



# IMPLEMENTING MEATLESS MONDAY IN FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS

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## Best Practices



JOHNS HOPKINS  
CENTER *for* A LIVABLE FUTURE

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# Introduction

Bon Appétit Management Company is an on-site restaurant company offering full food-service management to corporations, universities, museums, and specialty venues. Based in Palo Alto, CA, Bon Appétit operates more than 650 cafés in 33 states for dozens of marquee clients. At Bon Appétit sites, food is cooked from scratch, including sauces, stocks, and soups. A pioneer in environmentally sound sourcing policies, Bon Appétit has developed programs addressing local purchasing, overuse of antibiotics, sustainable seafood, the food-climate change connection, humanely raised meat and eggs, and farmworkers' rights.

Bon Appétit first committed to addressing the connection between the food system and client change in 2007, with the launch of its Low Carbon Diet program. The Low Carbon Diet set out a five year plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. After the completion of the program in 2012, Bon Appétit committed to sustaining and further pursuing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in its operations and supply chain by moving from a "Diet" of reduction goals to a "Lifestyle" that minimizes greenhouse gas emissions. The Low Carbon Lifestyle is a multi-

pronged approach to addressing climate change, which includes a mandate to prioritize plant-based proteins. The commitment includes specific, unit level goals for beef purchased and animal products purchased, and is accomplished by serving attractive and tasty plant-based options and tracking meat purchases at all sites. In partnership with the communities they are a part of, many Bon Appétit teams have promoted Meatless Mondays as a way to encourage guests to reduce meat consumption.

Meatless Mondays began in 2003 with the simple message of "one day a week, cut out meat." Since 2003 numerous food service operations have regularly implemented Meatless Mondays. The methods and frequency of implementation vary greatly—from offering vegetarian items to highlighting vegetarian specials to only serving meat-free options on Monday. Up to now, little has been done to catalog the activities or methods at each site and evaluate if any of these lead to changes in consumer behavior—i.e., eating less meat on Mondays. The partnership with Bon Appétit is an excellent opportunity to evaluate various models and their effectiveness.

## Methods

The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF) collaborated with Bon Appétit to obtain a better understanding of how Meatless Monday is implemented at institutional food service sites and how it is perceived by food service operators. The Bon Appétit manager of Strategic Initiatives connected us with staff from across the United States who have implemented Meatless Monday at their food service sites. The Bon Appétit Manager sent emails to all Bon Appétit sites to introduce the research project and to inquire which sites had implemented or were currently implementing a Meatless Monday or similar program and were willing to participate in a phone interview. Participants from 17 sites responded and expressed interest. The Bon Appétit manager collected contact information from interested participants. CLF contacted the participants via email to schedule phone interviews, and interviewed a total of 16 participants from 12 sites (four of the sites included two interviewees). Sites included 10 universities, one high school, and one corporate site. All interviews were conducted via phone, with the exception of one in-person interview. Each interview lasted approx-

imately 30-60 minutes, depending on the length of interviewees' responses. Interviews began with an introduction of CLF and Bon Appétit's collaboration and the purpose behind the interviews (see interview guide in Appendix 3). We asked participants for permission to record the interview and stated that their responses could be confidential upon request. The interviews were qualitative, and responses were recorded using Google Voice. We used the recordings to clarify any interview notes that were vague or ambiguous. While conducting the interview, we took detailed notes in an Excel version of the interview guide. We used *HyperRESEARCH* to deductively code the transcripts and develop themes from a bottom-up approach. The results reflect themes that were gathered from coding the qualitative interviews. In our evaluation report we use the term Meatless Monday to describe the initiative across all sites, though some sites promote and label their initiatives with a different title (i.e., Green Monday).

*Table 1. Facility summary*

|  | Number of sites (n=12) |
|--|------------------------|
| <b>Institution Type</b>                |                        |
| College/University                     | 10                     |
| High School                            | 1                      |
| Corporate                              | 1                      |
| <b>Service Type</b>                    |                        |
| All you care to eat                    | 7                      |
| Retail/À la carte                      | 4                      |
| Combination                            | 1                      |
| <b>Name</b>                            |                        |
| Meatless Monday                        | 5                      |
| Meatless Tuesday                       | 1                      |
| Mindful Monday                         | 1                      |
| Green Monday                           | 1                      |
| No name used publicly                  | 4                      |
| <b>Frequency and Fidelity</b>          |                        |
| Meatless Monday Event(s)               | 2                      |
| Eliminated meat completely             | 2                      |
| Weekly                                 | 10                     |
| Eliminate meat completely              | 1                      |
| Eliminate meat at one or more stations | 8                      |
| <b>Interviewee Background</b>          |                        |
| General Manager                        | 5                      |
| Chef (executive)                       | 4                      |
| Sustainability                         | 2                      |
| Marketing Manager                      | 3                      |
| Other leadership role                  | 2                      |



*supporting local farmers*

*working towards a more humane  
food system*



Naturally fed  
Carefully bred



**ANGUS  
MOMMY**  
Angus beef bowls

**wrap station**  
regional salad bowl  
regional Caesar salad  
grilled chicken, regional Caesar  
regional Cobb

# Background: Implementation of Meatless Monday

## INITIATION

Meatless Monday began for a variety of reasons across the institutions interviewed in this project. Over half (7 out of 11) of the schools began at the request of students—typically as part of sustainability or vegetarian groups. Other efforts were started by the food service manager or director, and another was initiated by the sous chef, who is vegan. Bon Appétit Management Company does not require Meatless Monday, but it aligns with many of the company's sustainability initiatives.

*“... The students really pushed getting Meatless Monday... And they came and did a presentation about Meatless Monday. That was kind of the kick-off point.”*

– Carleton College

A few spoke of negative past experiences with Meatless Monday. In all of these cases, they had eliminated meat entirely at first, and students/clients complained. They adjusted by offering one or more meatless stations instead and having meat available for those who would like it, or in the case of one college, having one meatless cafeteria

on Mondays but serving meat at another cafeteria on campus. For several of them, starting slowly and changing only a few stations appeared to foster wider acceptance of Meatless Monday.

*“A long time ago, they actually tried to do just a Meatless Monday entirely, and it wasn’t very popular... So it was more or less a compromise to try to have one station available that there was no meat offered for lunch on Monday.”*

– General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

## FRAMING OF MEATLESS MONDAY

In most cases, Meatless Monday is framed using a variety of themes and motivators—health, environment, and animal welfare, and it depends on the customer base. Environmental moti-

### Meatless Monday Framing

|   |   |
|---|---|
| All three (health, environment, animal welfare) | 4 |
| Human health and Environment                    | 1 |
| Animal Welfare                                  | 1 |
| Environment only                                | 2 |
| Not much framing                                | 4 |

vators are mentioned more frequently, particularly because the environment and sustainability align well with Bon Appétit's core values and initiatives. Most sites also reported receiving strong support and promotion from student/customer sustainability groups for implementing Meatless Monday. In several cases, student groups were motivated to reduce meat consumption because of animal welfare; however, school management often downplayed this approach to provide a more positive message to all customers. Overall, there were perceived benefits of approaching Meatless Monday from all different angles.

In the cases of co-initiatives (Meatless Monday being offered as part of another initiative), meat reduction is often framed within the specific con-

text of that initiative. For example, at one site, *Wellness Wednesday* is a separate campus initiative, but they paired with Meatless Monday to talk about meat consumption and health. Another site's program is called *Mindful Monday*, which includes a health theme that encourages students to eat less meat. *Green Monday* has an environmental focus, so going meatless on Monday is framed as an environmental action.

*"I'd say it's sustainability first, social justice second, and animal welfare third... health weaves into all of those only because we knew that's where most of the concern was coming from."*

- Community Programs and Sustainability Supports Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

Many interviewees commented that they have interest and support from



vegetarian and vegan students, but they have found that if they frame and present the Meatless Monday stations with choice and creativity, non-vegetarian students eat from them too. And beyond focusing on the type of diet, they have broadened their messaging to include the benefits of working with local farmers, non-GMO foods, and trying to think about all parts of the food system and how they work together, which attracts a wider audience.

*"(We) have a good number of vegetarians and vegans already. For them, it's great, it's another option. Other people started eating at that station as well."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

connotation for meat eaters. In four of the sites in which they don't use the Meatless Monday name externally, they do not have an alternate name.

*"By calling it Meatless Monday, it implies that the meat is gone. But we're not taking anything away, we're just giving them more vegetarian options. Our students are pretty vocal about wanting to have their choices, so we don't want to take away their meat."*

- Marketing Manager,  
Washington University in St. Louis

## PRESENTATION OF MEATLESS MONDAY

Only half of sites interviewed use the Meatless Monday name to promote the program externally. (One site does Meatless Tuesdays; however, we will refer to it as a Meatless Monday program for the purpose of this report.) Many commented on the challenges with the Meatless Monday name being interpreted negatively as getting less of or going without something. They are concerned about a negative

## MEATLESS MONDAY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Of the twelve sites interviewed, ten offer Meatless Monday on a weekly basis. Two sites have had only one or two Meatless Monday events but are considering doing more. In all but one weekly site, meat is still served on Monday, with one or more stations that are meatless. Most have signage marking the meatless stations or the special entrees. The one cafeteria that does not serve meat at all on Monday is on a campus with other cafeterias that students can go to if they want meat. The two sites that do only standalone Meatless Monday events serve only vegetarian foods.<sup>1</sup>

The way each site implements Meatless Monday varies, with some eliminating meat at only one station and others offering meatless stations with only a few meat options available. More often, the specials are vegetarian on Mondays. Others do not change much at all on Mondays but they will promote Meatless Monday (or whatever term they have chosen to use) on the menu board or highlight vegetarian items at the point of service. Most sites

serve more vegetarian choices and fewer meat-containing meals on Monday.

*"We did go Meatless Mondays, taking meat off the menu for about a month when they first instituted it. But the clients didn't like the idea that we were removing animal-based proteins completely. That's when we finally instituted just having one station meatless."*

- Carleton College

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<sup>1</sup> Both of these sites have a commitment to serving more plant-based foods on a regular basis. They have experimented with what works best to motivate customers to try vegetarian foods and contribute to the discussion about creative, successful menus. We used many of their comments in this document.



## Key Themes

Through analyzing and coding of the interviews, five major themes emerged regarding best practices for Meatless Monday:

| Key Themes       |   |
|------------------|---|
| Collaboration    | Provides feedback, enhances participation and promotion                                 |
| Education        | Learning supports participation   |
| Promotion        | Customers and staff are key   |
| Staff engagement | Take time to train and involve staff  |
| Menus            | Creativity and choices enhance participation, sustainability and long term diet changes |

### COLLABORATION

Although no two sites are alike, every interviewee mentioned the valuable role that collaboration plays. Students and customers are, by far, the main drivers and promoters of Meatless Monday. Student sustainability groups and vegetarian groups are especially influential in promoting Meatless Monday and similar programs. Cross-campus collaborations—such as Wellbeing Wednesdays or Student health Centers—are leveraged to a lesser extent; however, the buy-in across campus ap-

pears to strengthen the sustainability and commitment to Meatless Monday in the cafeteria. Sites also work with other campus or corporate initiatives and find common ground in their messages, thus providing more opportunities to incorporate meat reduction education and promotion.

At Washington University, Green Monday ambassadors (students and some faculty) agreed to help with tabling in the servery starting with the launch date. In this case and others, the key to

success was engaging stakeholders at a variety of levels, including the chancellor, student groups and teams, so that it became a campus-wide initiative, rather than just through a university office or dining services. Another student organization, Food Truth, is actively involved in Meatless Monday. They send out information to their groups, talk about it at their meetings, and they help with tabling. They are also active purchasers of the Meatless Monday items.

*"We do partner and meet with students quite regularly. And they're always very excited about what we're doing. The students that are peer health advocates or students who are a part of green board or other students that are House Advisors*

*(which are RA's at most colleges) are typically really excited about it... We've worked with the student sustainability coordinator- also very excited."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

## EDUCATION

Across the board, interviewees brought up the importance of educating customers and finding the most effective ways of communicating Meatless Monday messages. For education, the main themes were **student to student** (or colleague to colleague) education and **personal outreach**. Students educating other students was perceived to be the most effective way of getting other students to take notice. Outreach of

| Examples of groups that collaborate with Meatless Monday:  | Examples of co-initiatives that have worked with Meatless Monday:   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Sustainability groups—student led or with student involvement</li><li>▪ Environmental action groups</li><li>▪ Food Alliance groups (various food issues, e.g., Food Truth)</li><li>▪ Bon Appétit Fellows (employed by the Bon Appétit national team to raise awareness about social and environmental issues and support initiatives such as Meatless Monday on Bon Appétit campuses)</li><li>▪ Student vegetarian groups</li><li>▪ Student government</li><li>▪ Peer health advocates</li><li>▪ Green Monday ambassadors (students and faculty)</li><li>▪ Office of Sustainability</li><li>▪ Dining Committee</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Farm to fork initiative, Eat Local Challenge</li><li>▪ Student farm</li><li>▪ Wellness champions—a student group sponsors health challenges</li><li>▪ Green Monday</li><li>▪ "Eco-to-go"—composting program</li><li>▪ Food Waste initiatives</li><li>▪ Bon Appétit's Low Carbon Lifestyle program and other values, such as local sourcing, cooking from scratch, and prioritizing plant-based options</li><li>▪ Wellness Wednesdays</li><li>▪ Imperfectly Delicious Produce a program that rescues cosmetically imperfect produce that would otherwise go to waste, such as crooked carrots and slightly too small zucchini.</li><li>▪ Climate Action Week</li></ul> |

staff to students and customers in the cafeteria was also perceived as very effective. For instance, having staff directly interact with students at the service line by offering samples of the vegetarian items effectively encouraged students to try new items.

When customers/students know why you are doing Meatless Monday, they may better understand that their eating choices have an impact on the environment, and as one site explained, "You can have a healthy, protein packed diet without meat." Many students and customers are willing to make different choices when they realize that their food choices have consequences. It is also important to know your customer as you develop your educational approach. One site's client base is more "tater tots and hot dogs," so their education will look different than at Reed College, where 30% of the students are vegetarians.

*"I think that education is what's most important, at least for us. It's really helping people understand the significance of moving towards a plant-based diet."*

- Sustainability Coordinator,  
Washington University in St. Louis

#### **Salient Messages:**

- We can get enough protein and nutrients without added meat or animal products. (Especially important for athletes)
- Why we are doing Meatless Monday: Our food choices have consequences (environment, health, animal welfare)
- Plant-based meals can be delicious and satisfying

Sites mentioned several different approaches to education. Most used Meatless Monday as an opportunity to teach about meat reduction in the cafeteria—using table tents, displays, and posters. Some took a wider approach and went into classrooms to talk to students or did presentations to their staff. A Bon Appétit fellow assisted with the student education at one site. Another school mentioned using coaches to educate athletes about plant-based diets. At Carleton, coaches talk to athletes about nutrition and how to ensure they are getting adequate protein while eating more plant-based proteins and less meat. They also did a cooking exhibition to show athletes how to make vegetarian edamame burgers and to demonstrate that vegetarian items can be just as delicious as meat-containing meals.

"With any event, it's about how you promote it... For me, it's got to be a real word of mouth, [with] somebody actually talking to somebody ... No type of flat media is going to bring the type of excitement of someone in your face going, 'It's going to be amazing!'"

- University of Redlands

## PROMOTION

Sites use a variety of promotional techniques, but there was a strong agreement that **face to face** interaction is more effective at catching people's interest than any other written or "flat" promotion. "The people who are passionate about it are the biggest champions." (*Board of Operations Manager*) In fact, though every site talked about promotion and education, many of them said that they do not do any formal marketing of the program. Rather, they rely most heavily on word of mouth promotion, customer/student input and the regular routine of Meatless Monday.

Eight of the schools stated that **students** are their most valuable promoters. Peer outreach works because it "puts a face to it." At Carleton, students have a Facebook page called *Humans of Meatless Monday* where they promote the menu items. As a way of increasing interest and acceptance, another college promoted quotes from a student athlete who is vegan and supports Meatless Monday. Student led tabling and education were consistently valued and felt to be effective.

*"It's important to communicate with your students... We will go out on Monday if there's a really cool vegetarian entree... and take a picture and post it on Instagram and say, 'Tonight in the cafe! #MeatlessMonday.'"*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

## Promotion with compelling messages

was also mentioned frequently. For example, comparing the number of showers equivalent to the water used to produce a pound of beef or similar comparisons provide a more practical connection for people. Many use pictures, numbers, and eye-catching materials to equate food choices to something familiar. Others talk about the benefits of going meatless or send pictures of cute animals in emails saying "you don't want to eat this cute cow," etc.

*"We have an infographic on how much water usage goes into beef. And compare that to how many showers would be taken. We have a chooseveg.com picture of a vegetarian plate and what proportions should be beans versus grains versus vegetables and such."*

- Community Programs and Sustainability Supports Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

*Table 2: Summary of preferred promotion methods*

(\* = considered most effective by several sites)

| Preferred Promotional Methods   | Comments/Quotes   |
|---|---|
| Word of mouth, face to face *   | Peer and food service staff outreach mentioned often  |
| Weekly emails*  | From students or dining staff<br><br>Note: Customers at any site can also receive menus by email through the Bon Appétit website.   |
| Menus/calendars*  | Mentioned often; Simple and effective   |
| Student led tabling or outreach*  | <i>"Tabling from students makes a big difference"</i><br>Good place to collect commitments or pledges   |
| Table tents*  | <i>"Effective in creating awareness"</i><br><i>"Biggest way of reaching to students"</i><br><i>"While students are eating they can easily read them"</i>  |
| Point of sale*  | Best mechanism because students have so much going on that they may forget  |
| Facebook pages  | The students run their own page   |
| Digital displays  | Hit or miss; may or may not attract more attention<br><i>"Any time you take the menu away from the screen, people tend to walk off to the next screen"</i>  |
| Special events  | Beginning of school year and other times during the year serve as a reminder  |
| Handing out samples/Cooking demonstrations  | Some find this valuable, others do not<br><i>"Anything related to free food would make them stop and taste it"</i>  |
| Meatless Monday (or Tuesday) Pledge   | Used in two sites   |
| Using other groups or co-initiatives to help promote  | <i>"Whenever they have foodie-type initiatives they help market each other's events"</i>  |
| Giveaways and freebies  | <i>"Students don't want to read much, and they only get 3-5 seconds to make a first impression"</i>   |
| Other promotional tips included weekly consistency and making Monday look different than other days. However, regularly changing the presentation of Meatless Monday while sustaining the Meatless Monday efforts helped improve visibility. One site | uses an interruption table to promote Meatless Monday and sometimes reintroduces it with menu labels, digital displays, and marketing calendar. Another site makes sure to put the vegetarian items first on the line on Monday and the meat items toward the end. Having |

someone in charge on a regular basis, and making sure that vegetarian items have equal representation and are just as well advertised as the meat options were also suggested as important for effective promotion.

#### **Promotional materials utilized**

Only two sites use materials from MeatlessMonday.com. Many were not familiar with the Meatless Monday website but were interested in looking at the site after the interview. Other materials used included those produced by the Humane Society, PETA and Green Monday. Many sites did not use any specific promotional materials at all.

#### **STAFF ENGAGEMENT**

Food service staff are also important promoters when they are engaged and involved. At several sites, cooks and servers assist with promotion of Meatless Monday through interaction with the customers and “talking it up” in the café. At one school, the line staff can speak to the ingredients and flavor of the food, which may encourage more customers to try a meatless entree. While this was seen as one of the most effective methods of promotion, only a few sites actually took the time to engage and prepare their staff

to speak about Meatless Monday. At another school, food service staff are encouraged to offer suggestions and samples to students on the line when they are serving new menu items.

*“When [James, the Director of Operations,] is interacting with students, he will talk about Meatless Mondays with a huge sense of pride, [saying], “This is what we’re doing.” He’s really excited about it and a huge promoter of it. And so that enthusiasm is really infectious for the students.”*

– General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

Involvement and training of staff will be elaborated upon more in the Potential Benefits section.

#### **MENUS: CREATIVITY AND CHOICES**

There was strong agreement among all sites that creative, delicious menus are absolutely necessary. They emphasized the importance of trying new recipes and keeping things fresh by avoiding short menu rotations. When vegetarian options are appealing and delicious, people (including non-vegetarians) are more willing to try something different. Audiences do not want to be told what not to eat, but they value having choices.

### **Successful menus include:**

- Food that looks filling. It is not enough to just put out more vegetables. This is especially important for athletes.
- Putting the same amount of thought and effort into planning and creating plant-based meals as animal-based meals. Plant-based meals should not seem like an afterthought.
- A variety of choices—not just the same thing every week.
- Introduction of new recipes and tastes on a regular basis. Especially in residence halls where students eat every meal, they can get bored quickly.
- Emphasis on the culinary aspects of the foods. Substituting tofu for meat is not enough to create delicious meals. On the other hand, entrees that are similar to typical meat entrees, such as vegetable lasagna are well-received as long as they taste great.
- Global recipes have better acceptance from vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike.

Chefs are challenged to continually look for new recipes and flavors and to think “outside the box.” However, they need time to practice and taste the recipes with their cooks. They may have

pulled recipes and thought that they would be able to serve them, but they need to test them first. At one university, they learned the hard way that eggplant meatballs are hard to make and that it requires a lot of time to practice. Fortunately, Bon Appétit allows and encourages chefs to research and try new recipes and cuisines. While most chefs are open to new, trending ideas, giving them creative freedom allows them to broaden their repertoire of plant-based and global cuisine.

*“Our chefs are pretty current on what’s happening in the foodie world. A lot of times they sit and brainstorm together, come up with things, and they reach into their own backgrounds where they came from.”*

– Marketing Manager,  
Washington University in St. Louis

Creative menu items that have worked well

Chefs and food service operators offered ideas about what types of plant-based foods work best in their cafeterias. World cuisines work very well, such as Indian food and Asian stir fries. One-bowl meals

### **Culinary keys to success**

- Meatless has to look and taste good.
- Purchase quality ingredients.
- Provide choice and options—offer unique, different and fresh each week

are also popular including pho, soups, curries and noodles. Entrees that are similar to a meat-containing recipe but creatively done are also well accepted. For example, instead of chicken parmesan and spaghetti, one site makes

tomato mozzarella stuffed portabella mushrooms and eggplant meatballs.

*Table 3: Popular Global Cuisine*

| Cuisine Inspiration | Examples of popular meatless menu items  |
|---------------------|--|
| Asian               | Potato curry<br>Coconut curry tofu stew over cilantro lime rice<br>Crispy tofu lettuce wraps<br>Stir-fried veggies with tofu and tempeh<br>Pho bar<br>Fried rice<br>Tofu banh mi<br>Bombay potatoes  |
| Mediterranean       | Chickpea and seitan paella<br>Tortellini<br>Eggplant parmesan<br>Homemade falafels, with falafel sauce and vegan sour cream<br>Vegetable lasagna<br>Vegetable flatbread<br>Lentil pasta<br>Mediterranean night with baba ganoush, tzatziki, hummus, and toasted flatbread  |
| Mexican             | Vegan bean and cheese enchilada<br>Taco bar with salsas, beans, and rice<br>Burrito bar  |
| Other               | Vegan mac and cheese<br>Soy cheesecake<br>Salad bar, with beans, quinoa, edamame, tofu, those are the staples.<br>Black bean burger with a mango salsa<br>Handmade vegetarian burgers (made with beets or quinoa)<br>Green lentil cake with pickled red onions, tempeh, and smoked tomato nage<br>Vegetable jambalaya<br>Seitan with caramelized onions<br>Quinoa/bean cakes |

*"BBQ seitan is a big one. We do it with a caramelized medallion of onions. They love that. A coconut curry tofu stew over cilantro lime with rice is a very big one. We actually just started making our own vegan burgers in house and they're very popular. They're delicious."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit

*"Sometimes they'll do a whole Mediterranean night where they'll have tzatziki, hummus, babaganoush, and different types of toasted flatbreads. And they can just make themselves a huge platter of really yummy vegetarian foods. That's a popular one. They love the vegan mac and cheese. It's amazing what you can do with nutritional yeast."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit  
Management Company

#### *Favorite Recipes from chefs:*

- Curries (Potato, coconut curry with tofu, etc)
- Crispy tofu lettuce wraps
- Chickpea and seitan paella
- Eggplant parmesan
- Homemade falafels with falafel sauce and vegan sour cream
- Vegetable lasagna
- Mediterranean bar (baba ghanoush, tzatziki, hummus, and

toasted flatbread)

- Taco or burrito bar
- Vegan bean and cheese enchilada
- Handmade vegetarian burger (with beets or quinoa)
- Vegetable jambalaya
- Green lentil cake with pickled red onion, tempeh, and tomato nage
- Stir-fried vegetables with tofu and tempeh

#### *Recipe resources:*

Chefs get recipes and ideas from many different sources, including networking with other chefs. Students and staff who are vegetarians give suggestions. They also look online, in magazines and books and follow email groups and blogs. Finding and trying new recipes can be a challenge for chefs who have different backgrounds; however, many say it's been a positive experience for them.

#### *Frequently mentioned recipe sources:*

- Cookbooks
- Other staff – vegan dean, vegetarian chef
- Internet/web sites
- Cooking blogs
- Students

*“Just doing more research and looking into more ways to utilize things like grains. And trying to feature what’s in season. I get a lot of ideas from books, from different websites, emails. I have a couple of different emails from magazines and periodicals that send weekly email blasts with ideas and recipes. Food Service Director magazine is one, Tasting Table is another. They usually have really good, flavorful, creative ideas.”*

- Executive Chef, Bon Appétit  
Management Company

#### *Menu failures*

Interviewees openly shared their “flops.” Some entrees were not popular because they served them too often, such as quinoa stuffed vegetables. Flavorless and differently textured meatless substitutes were not popular. For example, products such as seitan and TVP need to have good flavor or people won’t like it. Just throwing in tofu instead of meat does not result in an equally delicious meal. Student familiarity with foods also played a large part. If students are not used to eating a certain food or ingredient, they are more resistant to trying it.

*“We’ve definitely overdone the bean stews and the quinoa-stuffed vegetables...We got an email from a student who said, ‘I’m sick of the quinoa <Insert vegetable here>.’ And I was [thinking], ‘you’re right.’ ... Every time I’m going out two days a week I’m seeing quinoa-stuffed eggplant, quinoa-stuffed zucchini, quinoa-stuffed pepper, quinoa-stuffed mushroom, and he was right! ... You get an idea sometimes and you just overdo it. That’s why that student feedback is so important”*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit  
Management Company



## Reported Benefits of Meatless Monday

### POSITIVE IMPACT ON STAFF

There are different degrees of knowledge and comfort among the food service staff when it comes to Meatless Monday and meat reduction. In most sites, the perception is that the food service staff don't really care much about Meatless Monday one way or another—they are there to prepare food and meet the needs of their guests. Many staff are from cultures with traditional diets, and plant-based entrees mean new, unfamiliar foods for them. Additionally, many staff have worked in these institutions for many years. They are used to programs coming and going, so they will just produce and serve what is asked for without much further thought.

On the other hand, food service staff and cooks seem to become more engaged when they are informed, in-

volved and educated about the different ways to prepare dishes and the reasons behind it. Rather than throwing a new recipe on a cook and telling them to make it, providing him/her with time to practice and get comfortable with the recipes improves acceptance. One site even said that their cooks and staff are now having fun with it.

**Staff training** is frequently suggested as an effective way to help staff embrace Meatless Monday. Many sites commented that the initiative provided an opportunity for cooks and line staff to learn and grow, and they saw Meatless Monday as a teaching opportunity. Bon Appétit already provides training on vegan and vegetarian diets; however, additional training opportunities for the staff on preparing plant-based proteins would make them more

confident and knowledgeable promoters. Food service staff are the best promoters when they have involvement in the menu and have tasted the foods they are serving.

At Thacher, the staff and leadership also committed to going meatless on Tuesdays. They are a living example and talk about it on the serving line. About 25% of the kitchen staff have also committed to Meatless Tuesday through their pledge drives.

*"Sometimes it's a bit of a challenge for them because it's a really different way of thinking about food. A lot of times the feedback is really good because they'll create something that's very different from what they're normally used to cooking...when they interact with the guests and they get that feedback from the guests, that's really exciting for them. So I think a lot of it is the broadening of horizons and the learning new things for them that they really enjoy. And then I hear things like, 'I didn't think vegetarian dishes could taste like this.'"*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

#### *Personal changes (Interviewee)*

Several interviewees commented that Meatless Monday also changed how they ate at home personally. A few described that they grew up in "meat and potatoes" homes or on farms where meat was at every meal, so Meatless Monday was a shift in thinking. As a company, Bon Appétit emphasizes the importance of knowing where food comes from and how animals are raised. These company values have also affected the perspectives of those interviewed. One person explained that she used to live on an animal farm and had always cooked with meat. Through her work at Bon Appétit, she learned that she wants to reduce her meat intake and shifted her diet.

*"[I've learned] to try different things, and there have been a lot of different foods that I've tried that are really good that I wouldn't have...tried on my own. I cook vegetarian a couple times a week at home, and I didn't use to do that... I always cooked with meat. So it's affected how I cook personally at home too."*

- Marketing Manager,  
Washington University in St. Louis

## INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Although the goal of Meatless Monday is to reach others who may not have considered reducing meat, it initially caters more to vegetarian and vegan students and customers. Many sites do feel that they are reaching more students/customers since Meatless Monday began even though there is little concrete evidence that customers are changing their dietary behaviors long term. They base their conclusions on popularity of vegetarian menu items and customer feedback. Overall, they observe that customers who choose to participate enjoy it.

*[Our school] in general has a good number of vegetarian and vegans already. For them, it's great; it's another option. Other people started eating at that station as well. It doesn't preclude them from getting something else at the cafe."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

Most sites routinely solicit customer feedback from comment cards, suggestion boxes, surveys, dining committees or student government associations. Many sites have received positive comments about Meatless Monday and

the addition of vegetarian items on the menu, as well as the expansion of choices on menus. Although a few interviewees talked about hearing verbal negative feedback, they did not receive negative comments through the feedback processes mentioned above. One site heard some negative comments after their Meatless Monday event, but when they offered a free meal for anyone dissatisfied, no one came forward. Athletes are mentioned more than any other group as pushing back and complaining about Meatless Monday. However, when choices are offered, the complaints seem to diminish. Most complaints happen when all meat is removed and/or options are limited. Consistency and choice are seen as keys to acceptance and adoption.

Beyond customer feedback, it is difficult to determine who or how many have actually made dietary behavior changes as a result of Meatless Monday. Two sites rely on pledges to assess Meatless Monday adoption, but this also offers very limited inferences about actual participation.

## GROWTH IN PARTICIPATION AND CUSTOMER BASE

Every site agreed that there is a trend of growing interest in vegetarian, vegan and flexitarian diets. Customers are increasingly motivated by health, well-being and social responsibility. The overwhelming response in the interviews was that participation in Meatless Monday and commitment to healthier diets—including meat reduction and more plant-based foods—are growing; however, it is difficult to tease out if these changes are due to the overall trend or the impact of Meatless Monday. Carleton connects the campaign with lower meat consumption but they do not collect quantitative data to support it. One site commented that they see an increase in the number of people at the Meatless Monday station and customers asking where they can get more veggies and vegetable proteins. Another site commented they were amazed at how many veggies the students eat that kids wouldn't touch before.

There is also a growing trend of interest in sustainable foods. As people learn about how their food is grown and processed, and the ingredients that they're consuming, they're more

conscious and willing to use their buying power to promote change.

Meatless Monday offers a fun, easy to implement marketing campaign that incorporates customers' health, environment, social responsibility and even culinary interests.

*"Consumer change is a huge deal. Not so long ago, any college student would say only government can change it. Now they understand they really can. They have the power to make those changes."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

*"[The staff] are even surprised at how popular vegan and vegetarian food is... There were the days where it was carved roast beef. We were going through 120 lbs of roast beef at lunch. I would think, 'My gosh, it's like they're eating Christmas dinner at noon everyday! I don't understand.' And these chefs were here during those times too and now, they [say], 'Oh, the lettuce cups are running out!'"*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

## LOWER FOOD COSTS

Although there was little evidence that food purchasing costs decreased or even changed at all with Meatless Monday, no complaints emerged from the interviews about the overall added cost of food purchases. The general response was that total food costs even out or decline slightly by purchasing less meat. Only one site commented on the added cost of promotion, but that was in reference to purchasing giveaways for students.

There were mixed opinions on whether plant-based ingredients are more or less expensive. Specialty and locally produced vegetarian ingredients, such as locally produced tofu and organic products, may cost more; however, purchasing less meat and dairy reduces food costs, especially because, as a company, Bon Appétit is committed to purchasing sustainably raised animal products, which come at a higher cost. Two sites stated that the implementation of Meatless Monday helped them meet limited budgets. One in particular had budget cuts they were able to manage through purchasing of more plant-based foods. Perhaps the cost changes are not obvious because all sites still offer meat on Monday. Addi-

tionally, most sites don't change much from Monday to another day. It also depends on what products they use. Falafel and chickpeas are less expensive but dairy and gourmet products are not. More dramatic reductions in the purchase of animal products would most likely result in larger cost savings after implementing Meatless Monday.

"I think it's actually pretty cost-effective. If you're willing to take the time to train your chefs in a new way of thinking, it's 100% worth it."

- General Manager, Bon Appétit

*"I think the impression that a lot of people get is that to have a lot of plant-based items is always cheaper. And it isn't necessarily. We make our vegan burgers, so a lot of vegan burgers have different grains in them. Quinoa, for example, pound for pound, is just as expensive as beef or chicken."*

-General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

JHU Class of 2018



# Challenges of Implementing Meatless Monday

## DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL MENUS

Interviewees mentioned several challenges developing and implementing plant-based menus—most of which they have resolved with a more creative approach to menu planning and opening lines of communication. The most commonly mentioned are below:

1. **Getting students and customers to make changes in eating habits.** Incorporating more plant-based proteins, grains and different varieties of foods was a challenge in several sites. At one site, they commented that they were located in a beef producing area of the country, so vegetarian food was a big step from their meat and potato diets. Even with meatless meals, students still prefer the meals that have cheese, which has both health and environmental impacts.

*“There is a large imbalance in the café when they do have a meatless station. The typical 18 to 19-year old gravitates to grill or home station. Hard to get them out of their routine, but slowly coming around.”*

- Executive Chef, Bon Appétit Management Company

2. **Getting chefs/food service staff on board to plan and prepare creative menus.** One can't just throw in tofu and expect customers to like it.

*“For a lot of chefs who aren’t used to cooking vegan and vegetarian to this extent, their go-to is to just cook what they normally cook but substitute tofu for any meat dish. And for the most part that is not what a vegetarian or vegan wants to eat. So I try and challenge chefs to not use ‘safe foods.’ And instead look for inspiration in cultures that are mainly vegetarian or vegan and really try and shy away from standard American food with just tofu substituting for the meat.”*

- Community Programs and Sustainability Supports Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

3. **Introducing new ingredients.** A lot of people don't know what pho or TVP is, so they are weary about trying it. Quinoa is another ingredient that people are less familiar with. One chef mentioned it was a struggle to educate students and get them to try different types of grains. Sampling was often used to increase acceptance.

## TRACKING MEATLESS MONDAY'S IMPACT

There is strong agreement that it is difficult to track the impact of Meatless Monday, especially in the all-you-care-to-eat setting. No site interviewed tracks meat purchases or vegetarian items selected by customers on Monday.

One option in the all-you-care-to-eat cafeterias would be to track the number of meal swipes, but this only works if the whole café is vegetarian on Monday. Tracking swipes did affect a decision to keep a full meatless cafeteria at one college on Mondays. When they originally alternated Meatless Mondays at two different locations, the participation dropped at the cafeteria where most athletes dined on Mondays, but it did not in the other. They decided to keep it exclusively at the more "successful" cafeteria, and the numbers of swipes on Monday have grown. Another option in the all-you-care-to-eat setting is to look at invoices or back of the house production records; howev-

er, this requires additional staff time. Thacher thinks more plant-based foods are eaten on Meatless Tuesday, but at the same time, cooks have commented that sometimes they are preparing more meat on Tuesdays.

Tracking meatless purchases in retail is also challenging because of the way the registers are programmed. One would need to change the categories on the register in order to collect data specifically on meatless items; however, this needs to be done in consideration of other categories they are tracking for business purposes. Additionally, the purchase of a meatless item does not necessarily mean the customer is going meatless for the whole meal or day.

*"It's really difficult to effectively track the impact. For us we can say this many people have taken the pledge, but our dining partners have not been able to tell us how much meat consumption has gone down*

*based on their data because we don't really have a system where if you're checking out with your meal, that you can choose vegetarian or meat at the register."*

- Sustainability Coordinator,  
Washington University in St. Louis

## OVERALL CHALLENGES

### 1. **Chefs, management, everyone must be committed.**

If they are not, the food is not creative, nor will it attract or engage the customers. One interviewee emphasized that the food service staff and managers must embrace it whole-heartedly; it cannot be an afterthought.

Past experiences inform people's opinions and willingness to take on a Meatless Monday program, especially if they were negative. At one site, they were hesitant to try after a first bad experience. The managers didn't want to anger clients. At Carleton, they went entirely meatless on Mondays for a month and received a lot of negative comments, which ultimately led them to keep meat and just have one meatless station on Mondays. The dining staff get the brunt of negativity as they are the ones interacting face to face with customers.

*"If you don't have a chef that's really committed, then you're going to end up with a not very creative vegetarian program... They have to sell it to the staff too."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

### 2. **Time "There is a time investment to get it right" – Reed College**

Time is needed for chefs to come up with menus and to research and test new recipes before serving them to customers. Time is needed to train culinary staff as some may not be familiar with vegetarian cuisine. It also takes time to solicit customer and guest feedback to improve the program. Interestingly, although

several sites talked about the added burden on staff and the time involved in making it happen weekly, this was rarely the main barrier mentioned.

*"Cost isn't really the issue, but I would say time. And that's more from...the chef's perspective. From a marketing perspective, once the infrastructure is in place, it's not really difficult on a weekly basis."*

- Marketing Manager, Washington University in St. Louis

### 3. **Multiple messages**

Meatless Monday is one of many initiatives happening in several sites. Interviewees commented they lose the attention of their audience when they try to communicate too much. They would have to reduce other initiatives to promote Meatless Monday more, which is not feasible in most cases. Even within the scope of Meatless Monday, there are different key messages; therefore, communicating a simple, clear message and following it up with conversation becomes important. One solution presented was figuring out how to incorporate shared messages into all of the initiatives.

*"We have a lot of initiatives on campus... so it's finding the ability to communicate all that we want to communicate to the students without losing their attention. That's probably the hardest part of it, but that's with any initiative, at least on our campus, but on a college campus in general I think."*

- Marketing Manager, Washington University in St. Louis

### 4. **Student perception**

Generally, students are neutral when it comes to Meatless Monday, although those who follow a vegetarian diet are most often pleased with the initiative. Negative feedback occurs when choices are taken away, particularly meat options. Customers don't want to be told what to eat—or not eat. Athletes in particular have a perception that they need meat. In one site there was an uproar from the athletes when they could not get their chicken breasts! Some students will also laugh and joke about it when they see the Meatless Monday signage.

Education minimizes complaints to some extent, as does providing choices and promoting the fact that the campaign is supported by other students.

*"We get a lot of comments about serving more meat protein, especially from athletes... So we tried to stop that before it started and say, 'Here are some athletes that have chosen to go vegetarian or vegan.'"*

- Board Operations Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

## 5. Ensuring Growth

Some choose a conservative route and do not advertise or change the menu much on Monday. While this eliminates complaints, it may not lead to growth in participation or more customers thinking about meat consumption. If customers do not understand why the dining service is reducing meat, the potential for long term dietary change is limited. It becomes a challenge to increase participation, sustain customer interest, and move them to the next step of long term meat reduction. Additionally, for university settings, a new group of students come in every fall, so the dynamic may change and the approach may need to as well.

*"We didn't go all the way with making every single station meatless. So it's more or less the students that want to eat that way, they have the options. And the students that still prefer to eat meat, they also have the options... There hasn't been a lot of feedback as far as why [we] do this... I think we would've had a little bit of pushback if we tried to do the entire cafe meatless for the one day. But for the way we did it to just do one station, it ended up being fine."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

## 6. Keeping recipes fresh and new

There is a tendency to plateau if Meatless Monday is not promoted regularly and "freshly." Sites are challenged with coming up with creative, new ideas so the menus are not redundant. This may be a challenge with sourcing new and interesting ingredients. One site stated they need more options than veggie burgers, veggie sausage and tofu. It may also be a challenge for companies that have menus provided for them and do not have the flexibility to do their own menus.



## Recommendations for Meatless Monday

The section below summarizes the overall responses from the survey of what was perceived as best practices for Meatless Monday. Responses to more specific questions about successful practices are listed in Table 4.

1. **Focus on the culinary aspect.** Food that is tasty and delicious draws vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike. Integrating more mainstream menu items with new and creative offerings may also help “lure” customers into trying a new food. Even with heavy promotion, the campaign cannot succeed without ensuring that the food offered is appealing and delicious.

*“There’s a large group of people that just want to eat good food. They’re here at college, they want a good meal and if you provide something that’s tasty and healthy that makes them full, they won’t necessarily mind if it’s ‘meat-ful’ or meatless.”*

- Board Operations Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

2. **Be consistent and patient.** This theme rang clear in all of the interviews. To ensure success and growth, one must embrace it whole-heartedly and demonstrate its importance. When leaders commit to something and do it consistently, customers and staff tend to grow in acceptance and also support. It takes time.

*“It comes down to shifting the paradigm. It’s just getting managers, culinarians, and staff- people that haven’t embraced Meatless Mondays on Mondays. So for me, the key to success to Meatless Monday is consistency. You need to make a commitment to do it every Monday.”*

- Marketing Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

**3. Allow chefs and cooks time to learn new recipes, flavors and cooking styles.**

When cooks and food service staff are comfortable with the recipes and changes, Meatless Monday is easier and more enjoyable to implement. Provide time for chefs to plan and test recipes to ensure they are both practical, delicious, and appealing.

*"A lot of our chefs will say, 'but I don't eat like this.' And we'll go through with tasting foods and [I'd say], 'But taste it, taste what you make! It's so delicious! It's really good. You added just the right amount of cayenne' or 'you toasted those curry spices to the perfect heat temperature so that they're really aromatic and really flavorful.' I think it's super important to encourage your chefs to be open to new flavors and taste it."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

**4. Invite staff input and creativity.** This increases interest, cooperation, and allows staff to contribute their ideas and advice. It becomes a team effort, rather than one pushed down from above.

*"Yea they're really supportive. My executive chef sometimes looks to us to help him. He says, 'You know, I need more ideas. What do you guys have? What have you seen? What have you heard about? What can we rotate into these menus that's new and exciting?' And he's really open to those ideas. Our sous chef especially is open to those ideas. I'll come in and say, 'hey I saw this cool thing on a menu last night and I took a picture I'm going to text it to you. I want to see how we can work it into our menus. This is a great vegetarian item. This is really healthy or really filling. This is great for our athletes on Meatless Monday.' So they are really open to new, trending ideas."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

5. **Involve customers, students and staff as much as possible and solicit regular feedback.** This results in word of mouth promotion and increased satisfaction and participation in Meatless Monday. A strong and involved student group as a partner is a very valuable source of information and promotion. Additionally, staff should be encouraged to promote the foods at the point of service and interact with guests to collect any feedback that can be used to improve the program.

*"I always tell the students that they vote with their fork. If students participate in things that we're doing in the dining hall by eating those things, then they're going to see more of those types of things. But if I put something on the menu and nobody eats it, it's probably not going to get run again."*

- Carleton College

6. **Keep menus varied and emphasize choice.** Offer an often-changing variety of new and interesting meals. Be careful of using short menu rotations because customers will notice and may lose interest. Rather than talking about going without meat, talk about eating more plant-based foods.

*"I think the more options that you can give, the better. Because just because you made something that's vegetarian, it might be absolutely delicious, but you're not going to appeal to everybody all the time. So if there's only one option that's vegetarian, you're probably not going to get a huge buy in. But if there's lots of vegetarian options, you have a better chance of getting people to try new things and to eat meatless. And I think the whole point of it is to encourage choices...But I feel a lot of audiences, they don't want to be told they can't eat meat. They want to be encouraged to not eat it, but you [don't want to] take it away from them."*

- Marketing Manager, Washington University in St. Louis

7. **Be flexible and adaptable.** This allows sites to adjust the program according to trends and customer feedback. Those sites that had negative feedback after going entirely meatless were more successful when they met customers in the middle and kept meat available on Mondays while emphasizing plant-based choices.

*“Despite...best laid plans, the students are still going to complain. And that the best implementation on one campus is certainly not the best implementation on another. Any implementation requires a bit of trial and error, and openness to changing based on the campus’ needs.”*

– Community Programs and Sustainability Supports Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

8. **Promote and make the program recognizable.** Vegetarian foods have become more mainstream than they were when Meatless Monday started over 10 years ago. With all sites offering plant-based options every day, Mondays are not vastly different in some cases. It is the advertising and promotion—making it a day—that differs. Whether it’s called Meatless Monday or another name, having a name grounds the initiative and engages the customer.

*“Maybe more signage, better signage, bigger signage. I loved your idea of having a Meatless Monday champion. Having somebody that speaks to it at their station while they’re serving it.”*

– General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

9. **Be mindful of how meatless items are presented.** When Meatless Monday stations are set up and placed strategically, they may get more traffic. Put vegetarian items first on the line and meat items toward the end. Use point of service signs highlighting Meatless Monday choices.

*“We offer vegetarian dishes right next to our regular. We always have our vegetarian burgers next to our hamburgers. And so on Monday, the only thing that we really do is we just highlight them more... We want to make sure that it’s a dish that’s very popular with our vegetarian students, and our non-vegetarians alike. So that we can encourage students to give up meat, one day a week.”*

– Carleton College

**10. Keep the next step in mind.** Culinary culture is changing and more people are familiar with plant-based and globally inspired food. How can Meatless Mondays spur customers on to the next step to reduce meat and increase plant-based foods long term?

*"In a lot of ways... I almost feel like there needs to be something else. Because like everything else, it's been around a while. Oh sure you're doing Meatless Monday, that's great, but what else are you doing? For us, if we just had Mondays be the day when the vegetarian options are plentiful, that's not going to satisfy our students. In 2008/2009, that might've satisfied our students. But now, they're [thinking], "Ok that's great, thank you for doing Meatless Monday. How about Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, because I'm still eating here those days. Are my vegetarian options going to be plentiful those days as well? So for us, sure, our almost Meatless Monday is the day when everything is vegetarian. But on all those other days, we make sure that their options are also plentiful and delicious. So our customers can also make those choices on those days as well, whether or not they want something that's meat-based or plant-based."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

*"I think it goes back to not allowing Meatless Monday to be all that you're doing... It's really just the beginning. So again, what else are you doing for them?... So it's an expansion. It's not just about that day."*

- General Manager, Bon Appétit Management Company

Table 4: Summary of Specific Recommendations

| Increase Participation  | Sustain Participation   | Improve Meatless Monday   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>1. Make food attractive and delicious.</b></p> <p><b>2. Keep it simple, but keep it interesting.</b></p> <p><b>3. Place and present Meatless Monday stations strategically.</b> (put vegetarian items first on line, meat toward end)</p> | <p><b>1. Think about the big picture.</b> How can Meatless Mondays affect the rest of the week and be a first step toward life-long meat reduction?</p> <p><b>2. Keep creative!</b> How does Meatless Monday in 2016 look different than 2003?</p> <p><b>3. Involve people!</b> Create a strong network of people supporting the message.</p> | <p><b>1. Meatless Monday should provide more marketing materials</b></p> <p><b>2. Promote regularly and make it visible</b></p> <p><b>3. Use strategic promotional pushes throughout the year</b></p> <p><b>4. Extend the impact of Monday to other days</b></p> <p><b>5. Consider another day if Monday is difficult.</b></p> <p><b>6. Amp up the education.</b> – Use other opportunities to teach about plant-based foods.</p> <p><b>7. Involve and train staff.</b> Make it a team effort and generate excitement through the team.</p> <p><b>8. Get customers and students involved.</b> Solicit and incorporate their feedback.</p> <p><b>9. Provide recipe resources</b></p> |



**Don't have  
a cow!  
It's Meatless  
Monday!**



**Why go Meatless?**

- To live longer
- To reduce your carbon footprint
- To improve your health
- Reduce your food budget

A part of the JHU Health  
and Wellness Campaign

Certificate in the Food System,  
Environment and Public Health  
Department of Environmental Health

**The day all health  
breaks loose!**

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## **Conclusion**

Meatless Monday provides a simple, effective approach to educating customers about the consequences of meat consumption and providing them with opportunities to make dietary changes. When implemented carefully and in collaboration with staff and customers, many food service operators have found it valuable and well-accepted. Key themes to successful Meatless Monday implementation include collaboration, education, promotion, staff engagement and attention to the culinary aspects of the meatless meals. While there is little concrete data about the cost effectiveness, most implementers believe it lowers food costs slightly or does not affect it at all. Most implementers also believe that over time customers do choose more meatless items as a result of Meatless Monday. More research and evaluation is needed to assess the impact of Meatless Monday on business practices, food costs and customer food choices.

# Appendices

## APPENDIX 1: MEATLESS MONDAY PROGRAM DETAILS

| Institution                       | Interviewed   | Interview date      | Type of food service                  |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Beloit College                    | Board Operations Manager                                    | 7/25/16             | All you care to eat                   |
| Carleton College                  | General Manager   | 7/29/16             | All you care to eat                   |
| Denison University                | Community Programs and Sustainability Manager; Chef Manager | 8/8/16              | All you care to eat                   |
| Emmanuel College                  | General Manager   | 7/28/16             | All you care to eat                   |
| Johns Hopkins University Homewood | Marketing Manager, Executive sous chef                      | 7/14/16             | All you care to eat; Retail           |
| Pitzer College                    | General Manager   | 7/27/16             | All you care to eat                   |
| Reed College                      | General Manager   | 7/27/16             | À la carte<br>Retail (dining dollars) |
| Sony Playstation (corporate)      | General Manager   | 8/2/16              | retail                                |
| The Thacher School (High school)  | Food Service Director                                       | 8/23/16             | All you care to eat                   |
| Trine University                  | Executive Chef  | 8/1/16              | All you care to eat                   |
| University of Redlands            | Marketing Manager, Executive chef                           | 7/21/2016; 8/5/2016 | Retail (dining dollars on meal plant) |
| Washington University, St. Louis  | Marketing Manager; Sustainability Coordinator               | 7/27/2016; 8/2/2016 | À la carte                            |

| Name used                             | Date started                       | Weekly Occurrence? | MM Locations  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Meatless Monday                       | 1st event 2014/2015<br>2nd in 2016 | no - done twice    | commons café  |
| No name; Students use Meatless Monday | 2014 (2 years)                     | yes                | both dining halls plus meatless specials at retail location |
| Mindful Mondays                       | Fall 2015 (1 year)                 | yes                | at one of two dining halls                                  |
| Meatless Monday internally only       | 2013 (3 years)                     | yes                | one dining hall (other locations are retail)                |
| Meatless Monday                       | Fall 2013 (3 years)                | yes                | freshmen dining hall, also at retail and other dining hall  |
| No name                               | Spring 2016 (6 months)             | yes                | main dining hall  |
| Meatless Monday internally only       | 2013 (3 years)                     | yes                | dining commons  |
| Meatless Monday                       | 2015 (1 year)                      | yes                | one cafeteria   |
| Meatless Tuesday                      | 2012 (4 years)                     | yes                |   |
| Meatless Monday                       | Fall 2015 (1 year)                 | yes                | Main dining facility. The Cafe.                             |
| Meatless Monday                       | February 2016 (5 months)           | single event       | main cafeteria  |
| Green Monday                          | Spring 2016 (8 months)             | yes                | in 3 residential locations                                  |

## APPENDIX 2: PROJECT OUTLINE

1. Implementation of the Practice
  - a. What are the main activities carried out?
  - b. When and where are the activities carried out?
  - c. Who are the key implementers and collaborators?
  - d. What are the resource implications?
2. Promotion and education (outreach)
3. Menu overview and changes
4. Results of the Practice—Outputs and Outcomes
  - a. What were the concrete results achieved in terms of outputs and outcomes?
  - b. Was an assessment of the practice carried out? If yes, what were the results?
5. Lessons Learned
  - a. What worked really well—what facilitated this?
  - b. What did not work—why did it not work?
  - c. How have the results benefited the population?
  - d. What are recommendations for those intending to adopt the Best Practices?

### *Questions to answer*

- What types of activities and promotions do institutions do for Meatless Monday?
- How do menus and specials change on Mondays?
- How long do institutions continue Meatless Monday?
- Who is involved in Meatless Monday?
- What lasting changes have institutions made in response to Meatless Monday? (i.e., changes in purchasing, set up of food, etc.). How have they measured or assessed these changes?
- How does promotion of Meatless Monday influence client food choices?
- What level and exposure of Meatless Monday promotion is needed to influence behavior change?
- What else is needed to see the desired result of Meatless Monday? (i.e., further education, incentives, partner programs, etc.).

### APPENDIX 3. INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am \_\_\_\_\_ at the Center for Livable Future at Johns Hopkins, Bloomberg School of Public Health. We have partnered with Bon Appétit Management Company to learn about Meatless Monday implementation in food service settings and are hoping to catalog the activities/methods that are the most successful in leading to positive changes in consumer behavior and institutional food purchasing.

We will create a Meatless Monday Best Practices Guide from exploring different models. It will provide an overview of the BAMCO institutions that are implementing Meatless Monday and describe promising practices in hopes of encouraging others to successfully implement MM and ultimately promote individual and institutional changes in meat consumption.

This telephone survey will take around \_\_\_\_\_ minutes. Your identity will be kept anonymous, and responses will be confidential if you wish. Notes will be taken during this survey as well. Do we have your permission to record this phone conversation to be referred to in the future for further analysis?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Note: Most questions are asked in present tense. If you no longer offer Meatless Mondays, please answer according to how it was implemented in the past.

| Question  | Sub-questions    | Answer | Notes |
|---|------------------|--------|-------|
| <b>Institutional Information</b>                  |                  |        |       |
| <b>Institution name</b>                           |                  |        |       |
| <b>Type (university, corporate, etc.)</b>         |                  |        |       |
| <b>Interviewee name(s)</b>                        |                  |        |       |
| <b>Interviewee role(s)</b>                        |                  |        |       |
| <b>How many customers do you typically serve?</b> | <b>Breakfast</b> |        |       |
|   | <b>Lunch</b>     |        |       |
|   | <b>Dinner</b>    |        |       |
|   | <b>Other</b>     |        |       |
| <b>What type of food service do you offer?</b>    |                  |        |       |

| Question   | Sub-questions | Answer | Notes |
|--|---------------|--------|-------|
| <b>In which facilities do/did you implement Meatless Monday?</b>   |               |        |       |
| <b>Do you promote Meatless Monday weekly, monthly, other?</b>  |               |        |       |
| <b>What does Meatless Monday generally look like at your site? (e.g., tabling, food samples, special menu, etc?)</b>                         |               |        |       |
| <b>When was Meatless Monday first launched?</b>  |               |        |       |
| For how long was the initiative promoted (i.e. just for a month, every Monday since launch?)   |               |        |       |
| If you do not offer it any longer, when did you stop? Why?   |               |        |       |
| <b>Meatless Monday origin and framing</b>  |               |        |       |
| <b>How did Meatless Monday begin at your institution?</b>  |               |        |       |
| <b>How did you first hear of Meatless Monday?</b>  |               |        |       |
| <b>How is Meatless Monday framed? (i.e., focus on health, environment, animal welfare or other)?</b>   |               |        |       |
| <b>Is the initiative called “Meatless Mondays,” or is there an alternative name?</b>   |               |        |       |
| <b>Have you received any feedback regarding the name?</b>  |               |        |       |
| <b>Was Meatless Mondays launched as part of any larger initiative (e.g., “Healthy Mondays”)?</b>   |               |        |       |
| What other co-initiatives exist along with Meatless Monday?  |               |        |       |
| <b>Is Meatless Monday done in partnership with other groups? (e.g., student groups, employee wellness, etc.) Who/what?</b>                   |               |        |       |
| <b>Oversight and Ownership</b>   |               |        |       |
| <b>Who oversees the implementation of Meatless Monday and makes sure it happens as planned? (e.g., chef, manager, student group, other?)</b> |               |        |       |
| <b>What is the role of the management/leadership of your account? Supportive? Involved? other? Would you give some examples?</b>             |               |        |       |
| <b>What is the role/expectations of the food service staff in implementing MM?</b>   |               |        |       |
| Is staff training provided? What are they trained in and how?  |               |        |       |

| Question  | Sub-questions  | Answer | Notes |
|---|--|--------|-------|
| Do you receive feedback from the employees/ food service staff? What overall feedback have you received?                      |  |        |       |
| <b>Menu-ing</b>   |  |        |       |
| <b>Who plans the menus? (chef, food service director, etc.)</b>   |  |        |       |
| <b>What is the menu planning cycle? (i.e., how far in advance do you plan weekly menus?)</b>                                  |  |        |       |
| <b>What makes Mondays (or your event) different than other days?</b>  |  |        |       |
| Do you eliminate meat throughout the entire café/organization on Monday or do you keep meat options and add meatless options? | YES<br>So there are no meat options at all, such as in a deli section, etc?                            |        |       |
|   | Is there an option to add meat onto a vegetarian option (ie. adding chicken to a salad or pasta dish)? |        |       |
|   | How do the number of vegan offerings compare to the number of vegetarian offerings?                    |        |       |
|   | NO<br>Are there more plant-based options on Monday than other days? how many?                          |        |       |
|   | Do you offer fewer meat options/entrees on Monday?<br>o If yes, how so?                                |        |       |
|   | Are all of your specials on Monday vegetarian?   |        |       |
|   | How do the number of vegan offerings compare to the number of vegetarian offerings?                    |        |       |
|   | Other? Explain   |        |       |

| Question   | Sub-questions  | Answer | Notes |
|--|--|--------|-------|
| <b>Has Meatless Monday inspired you to try new vegan or vegetarian recipes?</b>  | Yes<br>where did you get ideas or recipes for the new dishes?              |        |       |
|  | No<br>would you explain that further?                                      |        |       |
| <b>What are some creative menu items you have tried that worked well?</b>  |  |        |       |
| <b>What are things you have tried that were not popular?</b>   |  |        |       |
| <b>How has MM affected your purchasing?</b>  | Would you give some examples?  |        |       |
| <b>Meatless Monday promotion and education</b>   |  |        |       |
| <b>How is Meatless Mondays promoted? (i.e. posters, tabling, campaigns, newsletters, social media etc.)</b>  |  |        |       |
| <b>How do customers know it is Meatless Monday when they arrive?</b>   |  |        |       |
| <b>Who is involved in promoting Meatless Mondays?</b>  |  |        |       |
| Is the food service staff involved? Explain.   |  |        |       |
| Is there an individual who is directly involved (voluntarily or assigned) in the promotion of MM, such as engaging others and pursuing new resources? (e.g., Employee, customer, vendor). Explain. |  |        |       |
| <b>Can you tell me a little bit about the materials used to promote MM?</b>  |  |        |       |
| Are Meatless Monday-specific materials used? (from <a href="http://www.MeatlessMonday.com">www.MeatlessMonday.com</a> )  | Do you use the toolkit provided on the Meatless Monday website?            |        |       |
|  | Are materials provided for you (by whom?) or do you select and print them? |        |       |
|  | Are they adapted for your specific site?                                   |        |       |
| Do you use other materials not Meatless Monday branded? Can you describe them?   |  |        |       |
| Which of the Meatless Monday or other promotional materials are most used by managers?   |  |        |       |

| Question  | Sub-questions   | Answer | Notes |
|---|---|--------|-------|
| What materials do you feel are the most effective for motivating individuals to go meatless on Mondays? (Explain)   |   |        |       |
| <b>Are MM promotional materials on display permanently? On a weekly basis? Monthly basis?</b>   |   |        |       |
| <b>Reception of Meatless Monday</b>   |   |        |       |
| <b>How is Meatless Monday received? (i.e., what comments do you receive about MM?)</b>  | By food service staff?<br><br>By customers?<br><br>Others?  |        |       |
| <b>Do you collect feedback from customers regularly about MM?</b>   | If Yes, how?  |        |       |
| <b>Do you feel that Meatless Monday promotion influences customer choices? (e.g., customers select more vegetable items, salad bar more popular, etc.) Explain.</b> |   |        |       |
| <b>Have you observed specific changes in food items sold/taken or number of visitors on Mondays? (How is this tracked?)</b>   |   |        |       |
| <b>Have you seen changes in food choices on other days besides Monday?</b>  |   |        |       |
| <b>Tracking</b>   |   |        |       |
| <b>Is the effectiveness of Meatless Monday tracked in any way?</b>  | Yes<br><br>Are meat/vegetarian purchases tracked at point of sale or on the line?<br><br>How often is information compiled?<br><br>Who compiles data? Who reports it?<br><br>No |        |       |
| <b>Is any further analysis done?</b>  |   |        |       |
| <b>Do you track meat waste?</b>   |   |        |       |
| <b>Does your campus run the Real Food Calculator or have a Real Food Commitment? (Run by Real Food student groups)</b>  |   |        |       |
| <b>Best Practices</b>   |   |        |       |
| <b>What have you learned through implementation of Meatless Monday?</b>   |   |        |       |
| <b>Did you encounter any challenges with implementing and promoting Meatless Mondays?</b>   | <b>Would you provide some examples?</b>   |        |       |

| Question  | Sub-questions | Answer | Notes |
|---|---------------|--------|-------|
| <b>What do you think are best Meatless Monday practices? Any other advice for chefs and managers supporting students in a Meatless Monday campaign?</b>   |               |        |       |
| <b>How do you think Meatless Monday can be sustained?</b>   |               |        |       |
| <b>Do you see motivation for Meatless Monday growing or waning? Explain.</b>  |               |        |       |
| <b>What are the challenges of implementing Meatless Monday consistently (e.g., human costs of implementation like extra time to set up promotional materials, talk to consumers, serve meals, etc.)</b> |               |        |       |
| <b>How can Meatless Mondays be improved in the future at your account or in other settings?</b>   |               |        |       |
| This brings us to the end of our interview. Do you have any further comments about anything we did not ask you about? (meat reduction, menu changes)  |               |        |       |
| Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, we really appreciate your input. If you have any further comments or questions, please feel free to send them to rramsin2@jhu.edu.               |               |        |       |

