

MEATLESS MONDAY COOKING GUIDE



**A guide to creating
delicious food that's
better for you, and
better for the planet.**



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We believe the way we produce and consume meat and dairy, needs a radical rethink in order to curb corporate control over food, to reduce health, environmental and climate impacts, reduce suffering of animals and to help citizens move towards a more sustainable diet. We need to reduce our overall consumption of animal products and when we consume meat, make sure it's of better quality. We call for policies which support a model that secures livelihoods for farmers and increases trust between farmers and consumers by supporting responsible production practices. These practices include extensive, pasture-based animal husbandry and engaging in hands-on activities with citizens, schools, restaurants, and local authorities who are interested in reducing their overall meat consumption by promoting plant based options.

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About this guide

This guide provides ideas and information on eating less and better meat. The information focuses on helping you switch to a plant-based diet for one day each week. It is also useful if you just fancy a small change, or want to switch to a plant-based diet on a more permanent basis. While this isn't a recipe book, it does include an old favourite plant-based recipe and a traditional meat dish that is adapted to be made with plant-based ingredients. You'll find lots of tips for plant-based recipes in the more resources section.

Why less and better meat?

There are many reasons for eating less and better meat, here are a few:

- The majority of the meat that is eaten in Europe (especially pigs, cows and poultry) comes from **factory farmed animals**. In factory farms, hundreds or even thousands of animals are kept in cramped conditions, and often treated badly.
- Keeping animals cramped together on factory farms produces a massive amount of **air and water pollution** - harming the environment and health of the people who work on the farms, and the people living nearby.
- Factory farms, and the companies that control them, have **taken over our food system**. Small-scale farmers are being put out of business, or forced to work for these giant companies.
- Meat production, and especially factory farming, **contributes to climate change**, through deforestation to produce crops to feed animals, methane emissions from the animals, and the storage and processing of manure.
- The production of meat **uses much more land and water** than producing the same amount of food from plant-based sources, as animals need to eat plant crops to produce meat, milk or eggs.
- Eating too much meat **contributes to diseases** such as diabetes and heart disease.
- As well as being better for the planet, using fewer resources, and stopping animal suffering, eating a plant-based diet can be **delicious, healthy and exciting**. It doesn't just mean cutting meat out of your diet, but it opens up a whole new world of flavours and textures...

A balanced diet

The average European eats too much meat, which contributes to a range of diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes. However, just cutting meat out of your diet might leave you without the nutrients that your body needs to be healthy. Many of the new “vegan” products that are appearing on the market (especially fake cheese, and fake “meats”) are based on ingredients like palm oil or coconut oil which have very little nutritional value, as well as causing their own environmental problems.

Instead of just swapping (highly processed) meat for highly processed plant-based products, eating a plant-based meal – even once a day, or for one day per week – gives you an opportunity to think more about a more balanced and healthy diet.

The “food pyramid” is a good way of thinking about building your plant-based diet on a foundation of fruits and vegetables, and eating smaller amounts of (whole) grains,

beans & pulses, nuts & seeds, and herbs & spices every day.

And don't forget to exercise, and drink plenty of water!

You can treat this pyramid as a guide to inspire you- whatever type of food you like to eat.

For example, you can find a food pyramid specifically based on African Heritage food here:

<https://oldwayspt.org/resources/oldways-african-heritage-pyramid>



Plant-based ingredients

There are an almost infinite variety of plant-based ingredients, and switching to a plant-based diet (even if it is just for one meal per day, or one day per week) can be an exciting journey, but it can feel a bit overwhelming! It will be easier if you have these foods in your cupboard, or know where to find them from local suppliers.

The cost of some plant-based foods may be a bit higher than (factory farmed) meat. But buying in bulk (for your household or sharing the purchase with other people), buying direct from suppliers, eating fruit and vegetables in season, and avoiding the most highly processed plant-based foods are all ways to keep the cost down.

Vegetables

Your local farmer, Community Supported Agriculture project, market, or even growing your own vegetables (see section on growing your own veggies) should be able to keep you in fresh vegetables throughout the year. Eating with the seasons, and avoiding food that has been flown half way around the world, will decrease your impact on the planet and encourage you to try new recipes. Green leafy vegetables are especially good for getting the nutrients you need. Buying organic means you'll avoid the pesticides that sit on or just under the skin- which is also the most nutritious part of most vegetables.

Whole grains/cereals

Wheat (in the form of bread, pasta, couscous, noodles), rice, muesli, and maybe other grains such as quinoa, should also be a staple of your store cupboard. Whole grains (brown rice, wholewheat spaghetti or bread) have much higher nutritional value than highly processed products- they'll also fill you up so you probably won't need to eat as much of them.

Nuts and seeds

Having a stash of different types of seeds and nuts can be a good way to get your daily dose of vitamins and minerals. They can be quite expensive, but you don't need many to make a tasty snack or dessert, maybe mixed with some dried fruit.

Pulses

You can buy pulses (beans, peas and lentils and peanuts) in a wide variety of forms. Tins of chickpeas or kidney beans can be added to soups and stews. Frozen peas are a handy way to add colour and taste in winter. Dried lentils and beans may need to be soaked overnight, but the cooking time can be sped up in a pressure cooker. You can

also get “ground” pulses in the form of peanut butter or hummus! Added to a whole grain, they can make a complete protein.

Soya products

Humans have been eating soya-based foods for generations, especially in Asia where tofu (soya bean curd) and tempeh (fermented soya beans) are widely used. Tofu is quite bland, so soaking it in soya sauce, or some other marinade for a few minutes before cooking it is a good idea! Tempeh can have quite a strong flavour that is not to everyone’s taste. But both can work well in a stir-fry or other East/South-East Asian dishes.

The recent boom in vegan products has seen a massive increase in soya products, including soya milk (see below), textured vegetable protein (known as TVP) and highly-processed and “ready-to-eat” soya products such as burgers, sausages or mince. You might want to avoid relying too heavily on these, especially as the majority of soya that is grown nowadays is produced for animal feed, on massive plantations. There are plenty of other sources of animal proteins!

Seitan

Seitan is a Chinese product, made from wheat protein (essentially wheat that has had the starch washed out of it). It is sometimes called “wheat meat”. Just as with tofu, it needs to be cooked in a sauce to give it some flavour. You can make it yourself (with a bit of effort) using either normal wheat flour, or “Vital Wheat Gluten flour”. Depending on the brand you buy, or the way in which you make it yourself, it can have a slightly meat-like texture.

Plant milks

The growth in veganism, the increase in lactose intolerance, and the recognition that cow’s milk is not so healthy when consumed in large quantities, has led to a boom in the production and consumption of “plant milks” based on soya, almond, hazelnut, oats. You’ll find them labelled as “drink” rather “milk” due to labelling restrictions. (Note: Coconut milk is something completely different...).

They can substitute for milk in recipes, but they don’t really taste like milk. You might be shocked if you add them to coffee as they are likely to curdle when they mix with the hot liquid, turning into something a bit like cottage cheese... As with soya products, the massive increase in almond milk production has had environmental problems due to the amount of water used. If you do want to cut out cow’s milk, you can make your own oat milk quite simply and cheaply.

Plant-based nutrition

In order to stay healthy, our bodies need protein, fat, carbohydrates and fibre, as well as a range of different vitamins and minerals. A healthy and balanced plant-based diet should be able to provide you with enough of these macro-nutrients, and vitamins and minerals. Not every mouthful needs to include all of these nutrients, and some of them can be stored in the body so they don't need to be eaten every day. However, some of them can only be stored for a short time (including B Vitamins, Vitamin C, Zinc and Calcium).

Protein

Protein is important for growth and repair of the body's cells and tissues- for making strong bones and muscles and maintaining the immune system. Plant-based sources of protein include: pulses, beans, seeds, nuts, green vegetables including broccoli and spinach, and soya products.

Eating a variety of plant-based protein sources is much healthier than relying on only one source, to ensure you get a good balance of amino acids.

MEATLESS MONDAY PRESENTS

PLANT PROTEIN POWER

MEATLESS COMBOS THAT COMPLETE YOU

GOOD & SIMPLE	LATIN	MIDDLE EASTERN	ASIAN
Spinach with Walnuts	Rice and Beans	Hummus with Pita Bread	Tofu and Sesame Seeds

Put the power of plant protein to work for you. Visit meatlessmonday.com/plantproteinpower to learn more.
#MeatlessMonday #PlantProteinPower

Combining rice and beans, or peanuts and wheat (in peanut butter sandwich), will ensure you get a complete protein.

DECREASE YOUR CHANCE OF GETTING DIABETES BY ABOUT 15%

Just skip a serving of meat every day and replace it with a vegetable protein like black beans or tofu.

#MeatlessMonday MeatlessMonday.com

Carbohydrate

Carbohydrate is the main source of energy for the body. Simple sugars (found in fruit, table sugar, and sweets) release their energy much more quickly than complex carbohydrates found in starchy foods such as whole grains (pasta, cereals, bread), potatoes, pulses and root vegetables.

Fibre

Fibre is needed for healthy bowel function, and it can also help to lower blood cholesterol levels- important for reducing the risk of heart disease. It may also protect against some forms of cancer. Fibre isn't found in animal products, but there is a lot in whole grains (rice, wheat, quinoa), fruit, nuts, pulses and vegetables.

Fat

Eating some fat is important, to help the body absorb some vitamins. It is also a good source of energy. Unsaturated fat is healthier, and can be found in olive oil, other vegetable oils, nuts, avocado, seeds and green leafy vegetables. Saturated fats (found in eggs, butter, cream and cheese) and trans-fats (found in hydrogenated vegetable fat used in some processed foods) can raise the level of cholesterol in your blood.

Omega 3 Fatty Acids are especially important for the brain and heart, and can be found in flaxseed oil, hemp seed oil, rapeseed oil, and in lower quantities in spinach, broccoli, kidney beans and romaine lettuce.

Vitamins and minerals

Vitamins and minerals are needed in much smaller amounts, but are vital to keep us healthy. They are found in animal products including eggs and dairy, but can also be obtained from plant-based sources.

Vitamin A is a powerful antioxidant that is important for healthy skin, fighting off infections, healing wounds and protecting against disease. Beta-carotene, found in yellow and orange vegetables (carrots, red or yellow peppers, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, apricots, etc.), and green leafy vegetables, can be turned into vitamin A in the body.

B Vitamins are important for our brain, heart and nerves, and for blood formation, as well as healthy skin and muscle tone. They can be found in wholegrain cereals, nuts, yeast extract, mushrooms, bananas, peas, green leafy vegetables. **Vitamin B12** is added to some products, including yeast extract, some vegetable margarines, soya milks, and nutritional yeast flakes.

Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant, important for healthy skin, teeth and gums, as resistance to infection, and healing wounds. It is found in fruit and vegetables including oranges, red pepper, blackcurrants, kiwi fruit, and green leafy vegetables.

Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium for healthy bones and teeth. It can be obtained through sunlight on the skin, and some fortified products.



GO NUTS!
IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR MIND.

Walnuts are a rich source of protein. So they're a great substitute for meat. They can also help improve cognitive performance. Now that's good thinking.

#MeatlessMonday **MEATLESS MONDAY** MeatlessMonday.com

Vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant, important for healthy skin, resistance to infection, and healing wounds. It is found in spinach, sunflower seeds, almonds, olives and red peppers.

Vitamin K is important for blood clotting and healing wounds. It may also have a role in building strong bones. It is found in green leafy vegetables such as kale, spinach, Brussels sprouts, romaine lettuce, as well as in potatoes.

Iron is needed for healthy blood. Get it from pulses, green leafy vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, dried fruit and soya.

Calcium for healthy bones and teeth can be found in green leafy vegetables, nuts (especially brazils and almonds), soya products and some fortified products.

Zinc is important for healthy-looking skin, hair and nails and essential for our immune system. Get it from mushrooms, pumpkin seeds, peas, pulses, green leafy vegetables and whole grains.

Selenium, forms part of the antioxidant defence system with vitamins A, C and E. It can be found in brazil nuts, brown rice, button mushrooms, tofu and oats.

Iodine is important for producing thyroid hormones, to ensure a healthy metabolism. It can be found in green leafy vegetables as well as seaweed some vegetable stock.

Magnesium is important for bones, nerves and muscles. It also helps convert food into energy. It is found in nuts (especially almonds and cashews), pumpkin seeds, green leafy vegetables, green beans, whole grains and soya products.

How much of these nutrients do I need?

The exact amount of each vitamin and mineral or macronutrient you need to consume depends on your age, sex and level of activity, and also whether you are pregnant. You can find more details here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals>

In case you are worried about getting enough of these minerals and vitamins, especially when you switch to a completely plant-based diet, then you could consider taking supplements, to boost your daily intake and make sure you are getting your recommended daily intake. However, certain vitamins and minerals cannot be stored in the body, so you won't get any benefit from eating more than you need each day.

Plant-based recipes

!!!: A traditional recipe that's already plant-based

!!!: A traditional recipe adapted to be plant-based

!!!: A recipe that is completely different

Busting some plant-based myths

“Humans need to eat meat to be healthy and strong”

There is plenty of evidence that you can get all the nutrients you need from a plant-based diet. This guide shows you how to have a balanced diet eating less meat, or even cutting out meat and dairy products entirely. Some of the world’s top athletes (include Venus Williams and champion boxer David Haye) eat entirely plant-based diets.

“A meal without meat is not complete”

There are lots of delicious plant-based recipes, which can be just as filling and tasty as meals with meat. Some dishes may be easy to adapt using tofu, seitan, or even some processed “fake meat” burger or sausage. You could get creative and try something completely different: check out the recipes in this guide, and the online cookbooks for more ideas. You may even find out that some of your favourite dishes (desserts, soups, salads, etc.) are entirely plant-based already!

“I won’t be able to manage without milk or eggs”

There are plenty of ways to avoid eating dairy products and eggs, and still have a healthy, balanced, diet. Even if you can’t (or don’t want to) avoid eating eggs or milk completely, cutting down on the amount of meat, eggs and dairy you eat (starting by having a Meatless Monday!) and eating better meat and animal produce – produced locally and with higher standards for the animals, can still have a positive impact.

“I’ll never be able to eat out at restaurants”

More and more restaurants are offering plant-based options. If your favourite restaurant doesn’t have any plant-based options, why not speak to them and encourage them to join the “Meatless Monday” movement.

“I don’t like broccoli/beans/mushrooms, etc.”

Sorry, we can’t help you with that, but there are lots of delicious alternatives when you’re eating plant-based food!

“Plant-based food is too expensive”

Some plant-based alternatives (especially highly processed foods) can be more expensive than meat or dairy. But buying in bulk (for your household or sharing the purchase with other people), buying direct from suppliers, eating fruit and vegetables in season, and avoiding the most highly processed plant-based foods are all ways to keep the cost down.

More resources

There are lots of resources on the internet which you can look at for information and inspiration!

Cookbooks and Recipes

There are lots of vegan and plant-based cookbooks and recipes available online and in hard copy. Meatless Monday has hundreds of recipes and a range of books for different types of food:

<https://www.meatlessmonday.com/favorite-recipes/>

<https://www.meatlessmonday.com/ecookbooks/>

The UK Vegan Society has some basic and tasty plant-based recipes:

<https://www.vegansociety.com/resources/recipes>

If you want to buy a cookbook, the “A Vegan taste of...” series (by Linda Majzlik) is a good place to start, with books on food from Eastern Europe, Middle East, Italy, India, the Caribbean, and many more regions!

Plant-based nutrition

Visual guides to plant-based nutrition to download: <https://www.animalaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Nutrition-Wall-chart-2019.jpg> and to buy:

<https://www.vegansociety.com/shop/charts/vegan-nutrition-chart>

Meatless Monday has a focus on protein:

<https://www.meatlessmonday.com/plantproteinpower/>

Community supported agriculture

CSA schemes bring together citizens, small farmers, consumers, activists and political actors through a locally-based economic model of agriculture and food distribution:

<https://urgenci.net/>

Growing your own vegetables

Few things are as satisfying (or tasty) as eating vegetables you have grown yourself. This guide gives an overview of some crops you can grow with limited space and experience: <https://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/vegetable-crops-for-beginners/>

Eating out

“The Happy Cow” is an online guide to plant-based (vegan and vegetarian) restaurants and eating out around the world: <https://www.happycow.net/>