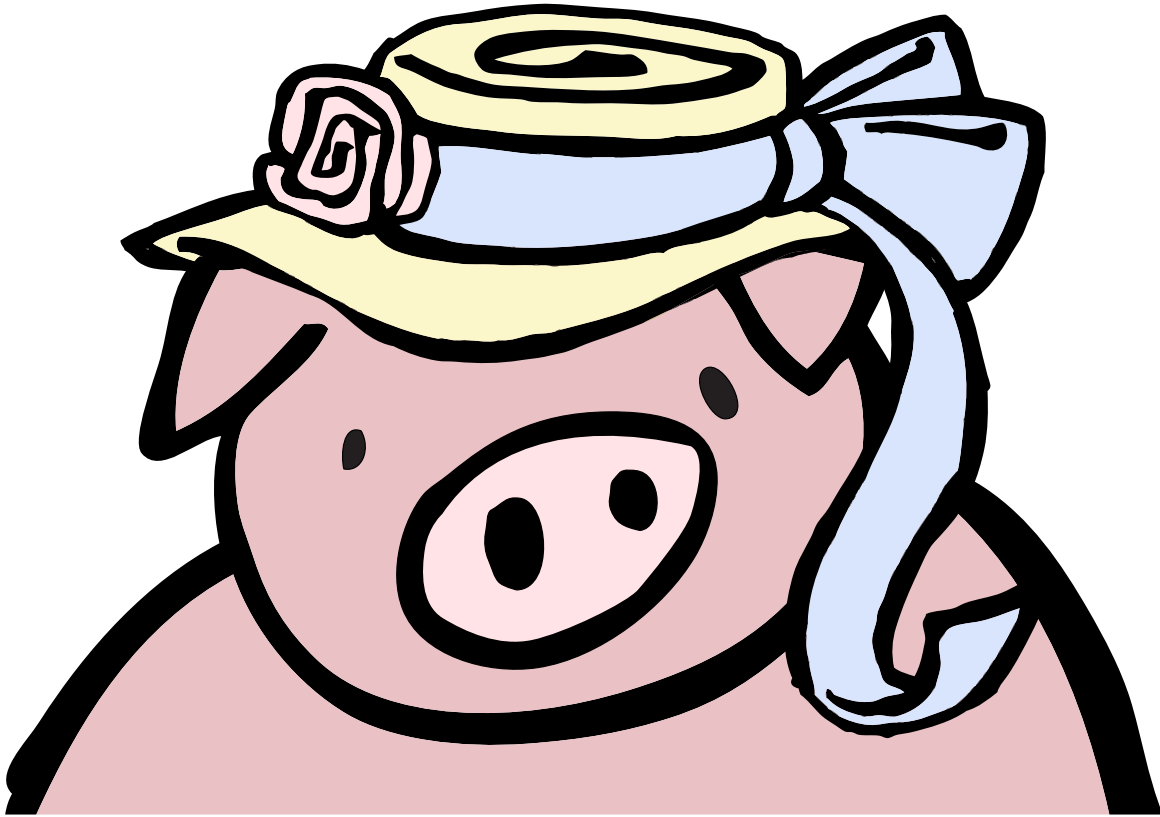


Meatless Monday goes to town.

Tools and Resources for Communities



One day a week, cut out meat.

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Welcome to the Meatless Monday movement!

America's obesity epidemic is impacting communities nationwide. As of June 2010, more than two-thirds of U.S. adults and nearly one-third of children and teens are overweight or obese.

Excessive weight has been linked to many of the preventable chronic diseases that plague western society. Currently, one in three adults has some form of heart disease and more than 80 million Americans have type-2 diabetes or are pre-diabetic. These health issues hurt not only individuals, but entire communities. Obesity-related medical costs account for about 10 percent of all annual medical spending, and unhealthy workforces affect a community's ability to thrive economically. Higher healthcare costs and low productivity means that many businesses are reluctant to relocate to, or invest in, areas with a high incidence of obesity.

Now is the time to take steps toward a healthier lifestyle, but the road isn't always easy. It can be difficult if not impossible for individuals to correct unhealthy habits if their environment does not follow suit. If we hope to affect change in towns nationwide, we must change community-wide behaviors.

That's where Meatless Monday comes in. Meatless Monday is a simple, weekly reminder to take saturated fat off our plates and replace it with nutrient-rich fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains. Entire neighborhoods can commit to a healthy start on Monday, with the intention of making smarter choices throughout the week.

In this toolkit, you'll find the advice, ideas and actions you need to make Meatless Monday a community-wide movement. Start a letter writing campaign to public officials, launch a Meatless Monday event or get local restaurants on board. Use this information in conjunction with our Media Toolkit to spread the word far and wide!

Congratulations on taking this first steps towards a healthier community, both for yourself and for future generations.

Levi, J, S Vinter, R St. Laurent, and L M. Segal. F as in Fat 2010: How the Obesity Crisis Threatens America's Future. N.p.: Trust for America's Health, 2010. Web. 22 July 2010.

Tips for a successful letter writing campaign:

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Using the sample letter as your guide, feel free to personalize your letter writing campaign based on the specific issues facing your community. Aim for a short template letter (a page or less) so letter writers can include their feelings or personal stories in the space provided.

CHOOSE A PLACE TO SPREAD THE WORD

Try sharing your campaign at a town hall meeting, PTA gathering, or local place of worship. You can also set up a table in a high-traffic area of your community, like a college campus, or outside a bank, post office or grocery store. Just be sure to ask permission first.

KNOW THE FACTS

When asking people to write letters, be sure that you can provide them with some information about the campaign. Download the Meatless Monday General Kit for a list of talking points, including facts, benefits and recent news. You can even print out extra copies to hand out while you table.

ENCOURAGE INVOLVEMENT

When you come across someone who is excited about your campaign, harness their energy!

Urge them to jump in; perhaps they would like to call government officials, help you on the letter campaign, or plan an event. Set up a Meatless Monday planning committee where passionate people can meet and plan larger change.

GET IMMEDIATE RESULTS

Ask neighbors to sign their letters right then and there, rather than taking them home (kind hearts can still be forgetful!). Assure them that it will only take a minute; if they would like to do more at home they can call officials or encourage more people to write.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

If you're planning an event that corresponds with the letter campaign, have some information about the event ready to share with supporters. Not sure of all the details yet? Take down an e-mail address so you can invite them later.

MAKE EACH LETTER COUNT

If possible, mail each letter in its own envelope so the recipient has to open and consider each request for change (if you have many letters and limited stamps, try sending them in intervals of 10 or 20; remember – the more envelopes the better!)

Letter writing is a great way to gain support from your neighbors and your government. When an elected official receives a letter, they know that citizens care deeply about the issue at hand. The more letters you send, the louder your voice, so get the community involved! By asking your neighbors to help you create change, you also teach them about the benefits of a Meatless Monday, making them more likely to try it themselves.

Write letters for a variety of issues:

- Ask elected officials to support a campaign or event
- Develop dietary recommendations for meal programs
- Pass a Meatless Monday resolution!

(sample letter)

[YOUR COMMUNITY]
LETTERHEAD AND/OR LOGOMARK



One day a week cut out meat

Dear [elected official's name],

[Our community] is at a turning point in the battle with chronic disease. Conditions like obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers can all be alleviated with simple changes in diet. Thankfully, our nation is making great strides in health education and preventative medicine. Now is the time for community leaders to speak out about proper diet and healthy habits.

That's why I'd like you to support Meatless Monday. The campaign is a non-profit public health initiative in association with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and seeks to educate the public about the benefits of reducing meat consumption. Just one meatless day a week cuts one's saturated fat intake by an impressive 15%, reducing their risk of chronic, preventable illness, as well as the costs associated with treatment.

[This would be an appropriate place to add personal touches to the letter. Reference a recent community health issue, personal health and nutrition stories, or a desire to pave a better road for future generations.]

Meatless Mondays offer an easy, effective reminder to start the week with a focus on health and nutrition, but we need to work together to spread this message. Please [request for a specific action, like attending an event or making a proclamation. You can also simply say "join us with your support"]. I know our community can count on you to be an advocate for better health [especially considering your success with (a recent initiative the official has worked on relating to health)]. I look forward to your response on this issue.

Sincerely,

[Your name. Add title or description if desired (e.g. Jane Smith, small business owner and mother of two children at Pine Elementary) – and your contact information!]

An event to remember!

Show off the benefits of Meatless Monday with an event that the whole community can get behind! Be it large or small, a well planned action can serve as the official kickoff of Meatless Mondays in your community. Get your town excited with these 10 event ideas (feel free to use your own, of course!):

SET UP A SOCIAL NETWORK

Create a Facebook page for your community where neighbors can check-in each week, swap recipes and learn about upcoming events. Gain fans by posting flyers around town, highlighting your efforts in the local newspaper, and encouraging others to share the page with everyone they know.

MEATLESS MONDAY
MOVEMENT ON:

facebook



START A “PLEDGE DRIVE”

Get neighbors to pledge to go meatless on Monday! Place volunteers with pledge sheets (attached) at various high-traffic areas in town. Set a total pledge goal beforehand that you can aim for- see if you exceed expectations.

HOST A RECIPE CONTEST

Local newspapers are always looking for content! Encourage yours to start a Meatless Monday recipe contest. The top finalists will have their recipes posted over the course of several Mondays. Let readers vote on a favorite.



ORGANIZE A POTLUCK

Gather at a local park or community center and see what your neighbors can cook up. Ask participants to bring a dish as the “price of admission” so no one is left hungry.

CREATE A COOKBOOK CLUB

Much like other community book clubs, choose a meatless cookbook to review as a group. The “review” will of course have to include some tasting, so each club member can make and bring one of the dishes to try.

HOLD A CHILI COOK OFF

There is no end to the types of meatless chili you can make (search ‘chili’ on MeatlessMonday.com for some ideas)! Ask everyone in town to bring their own secret recipe and encourage local chefs, celebrities and community leaders to serve as judges. The winner can have their picture (and, if they’d like, their recipe) posted in the local paper or blogs.



More newsworthy events!

TAKE A LUNCH BREAK

Get your town talking with free food! Set up a table in an area where people normally go for lunch and offer free Meatless Monday samples. Ask them to try going meatless for dinner too!

HAVE A 'PENNY SOCIAL'

Also known as a 'tricky tray', 'pick-a-prize', or 'Chinese auction', participants buy raffle tickets and place them in a tray in front of one of several gift baskets. One ticket (and winner) is then selected for each basket. Encourage local businesses to donate items for gift baskets like kitchen supplies, cookbooks, restaurant gift cards and healthy meatless foods. Thank those who donate, both at the event and on any advertising materials. Donate the proceeds from the social to a local food bank or other healthy cause.



PLAN A WELLNESS FAIR

Highlight the health benefits of Meatless Monday with a community wellness fair. Encourage local health food stores, hospitals, nutritionists, personal trainers, community centers, sustainable farmers and physicians to participate. You can also try a food fair with restaurateurs, shopkeepers and farmers.

GET YOUR COMMUNITY COOKING

Set up cooking classes or demonstrations so your town can learn how to prepare healthy meatless food. Ask a local chef to lead the class (or several on a rotating schedule). They'll love the opportunity to highlight their skills!

Hold your event on a Monday, if possible; one of the main goals of Meatless Monday is to start the week with a focus on health. If Monday simply won't do, consider hosting your event on a Sunday so participants can learn about the campaign and take action the very next day.

Spread your message even further by getting media involved! Get local news sources to talk about your event before it occurs and ask them to attend. Remember, no event is too small if it's for a good cause! Please see our Media toolkit for all the steps you need to navigate press releases and interviews.



PLEDGE TO GO MEATLESS THIS MONDAY!

JOIN the growing number of people, families and organizations pledging to improve their health – and the health of our planet.

SIGN UP for interesting weekly news (by providing your e-mail address or Twitter name).

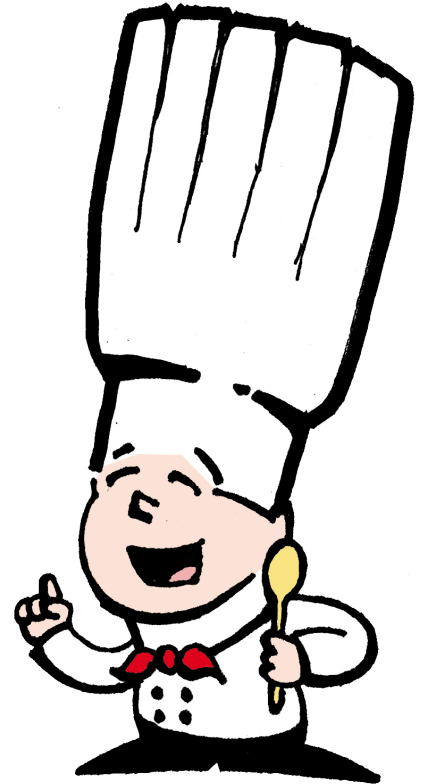
SPREAD THE WORD about the movement! Encourage your friends and family to go Meatless Monday!

Name	Email address <i>(optional)</i>	Twitter <i>(optional)</i>	Signature

Reaching restaurants

Partnerships with restaurants are an easy, effective way to spread Meatless Monday in your neighborhood. By offering additional or reduced price meatless fare on Monday, eateries can show that they care about the health of the community- and make a little extra money in the process! Here are some things to highlight when asking a local restaurant to have Meatless Mondays:

- Offering a Meatless Monday special couldn't be easier! Most restaurants (especially those that specialize in ethnic cuisine) have vegetarian options everyday. Just add a Meatless Monday menu icon and window flyer and voilà!
- Mondays are a notoriously slow day in the restaurant industry. Meatless Monday specials are a great way to increase traffic.
- Meatless dishes are usually much cheaper to produce and take less time to prepare. Highlighting vegetarian entrees means an increase in profits from each dish sold. Low costs also mean restaurants can offer attractive discounts and specials without breaking the bank.
- By signing onto Meatless Monday, restaurants are joining forces with eateries nationwide! From delis in D.C. to five-star bistros in Santa Monica, this is a public health campaign that everyone can get behind. Even celebrity chefs like Mario Batali, John Fraser and Wolfgang Puck now have Meatless Monday specials.
- Remember, you don't have to stop serving meat to join the movement. Meatless Monday is an awareness campaign- simply highlighting plant-based options is enough. Many restaurants have also found success with Meatless Monday set menus- a few pre-selected courses available for a set price.
- Meatless Monday offers restaurateurs invaluable marketing opportunities. The campaign is a great hook to get publicity in local news outlets. Aside from special entrees, eateries can participate by donating food to a Meatless Monday event, hosting a campaign event, or by offering Monday cooking demonstrations.



Online Resources

Download posters, sticker and magnet designs and web graphics to get your school, community, workplace or organization excited about Meatless Monday!

<http://www.meatlessmonday.com/spread-the-movement>

Contact Info:

Email: info@meatlessmonday.com

Website: <http://www.MeatlessMonday.com>