commonly used as a measure of the performance of the U.S. stock market as a whole.
2. Impact Cubed scores are based on company reporting or regression where reported numbers are not available. Carbon: Tons of CO2 equivalent emitted per \$1 million of revenue. Waste: Tons of solid waste generated to create \$1 million of revenue. Water: Thousand cubic metres of fresh water used to create \$1 million of revenue. Impact Cubed is an affiliated company of Beyond Investing.
3. Vannucci, Cecile. "European Investors Are Now Blocked From Investing in One of the Most Popular ETFs." Bloomberg.com [Ends]

## About Beyond Investing

Beyond Investing is US-based registered investment advisor owned by three experienced investment professionals who follow a vegan lifestyle: CEO Claire Smith who has 34 years' experience working in the finance industry at UBS and as a partner at Albourne in areas including derivatives and hedge fund research; Lee Coates, OBE, of UK financial advisor Ethical Investors and founder of Cruelty Free Super in Australia; and Larry Abele, founder of Auriel Investors, an FCA-regulated asset management firm in London. Debra Bouton, an animal activist and former private wealth manager at Morgan Stanley, is heading US sales of the vegan ETF. The ETF was created with the aim of promoting the development of vegan investment products for the masses. Visit [www.beyondinvesting.com](http://www.beyondinvesting.com)

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An online press kit, including high-res images of Claire Smith, Lee Coates and Larry Abele are available at: <http://bit.ly/beyondinvesting> (Adviser)

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Authorised Participants: Cantor Fitzgerald, Citadel, Citigroup Global Markets Inc., Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC, Deutsche Bank Securities, Inc., Goldman, Sachs & Co., JP Morgan Securities LLC, Merrill Lynch Professional Clearing Corp, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc., Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC, Nomura Securities International Inc, RBC Capital Markets, Societe Generale Americas Securities LLC, UBS Securities LLC, Virtu Americas LLC

Any tax or legal information provided isn't an exhaustive interpretation of some of the current income tax regulations. Investors must consult their tax advisor or legal counsel for advice and information concerning their particular situation. Neither the Fund nor any of its representatives may give legal or tax advice. It is not possible to invest directly in an index.

**Investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal. The Fund is a recently organized management investment company with no operating history. As a result, prospective investors have no track record or history on which to base their investment decision. Shares of any ETF are bought and sold at market price (not NAV), may trade at a discount or premium to NAV and are not individually redeemed from the Fund. Brokerage commissions will reduce returns. Investments in mid-cap securities involve additional risk such as limited liquidity and greater volatility. The index methodology may cause the Fund to underperform the broader equity market or other funds which do not utilize such criteria. The Fund's return may not match or achieve a high degree of correlation with the return of the underlying Index. To the extent the Fund utilizes a representative sampling approach, it may experience tracking error to a greater extent than if the Fund had sought to replicate the Index.**

*The fund's investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses must be considered carefully before investing. The prospectus contains this and other important information about the investment company, and it may be obtained by calling 1-800-617-0004 or visiting [www.veganetf.com](http://www.veganetf.com). Read it carefully before investing.*

Beyond Investing LLC is the adviser to the US Vegan Climate ETF. VEGN is distributed by Quasar Distributors, LLC