Meatless Monday goes to school.

Implementation Kit for K-12
Welcome to the Meatless Monday movement!

There is no better place to educate our children about health and nutrition than in our nation’s schools. Schools have a unique opportunity to provide children with the foundation they need to lead a healthy life.

At Meatless Monday, we recognize that healthy eating habits start young and require nurturing. That’s why we offer easy, effective and fun solutions that any school can use, regardless of size, location or student population. Offering and promoting Meatless Monday meals creates a weekly opportunity to teach students about healthy eating, proper nutrition and overall well-being.

This Implementation Kit will help start a Meatless Monday program in your school by providing useful information, promotional ideas and materials. We congratulate you on taking this first step towards a healthier student body.

“Meatless Mondays does more for our children than help establish a lifetime of healthier eating...when children’s basic nutritional and fitness needs are met, they attain higher achievement levels.”
- Kevin Beiser, Vice President of the San Diego Unified District School Board

“Meatless Monday allows me to continue educating our students, teachers and community about the benefits of eating more plant-based foods and less meat.”
- Miguel Villarreal, Novato Unified School District Director of Food and Nutritional Services

“We have a community that is growing more and more diverse and the students are looking for more meatless entrees... Meatless Monday really has great health benefits.”
- Frank Castro, Pleasanton School District Director of Child Nutrition Services
How to get started

Launching a Meatless Monday program in your school cafeteria is surprisingly simple and straightforward. Here are some pointers to get you up and running.

• **Commit to Meatless Monday.** Build enthusiasm and strong support by getting everyone on board. Educate and involve your stakeholders – the cafeteria directors, kitchen staff, faculty, students and parents. Let the facts speak for themselves. The health, environmental and business benefits are irrefutable. This is a rare win-win solution on every level.

• **Set your goals.** Determine a success criteria and how to measure it. Agree upon your key performance indicators. Develop your culinary strategies for menu and nutrition. Establish a baseline before beginning for reference.

• **Organize your crew.** Set your start date and create a things-to-do timeline leading up to it. Define your menu. Train your culinary team on the new recipes. Make sure everyone involved understands and can explain the many advantages of the Meatless Monday program.

• **Go! Big!** Plan a Meatless Monday Grand Opening for your school cafeteria. Let the school staff know well in advance. Have teachers lead a discussion on healthy eating and respect for the environment to help prepare their students. Look for opportunities to promote Meatless Monday on school bulletin boards, morning announcements and school websites. Posters, Point of Sale and additional educational materials can be downloaded free.

• **Promote Meatless Monday regularly.** Feature your weekly plant-based specials. Publicize your goals and progress. Use the 10 promotional ideas in this kit as thought-starters to make Meatless Monday your weekly lunch celebration.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT!
Ten ideas on how to promote Meatless Monday in your school

1 Hold a recipe contest. Invite students, faculty and staff to submit recipes to be chosen as a lunch or dinner entrée. Let the students vote for their favorite!

2 Organize a tasting event. Fight misperceptions that food needs to be unhealthy to taste good – get students to opt for meatless meals by offering them tasty samples of meatless dishes.

3 Plan a launch event to create excitement around the campaign. Have school organizations create posters and contact your local newspaper, school newspaper and school website to get the word out.

4 Hold a cooking demo that features local ingredients. Have chefs demonstrate step by step on how to prepare the meatless dish and educate students on where the ingredients came from.

5 Set up an information table in your cafeteria before your campaign launch to provide students with details, a place to ask questions and some free samples of an upcoming meatless entrée.

6 Display Meatless Monday posters in the cafeteria and around your school. Post a bulletin board in the cafeteria that displays food, diet and health-related news to remind students about the reasons to participate in Meatless Monday.

7 Create a school-wide competition to see which classroom can recruit the most friends and family members to join the Meatless Monday pledge. Track the progress in a public place, such as in the school cafeteria. Reward the class with the highest average at the end of each month with an extra 30 minute recess.

8 Incorporate Meatless Monday into a class project for your health, food science, nutrition, communications or environmental science classes. Hold a Meatless Monday fair to give students a chance to display and explain their work. Give a prize for the best project!

9 Distribute a Meatless Monday “passport” and provide students with a stamp for every time they participate in Meatless Monday. Use this as an opportunity to encourage students to try different meatless cuisine, such as Indian, Thai, Latin American or African.

10 Celebrate local produce. Instead of simply promoting the “meatless” message, use Meatless Monday as an opportunity to spotlight local produce farmers. Display information about the local fruit or vegetable of the day and where it came from.
Key Benefits of Adding Meatless Monday to Your School Cafeteria

- **Signals a commitment** to the health and wellness of the students, staff and the environment. Meatless Monday is a proven plant-based dietary program that makes a real difference in people’s lives.

- **Promotes healthy eating habits.** The lessons children learn now will last a lifetime and may be passed along to their own children. Provide this generation with the knowledge they need to avoid preventable chronic diseases.

- **Reduces environmental impact.** Decreasing meat consumption just one day a week results in a substantial reduction of your school’s carbon and water footprint. It also encourages growing more sustainable plant-based sources of food.

- **Practice what you teach.** Meatless Monday enables schools to lead by example – bringing to life the lessons of healthy diet and respect for the environment.

- **Broadens student’s tastes.** Each Monday becomes an excellent opportunity to enlighten students on different tastes and different cuisines from around the world.

- **Stimulates culinary innovation.** Meatless Monday enables a fresh, contemporary approach to menu planning, encouraging the use of locally grown seasonal produce and more wholesome, nutritious methods of food prep.

- **Inspires the community.** Parents appreciate the school taking an active role in helping their children eat healthier. So much so, that many homes begin cooking more plant-based meals.

- **Complements U.S. nutritional guidelines.** Meatless Monday follows the FDA recommendations of incorporating more fruits, vegetables and whole grains into our daily diet, which is essential for healthy growing children.

- **Saves money.** The price of plant-based foods is often lower and more predictable than meat. This enables your cafeteria to better manage their costs and budgets.

- **Easy implementation.** Hundreds of school cafeterias are currently running Meatless Monday in the U.S. It is by far the most successful weekly meat reduction program in America – and it’s also supported in 44 other countries! Let our team of management, nutritional and health experts help get you started. You’ll soon see, it really is that easy.
Bulk Meatless Recipes

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
The USDA and Let’s Move! assembled this book of bulk recipes submitted by schools across the country. Many of the recipes are meatless.

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM)
PCRM is a nonprofit that promotes a plant-based diet. Their toolkit helps food service professionals introduce vegetarian meals while maintaining USDA requirements.
http://bit.ly/2kRAihm

The Lunch Box
The Lunch Box is a nonprofit that provides tools and recipes to help schools transition from serving processed, unhealthy food to fresh, healthy food.

Meatless Monday Goes to School Cookbook
Get 30 delicious recipes to kick off Meatless Monday at your school. These dishes are child-friendly, produce-packed and full of flavor. It’s a scrumptious collection of favorite recipes from existing school partners and the food brands that supply foodservice operations with meatless ingredients. Download it now for free.
http://bit.ly/1GG9kLh
Graphic Resources

Print - All available at meatlessmonday.com/start-a-campaign

- Barnyard Friends posters 11x17 pdf (8)
- Fresh! posters 11x4 pdf (7)
- Kids posters 8.5x11 pdf (6)
- Colors posters 11x17 pdf (4)

Online - All available at meatlessmonday.com/start-a-campaign

- Graphic Veggies 403x403 jgpgs (6)
- Resources 403x403 jgpgs (3)
- Logo hi-res eps
Additional Resources

The Humane Society
The Humane Society advocates for participation in Meatless Monday as a simple and effective way to help animals, the environment and your health. Their website provides weekly recipes and Meatless Monday tips.
http://bit.ly/2kuVnNo

Johns Hopkins University Center For A Livable Future
The Center serves as a science advisor to the Meatless Monday campaign. The Center promotes research about the interrelationships between diet, food production, environment and human health, in order to advance public health and protect the global environment.
http://bit.ly/1iDEUCO

Kaiser Permanente plant-based diet recommendations
Kaiser Permanente recommends physicians in its managed care consortium promote plant-based diets as a cost-effective, low-risk way for patients to improve health and reduce the risk of chronic disease.
http://bit.ly/1evF5Pn