

MEATLESS MONDAY



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

Why Meatless Monday?

Meatless Monday was started by the U.S. government as a resource saving measure during World War I and II. In 2003, it was revived by The Monday Campaigns in association with the Johns Hopkins' Bloomberg School of Public Health to reduce meat consumption by 15 percent for our personal health and the health of the planet. In this toolkit you'll learn why Meatless Monday is sweeping the nation and what to eat.

For Health, Sustainability, and Animal Welfare

Health

Participating in Meatless Monday will help your family embrace healthy eating. Diets rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, and nuts are consistently linked to lower obesity rates, blood cholesterol levels and blood pressure. As a recent Harvard study concluded, "red meat

consumption is associated with an increased risk of total, cardiovascular, and cancer mortality” due to meat’s high fat and cholesterol content. Researchers found that those who replaced meat with plant-based proteins decreased their chance of mortality up to 11 percent.

“Reducing meat consumption and eating a balanced diet full of fruits and vegetables is a great way to combat chronic disease and improve overall health.”

—Melissa K. Li, M.D., at Providence St. Vincent in Portland, Ore.



Jason Lee, St. Vincent’s Retail Restaurant Manager and Melissa Li, Gastrointestinal pathologist, Providence St. Vincent Medical Center, Portland, Ore. | Photo by Shawn Linehan

Sustainability

Animal agriculture has been implicated by the United Nations as one of the top contributors to global environmental problems, due to its vast use of water, land, and fossil fuels, and high carbon dioxide and methane emissions. Prominent environmental organizations like the Sierra Club, Environmental Defense Fund, and Natural Resources Defense Council advocate for reduced meat

consumption. According to Environmental Defense Fund, “If every American skipped one meal of chicken per week and substituted vegetables and grains...the carbon dioxide savings would be the same as taking more than half a million cars off of U.S. roads.”

**“If Americans reduced meat consumption by just 20 percent, it would be as though we all switched from a sedan to a hybrid.”
—The Sierra Club**

Animal Welfare

The majority of the meat, milk, and eggs produced in the U.S. come from animals intensively confined in in factory farms, their lives bearing no resemblance to the way most of us envision farm life. By increasing and highlighting meat-free options even just one day a week, your family can help spare animals from factory farms.

What can we do at home?

Try Meatless Monday at home. Cook with your family on Mondays to acquaint kids with new healthy foods.

- Visit our web site for recipes and a helpful guide with more information on meat-free eating.
- The website Fruits and Veggies More Matters is full of great ideas for getting kids involved at home.
- See our ideas for family activities to learn more about healthy eating and cooking.
- Check out our “Meatless Monday Food in Your Community” document for resources to help your family on its path to meat-free eating.

What can we do at school?

If your school is not already participating in Meatless Monday, contact us for resources and tips on how to change that. You can share the information on our web site for school food service directors with your child’s nutrition department. You can also use the Meatless Monday resources from the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale University. We’re here to help every step of the way!

Activities for your family

- **Farmers' Markets:** Going to the farmers' market can be an opportunity for children to get hands-on experience learning more about fruits and vegetables, how to plan for meals, the environmental impact of our food choices, and a chance to meet real, local farmers. Visit FarmersMarketOnline.com to find farmers' markets in your area. You can also talk to farmers to see if you can visit their farm or fruit orchard so your family can learn where the food is grown.
- **Animal Sanctuaries:** Visit a local animal sanctuary to meet rescued farm animals in person! This is a chance for kids to meet farm animals, like chickens, pigs, cows, and turkeys, and to learn about their lives. Check out this web site to see if there are any in your area.
- **Health Food Stores:** Many health food stores offer cooking classes and food demonstrations. Check with your local health food store or Whole Foods for scheduling and availability.
- **Make Meatless Monday about family, friends and fun!** There are a lot of activities to do at home and with neighbors. For example:
 - Cook and eat a Meatless Monday meal together.
 - Have a contest to determine who makes the most creative dishes or who keeps true to Meatless Monday all day long.
 - Watch documentaries and programs about the issues the campaign addresses. See "Learning Resources for Meatless Monday" for suggestions.



Get the recipe for this twenty-minute chili at humansociety.org/recipes. | Photo by Meredith Lee/The HSUS

Meatless Monday in Your Community

When it comes to eating more meat-free meals, options abound in every local community! By exploring meat-free cuisine, you're exposing your palate to a world of new tastes, textures, and foods. Use this guide to find the right foods at the grocery store, local farmers' markets, local meat-free options, and resources at your local library and online sites.

Farmers' Markets and Farm Stands: You can score great deals on fresh produce, meet your farmers—and your neighbors, and learn more about where your food comes from! Some farmers' markets also feature cooking demonstrations to show you how to prepare your fresh fruits and vegetables. Visit FarmersMarketOnline.com to find farmers' markets in your area.

Eat International: International restaurants almost always offer delicious meat-free options and have vegetarian menus.

- Chinese and Thai restaurants often have vegetarian menus and dishes consisting of vegetables, tofu, and rice or noodles.
- Middle Eastern restaurants have hearty falafel sandwiches, hummus platters, and healthy, rich lentil soup.
- While not all Mexican restaurants have vegetarian menus, it's very easy to order vegetarian. Ask for no meat, and extra beans, veggies, and guacamole on your dish.
- Indian restaurants always have vegetarian dishes – just ask!
- Japanese restaurants can always make vegetarian sushi rolls like avocado and cucumber maki.
- Ethiopian restaurants often have delicious vegetarian plates and samplers.

Meat-free on the Go: Because of the growing popularity of meat-free eating, most restaurants and fast-food chains now offer meat-free fare, including: **Subway** (veggie patty or veggie delight sub), **Chipotle**, **Burger King** (veggie burger), **Denny's** (veggie burger), **Quizno's** (veggie sub), **Taco Bell** (ask for no meat, get extra veggies), **Johnny Rocket's** (veggie burger), **Red Robin** (veggie burgers), **Olive Garden**, **Noodles & Co.**, and **Ruby Tuesday**.

Meat-Free Restaurants: Vegetarian restaurants are sprouting up all over the country, and there could be some right in your backyard! Additionally, many restaurants that traditionally serve meat-based dishes are adding vegetarian dishes to accommodate the growing population of Americans looking for meat-free meals. Visit VegGuide.org to find local vegetarian and vegetarian-friendly restaurants or download [Veg Out](http://VegOut) in the app store to find veg-friendly restaurants wherever you are.

Grocery Shopping: Your everyday grocery store is chock full of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, beans, meat substitutes, and more. Here's a list of foods to stock up on to get you started.

- Fruit: bananas, apples, pears, berries (blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries), grapes, peaches, plums, watermelon, oranges, raisins.
- Vegetables: spinach, carrots, zucchini, cucumber, lettuce, mushrooms, squash, corn, broccoli, asparagus, tomatoes, potatoes, avocados, onions, kale, collard greens.
- Beans and legumes: black beans, red beans, chick peas (garbanzo beans), lima beans, pinto beans, lentils, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans, Great Northern beans.
- Grains: rice, oats, barley, bread, bagels, pastas, tortillas, taco shells, quinoa (can be found in health section or near rice), couscous.
- Nuts: peanuts, walnuts, almonds, pistachios, cashews, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, sunflower seeds.
- Plant-based meats: Like the taste and texture of meat? You can find enjoy that same experience with the plant-based meat alternatives in your local grocery chain – they're usually found near the produce section, in the health section, or in the frozen foods section. There are high-protein vegetarian versions of burgers, hot dogs, sausages, ground beef, chicken strips and more. There are a lot of brands and varieties and some are better than others, so be sure to shop around until you find your favorite. Some of our favorites include Tofurky Deli Slices and sausages, Gardein products, Field Roast sausages, Lightlife "Smart Ground" ground beef substitute, Boca Chik'n Patties, and Morningstar Farms Riblets. You can also use high-protein meat alternatives like tofu, tempeh, and seitan, which can often be found near the produce section in the grocery store.
- Dairy alternatives: Soy milk, almond milk (often found right next to the cow's milk), Earth Balance (a butter alternative), soy yogurt, Daiya cheese.
- Other staples: veggie bouillon cubes (for soups), pasta sauce, peanut butter (or other nut butters), cereal, jam/jelly, frozen fruit (for smoothies), hummus.
- Note: If there's a health food store, Whole Foods Market or Trader Joe's grocery store in your area, you can find even more great meat-free foods!

Online Resources

- [HumaneSociety.org/meatfree](https://www.humanesociety.org/meatfree): Free recipes, a dining-out guide, and information about the health benefits of meat-free meals.
- [HumaneSociety.org/Recipes](https://www.humanesociety.org/Recipes): Our favorite meat-free recipes! Sign up to receive a weekly Meatless Monday recipe each week.

Book Resources

Visit your local library and search for vegetarian cookbooks. Ask your librarian who should be able to help you find just what you're looking for. Alternatively, search any online bookseller for vegetarian or vegan cookbooks and you'll find dozens of good options.



A student at the Academy of Global Citizenship in Chicago enjoys a Meatless Monday lunch. | Photo by J. Geil

Learning Resources for Meatless Monday

K-5

- [Gassy Cows](#) – a short video made by Animal Planet about the impact meat production has on our planet.
- [Download a host of activities](#) ranging from coloring pages to word searches, puzzles, scrambles, and more on the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables.

Middle School

- [The Meatrix](#) is an interesting and animated take on the hit film *The Matrix*, and explores our industrial food system in an easy to digest way.

High School and Older

- [Meatless Monday](#) – a three-minute award-winning video produced by The Humane Society of the United States on the WHO, WHAT, HOW, WHY, and WHERE of Meatless Monday.
- [Rethinking the Meat Guzzler](#) by *The New York Times* encourages students to investigate and discuss the environmental impact of factory farms.
- [Food, Inc.](#), an Oscar-nominated documentary, examines our modern food system and how we can all improve it. It's available on Netflix.
- *Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer is the true tale of an award-winning novelist investigating the welfare of animals raised for food, and the impact it has on the environment.
- [Forks Over Knives](#), a groundbreaking documentary about the health benefits of meat-free fare.