

NEARLY HALF THE PEOPLE IN THE U.S. CAN BE DESCRIBED AS FLEXITARIAN — THOSE CHOOSING TO EAT LESS MEAT AND MORE PLANT PROTEIN.¹

Flex-Up Your Menus!

by David Grotto, MS, RDN, LDN, Kellogg Nutrition Manager

WHAT IS A FLEXITARIAN?

For those who want their meat but may not want to eat it too, a *Flexitarian* approach to eating is a perfect solution. Numerous campaigns—from Meatless Mondays to Vegan Before 6—appeal to Flexitarians by encouraging the adoption of plant-based meals without requiring the total abandonment of meat.

Plant-based meals are becoming commonplace—even among meat eaters. More people today value personalization with food—making it their own. They want to define healthy lifestyles on their terms, and they want to feel good about their food choices.

According to the 2017 Annual Food and Health Survey by the International Food Information Council, 72 percent of consumers recognize protein from plant sources as healthful. Mirroring these sentiments, 2016 Nielsen data found that 75 percent of consumers are open to eating veggie foods with over one-third of those consumers actively reducing their meat intake.

BUT WHY LESS MEAT?

The earth isn't getting any bigger, but the challenge of feeding a growing population is. So it's not surprising that drivers for plant-based eating include concerns about the

environment and sustainability, animal welfare, the financial cost of meat, as well as health and nutrition. Ultimately, people will only make a plant-based diet a habit if they enjoy what they eat.

YOUR MILLENNIAL AND GEN Z CUSTOMERS ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY, HUMAN-KIND AND THE EARTH.

Dietary choices are incredibly personal, as are the reasons that motivate us to choose certain foods over others. Millennials and GenZ want to know that their purchase decisions make a difference in the world whether supporting social causes or positively impacting the environment. That may explain why 72 percent of millennials and 62 percent of GenZ are trying to eat a more plant-based diet.²

ACTION! Promote your veggie cuisine via “facted-up” menu boards and table tents including these inspiring factoids/ infographics that are sure to sway any fence-sitters:

- Choosing a veggie meal over one with meat just once a week for a year, could save enough water for more than 200 showers.³
- A veggie lunch requires 81 percent less water, 79 percent less land, and 74 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than one made with meat.⁴

PLANT IN SOME GREAT FLAVOR AND GOOD NUTRITION!

Flexitarians are celebrating vegetables and moving them to the center of the plate—a place previously reserved for meat. Global and ethnic flavors and ingredients are central to the flexitarian’s way of eating. Consumers are looking to cultures where there is an inherent knowledge in vegetable preparation (i.e., Asia, Italy, France, India) for inspiration.

Today’s plant-based options, ranging in flavor profiles from chipotle black bean to garlic roasted quinoa, meet today’s students’ demands for great tasting foods and exciting ethnic flavors available in food formats they can feel good about. Recipes incorporating emerging and on-trend flavor profiles are now readily available and provide all-day choices in the plant-based meal category.

There is also a growing focus on protein, and consumers are concerned about not getting enough when switching



36,200

to a plant-focused diet. Plant-based proteins such as lentils, whole grains, and soy products can provide an adequate amount of protein for daily needs. In fact, of all of the plant proteins, soy has the highest protein content at 18g of protein per cup, with lentils coming in close at second place at 14g per cup.⁵ Additionally, plant-based meals tend to be lower in cholesterol and saturated fat than meat-based meals.⁶

ENOUGH WATER TO FILL THE

**CAPITOL
ROTUNDA**



**46
TIMES**

That’s how much we’d save if the average US city ate one meal with veggie protein instead of meat, just once a week.

Kunzig, R. (2014). Carnivore’s Dilemma. [Online] National Geographic.

Available at: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/meat/>



11,300



8,800



6,300



5,900

Average calories of feed required to produce 1,000 calories of food.

INCENTIVIZE CUSTOMERS TO “MAKE THE FLIP” AND SHARE THEIR CHOICE WITH THE WORLD!

Serve burgers that students will love so much that they will want to share them with the rest of the campus and beyond! Encourage customers to share on social media that they “made the flip” to delicious veggie burgers at your operation!

17 TRIPS TO MARS



That's how many car miles worth of greenhouse gasses we could offset if every adult in America swapped just one meal with meat for a veggie one.

Kunzig, R. (2014). Carnivore's Dilemma. [Online] National Geographic. Available at: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/meat/>

- 76 percent of internet-using adults and 90 percent of millennials use social media.
- Social media can help you stay connected with guests and keep you top of mind.
- Facebook & Instagram are the most widely-used social media platforms.
- Images boost post results and reactions to break through cluttered feeds.

By offering easy and delicious plant-based solutions, operators can help their customers feel good about their choices and give them more of what they want, deliciously. A diet containing more plant proteins doesn't have to be hard, and giving customers convenient ways to incorporate more veggies into their daily lives helps “plant in” habits that are good for people and the planet. For more information, visit www.kelloggsspecialtychannels.com/Home/CU.◆

1. Stahler, C. (2012) How Often Do Americans Eat Vegetarian Meals? And How Many Adults in the U.S. Are Vegetarian?
2. IFMA/Datassentials CPP 2016
3. Veg Effect Calculator™ @ https://www.morningstarfarms.com/just_what_the_world_ordered/what-we-do
4. A Comparative Life Cycle Assessment of Plant-Based Foods and meat Foods Summary (Quantis, MorningStar Farms® 2016)
5. US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Nutrient Data Laboratory. (2014) USDA national Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 27.
6. Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Vegetarian Diets. J Acad Nutr Diet, 2016.