

Why go Meatless on Mondays?

Meatless Mondays is an international movement to reduce meat intake by 15%. **Carolina Dining Services** has adopted its own version of Meat“less” Mondays; vegetarian options are served at the World’s Fare section of the dining halls every Monday for lunch and dinner.

FOR YOUR HEALTH

- On average, Americans consume 8 ounces of meat per day – 45% more than the USDA recommends.
- **Most Americans get at least twice as much protein as they need.** Almost everything contains protein; unless you eat nothing but junk food, it's almost impossible to eat as many calories as you need for good health without getting enough protein. Healthy sources include whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, beans, peanuts, peas, nuts, mushrooms, and broccoli.
- People on low-meat or vegetarian diets have significantly **lower body weights and body mass indices.**
- Going meatless once a week can **reduce your risk of chronic preventable conditions** like cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity.
- Hundreds of studies suggest that diets high in fruits and vegetables may **reduce cancer risk.** Both red and processed meat consumption are associated with colon cancer.
- A recent Harvard University study found that replacing saturated fat-rich foods (for example, meat and full fat dairy) with foods that are rich in polyunsaturated fat (for example, vegetable oils, nuts and seeds) **reduces the risk of heart disease by 19%.**
- Another Harvard study published in March 2012 found **that eating red meat is associated with a sharply increased risk of death from cancer and heart disease.** Each daily increase of three ounces of red meat was associated with a 12 percent greater risk of dying over all, including a 16 percent greater risk of cardiovascular death and a 10 percent greater risk of cancer death.
- Many studies have found **antibiotic-resistant bacteria** in samples of meat. MRSA, an antibiotic resistant bacterium, claims more victims every year in the U.S. than AIDS. The rampant overuse of antibiotics on factory farms contributes to rapidly growing antibiotic resistance.

FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

- Senior U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization official Henning Steinfeld reported that the meat industry is **“one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems.”**
- A recent United Nations report concluded that a global shift toward a vegan diet is **necessary to combat the worst effects of climate change.**
- Going meatless on Mondays, or being one seventh vegan, **reduces your carbon footprint** by 0.23 tons (that's 460 pounds!).
- **Over 1/3 of all raw materials and fossil fuels** consumed in the U.S. are used in animal production.
- Livestock production emits more climate change-causing greenhouse gasses **than all the planes, cars, trains, and other transportation combined.**
- According to the United Nations, raising animals for food (including land used for grazing and land used to grow feed crops) **uses 30 percent of the Earth's land mass.**
- Over 260 million acres of U.S. forest have been cleared to create cropland to grow grain to feed farmed animals, and according to scientists at the Smithsonian Institution, **the equivalent of seven football fields of land is bulldozed worldwide every minute** to create more room for farmed animals.
- **Nearly half of all the water** used in the United States goes to raising animals for food.
- It takes more than **2,400 gallons of water to produce 1 pound of meat**, while growing 1 pound of wheat only requires 25 gallons. **You save more water by not eating a pound of meat than you do by not showering for six months!**
- According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the runoff from factory farms pollutes our waterways **more than all other industrial sources combined.**
- Livestock generate billions of tons of waste, the vast majority of which **goes untreated.** This waste pollutes air, water, and soil.
- Livestock grazing is the **number one cause of threatened and extinct species** both in the United States and in other parts of the world.

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For THE PEOPLE

- Meat packing industry jobs are **the most dangerous jobs in America**.
- Common meatpacking injuries range from **musculoskeletal injuries**, such as tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and white finger, caused by rapid repetitive motions, to **life-threatening injuries**, often caused by the deadly combination of long hours, tiring work, and sharp knives designed to easily slice through bone.
- A Human Rights Watch investigation found that meatpacking “companies frequently **deny workers’ compensation** to employees injured on the job, intimidate and **fire workers who try to organize**, and **exploit workers’ immigrant status** in order to keep them quiet about abuses.”
- According to figures from the U.S. Department of Labor, **nearly one in three slaughterhouse workers suffers from illness or injury every year**, compared to one in 10 workers in other manufacturing jobs.
- The industrial livestock industry **exploits poor people, immigrants, and children**.
- Factory farms and slaughterhouses are disproportionately located in areas with **high populations of economically disadvantaged and uneducated minorities**.
- The U.S. Department of Labor has repeatedly cited Smithfield Foods, the world’s largest pork producer, for **violating child labor laws**.
- Slaughterhouse employees are also prone to many psychological disorders, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The consequences of a job of killing all day include **domestic violence, social withdrawal, drug and alcohol abuse, and severe anxiety**.
- A 2005 study by a University of Windsor (Canada) criminology professor found that **as the number of slaughterhouse workers in a community increases, the local crime rate also increases**.
- Slaughterhouse workers’ **wages are extremely low**. In May 2006, the average slaughterhouse worker made only \$10.43 per hour (\$21,690 per year).

For THE ANIMALS

- Farmed animals are **no less intelligent or capable of feeling pain** than are the dogs and cats we cherish as our companions. They are inquisitive, interesting individuals who value their lives, solve problems, experience fear and pain, and are capable of using tools.
- Farm animals are confined to cages barely larger than their bodies for the majority of their lives, live in filthy and unnatural conditions, and are abused by farm and slaughterhouse workers.
- There are **no federal laws** protecting pigs, cows, turkeys, sheep, or goats from any type of abuse or neglect inside factory farms.
- There is only one law (the Humane Slaughter Act) protecting farm animals from inhumane slaughter; it **does not apply to chickens and is seldom enforced**.
- Every year millions of farm animals are **not rendered unconscious** before being scalded, skinned, and dismembered alive.

Resources for More Information

- *Eating Animals*, Jonathan Safran Foer
- “LIVESTOCK’S LONG SHADOW: Environmental Issues and Options”, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- *Forks Over Knives* (Documentary- available on Netflix)
- *Slaughterhouse: The Shocking Story of Greed, Neglect and Inhumane Treatment Inside The U.S. Meat Industry*, Gail Eisnitz

About FLO (Fair, Local, Organic) Food

FLO Food is a UNC student group dedicated to promoting food that is Fair, Local, and Organic. We are committed to educating students about the food system and creating a better food economy at UNC. We host events, hold on-campus cooking classes, and work with the dining halls to promote sustainable sourcing of food, among many other things!

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Email Jamie (jberger@email.unc.edu) with questions!