Hidden animal ingredients on food labels

Many animal ingredients do not sound like animals. Read the ingredient list for these words. A vegan mark you trust is the quickest answer.

Always from an animal or insect

Gelatin	Boiled animal skin and bone. Gummies, marshmallows, some yogurts, desserts and capsules.
Carmine, cochineal E120	Red color made from crushed insects. Red candy, yogurt, drinks and icing.
Shellac E904	Resin from the lac insect. The shine on candy, sprinkles and some coated fruit. Also called confectioner's glaze.
Beeswax E901	Made by bees. A glaze on candy and some fruit.
Honey	Made by bees. Cereal, granola bars, bread, sauces and dressings.
Isinglass ⚠ Fish allergen	From fish swim bladders. Used to clear some beer and wine. It rarely appears on the label.
Casein, caseinate ⚠ Milk allergen	Milk protein. Some non-dairy creamers, soy cheese and protein bars.
Whey ⚠ Milk allergen	Milk. Bread, crackers, chip seasoning and protein bars.
Lactose ⚠ Milk allergen	Milk sugar. Chip seasoning, bread, processed meat and some medicines.
Albumen, albumin ⚠ Egg allergen	Egg white. Baked goods, meringue and some wine fining.
Anchovies ⚠ Fish allergen	Fish. Most Worcestershire sauce, Caesar dressing and some pesto. Vegan Worcestershire exists.
Lanolin E913	Grease from sheep's wool. A glaze on chewing gum, and the usual source of vitamin D3.

Can be from an animal: check the source

L-cysteine E920	Dough conditioner in bread, bagels and pizza dough. Can be made from feathers or hair, or by fermentation.
Vitamin D3	Added to cereal, juice, spreads and supplements. Usually from lanolin, unless it says D2 or vegan D3 (from lichen).
Natural flavors	Under US rules these can come from meat, fish, eggs or dairy. Ask the maker or look for a vegan mark.
Cane sugar	Some US cane sugar is filtered through bone char. Beet sugar is not. Look for a vegan mark or ask the brand.
Mono and diglycerides E471	Emulsifier in bread, ice cream and spreads. Can be from plant or animal fat.
Lecithin E322	Usually soy or sunflower, sometimes egg. If it is soy, it is also a soy allergen.

More E numbers PlatePal screens as not vegan: E542 E631 E635 E909 E966 E1000 E1105
More that can be animal, check the source: E270 E422 E570 E627 E472e E481
When the label cannot tell you, ask the maker.

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