

## **ARRAN VEGFEST POSTPONED**

It is with deep regret and sadness, in view of the fact that a number of participants in, and visitors to, Arran VegFest 2020 have had to withdraw, that the organisers have taken the very difficult decision to postpone the event. Arran VegFest was due to take place at Arran High School this weekend. A new date will be announced later in the year.

The withdrawal of so many participants and visitors has been attributed to a number of factors but largely the uncertainty as to whether, having already travelled some distance to get to Ardrossan, they will be able to cross to Arran or back with their vehicles. This is due to the continuing uncertainty as to whether particular sailings will take place as a result of CalMac's ongoing technical problems. There are currently two technical issues cited by CalMac, the combined results of which are causing reduced vehicle capacity, and the potential inability of the vessel to dock.

In addition, we have concerns over the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) to Arran by visitors to Arran VegFest. Opinions indicate that a fast spread of the virus is likely to cause an NHS crisis, and we do not wish to be contributors to such a situation on our island or to put any Arran residents at any unnecessary risk.

This decision is a heartbreaking one, after the many hours of preparation by so many people that have gone into organising the festival. Arran VegFest was to include seven speakers, two films, children's entertainment, live music, and almost thirty food and other stalls.

It is intended that Arran VegFest will be rearranged for a future date when transportation to and from the island can be better predicted, and coronavirus is no longer a threat.

Judging of the young people's Creativity Competition, for which many amazing entries have been received, will still take place, and prizes awarded. Entries will be posted on social media and the website, [www.arranvegfest.com](http://www.arranvegfest.com), and winners announced over the next week.

We are also working with the seven VegFest speakers to record the talks they would have been presenting over the weekend, with the intention that these will be made available online.

The organisers wish to thank the many people on Arran and beyond for their support, help and kindness in helping to create what had promised to be an amazing weekend on Arran.