



Meat Free Monday

# Meat Free Monday



Meat Free Monday is an easy, effective and tasty way for all of us to become more responsible global citizens. It's about coming together as a school community to help the planet, but to also promote healthy food. The truth is, we should all be eating a bit less meat, and joining the Meat Free Monday campaign is a simple way to start building new habits. Plus, we have some brilliant veggie recipes for you to get excited about in the pages that follow.

## ★ Did you know?

- ★ One third of all land on earth is used for meat production.
- ★ An area of rainforest, roughly the size of a hundred football pitches is cut down every hour to create room for grazing cattle.
- ★ If every person in Britain skipped meat for one day, it would reduce our carbon footprint by more than if every car was taken off the road for one day.
- ★ Having as little as one sausage or two strips of bacon every day increases a person's risk of heart disease and diabetes.

### What is Meat Free Monday?

Meat Free Monday is a campaign which encourages people to skip meat for one day a week to improve their health and help the environment. The campaign was started by Paul, Mary and Stella McCartney in 2009, and is part of a worldwide movement with similar campaigns in over 40 different countries, including Meatless Monday in the USA.

### Why is Meat Free Monday good for our health?

Evidence exists to suggest that too much meat, especially beef, pork and lamb, can increase the risk of cancer and heart problems – so reducing our intake is a good idea for our health. Plus, going meat free gives us a chance to fill our bodies up with extra fruit and vegetables. Fruit and vegetables are nutritional powerhouses that can help us maintain a healthy weight and a healthy heart, and they are packed with loads of little extra vitamins and minerals that have all sorts of benefits for our bodies, too.

### Why is Meat Free Monday good for the environment?

Meat production uses a lot of land and huge quantities of water – both for raising animals and to grow food for them. In fact, one third of all land on earth is used for meat production. Plus, animals are fed crops, such as maize and soya, which could be used to feed humans. It can take up to 12kg of grain and nearly 200 bathtubs of water to produce just 1kg of beef.

### How else does meat production impact the planet?

Producing meat causes greenhouse gases which are damaging to the planet. These gases rise into the atmosphere, trapping the sun's heat and causing what is known as global warming. This means that the earth can get too hot, which results in changes to the environment (we call this climate change), such as disruptions to long-term weather patterns, affecting things like temperature, rainfall and snowfall.

## How does meat production cause greenhouse gases?

Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is produced when rainforests are cut down to make room for grazing cattle or for growing crops to feed farmed animals. An area of rainforest the size of a hundred football pitches is cut down every hour to create room for grazing cattle. Methane is caused when cows, sheep and goats burp – and this greenhouse gas is 21 times more powerful than CO<sub>2</sub>. Nitrous oxide, which comes from manure pits and also fertilisers, is even stronger – 310 times more powerful than CO<sub>2</sub>, and this gas stays in the atmosphere for up to 114 years. With more and more people on the planet and more animals being raised for meat, a lot more greenhouses gases are being produced.

## What can we eat on Meat Free Monday?

There are all sorts of delicious ways to have a balanced meat-free meal. Beans, lentils, seeds and nuts all provide our bodies with protein, which is essential for the growth and repair of our muscles. There are also protein-packed alternatives to meat, such as tofu, seitan, tempeh and others that are commonly eaten in different parts of the world. Vegetables and grains are excellent sources of fibre which help us feel full and satisfied. For more inspiration, check out the pages that follow for some delicious meat-free options.

### Curriculum links

#### Literacy/PHSE

#### Alphabetical food chart

Get the children to create an alphabetical chart of meat-free foods, encouraging them to think of foods that start with every letter of the alphabet. Research foods from around the world to find letters X and Z, or ask the children to choose a food that contains that letter instead. Next, ask the children to indicate which food group (carbohydrates, protein, fats and vitamins/minerals) each food belongs to by underlining the names of the foods with different colours. If a food belongs to more than one nutritional category, it should be underlined with each applicable colour.

#### Art/Literacy/ PHSE

#### Meat Free Monday promotion

Set the children persuasive writing projects to create posters or billboards which advertise Meat Free Monday to other schools, other young people or the general public. This could include letters to other schools written on behalf of the campaign asking them to sign up for Meat Free Monday, or informational leaflets designed to raise awareness about the initiative.

#### D&T

#### Meat-free menu

Design four weeks' worth of Meat Free Monday lunches. Encourage the children to use a variety of foods and some exciting combinations, then get them to illustrate and describe each lunch and give it an interesting name. Consider speaking to your school caterer about the children's ideas, perhaps having a competition for a dish to be featured in the school canteen.

#### Geography

#### Meat-free diets around the world

Many diets from different parts of the world are meat free. Indian, Vietnamese, Malaysian, Thai, Ethiopian, Lebanese, and Mediterranean cookery offer some great meat-free options. Get the children to research different meat-free cuisines and present their findings to the class. For an extension, run a cookery demo or invite parents in to show children how to make one of the dishes discussed.

This resource was a collaboration between Jamie Oliver's Kitchen Garden Project and The Meat Free Monday Foundation. Launched by Paul, Mary and Stella McCartney in 2009, Meat Free Monday is a not-for-profit campaign which aims to raise awareness of the detrimental environmental impact of eating meat, and to encourage people to help slow climate change, preserve precious natural resources and improve their health by having at least one meat-free day each week.



# Vegetable spaghetti Bolognese



Serves 8



## Equipment list

- Chopping board
- Knife
- Y-shaped peeler
- Mixing bowl
- Box grater
- Large saucepan with lid (25cm)
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Tin opener
- Kettle
- Sieve
- Measuring jug
- Ladle
- Large pot
- Microplane
- Colander
- Tongs



This recipe makes double the amount of sauce you need, so freeze half for another day. I've served my Bolognese with spaghetti, but feel free to use other traditional pastas, such as tagliatelle, pappardelle or penne.

## Ingredients

- 2 onions
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 2 carrots
- 2 sticks of celery
- 2 courgettes
- 1 medium aubergine
- 1 medium leek
- 100g mushrooms
- olive oil
- a few sprigs of fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tablespoons tomato purée
- 1 tablespoon balsamic or red wine vinegar
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 1 x 400g tin green lentils
- 1 organic low-salt vegetable stock cube
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 500g dried spaghetti
- optional:** 40g Parmesan cheese

**Allergy info**  wheat, gluten, dairy, celery, sulphur dioxide



For nutritional information ask your teacher

# Here's how to make it

- 1** On a chopping board, peel the onions, garlic and carrots and trim the celery, courgettes and aubergine.
- 2** Finely chop the onions, then add to a mixing bowl.
- 3** Trim and finely chop the leek (make sure you wash it really well) and finely chop the garlic, then add to the bowl.
- 4** Gently brush or wipe the mushrooms to get rid of any dirt than might be hiding.
- 5** Holding a box grater steady on a chopping board, coarsely grate the carrot, celery, courgettes, aubergine and mushrooms (whenever the grater gets full, transfer to the bowl).
- 6** Put a large saucepan on a low heat and add 1 tablespoon olive oil and all the vegetables from the bowl.
- 7** Pick the thyme leaves, discarding the stalks, then add the pan along with the dried oregano.
- 8** Mix well, then cook with the lid ajar for around 20 minutes, or until cooked through, stirring occasionally.
- 9** Add the tomatoes, tomato purée, vinegar and bay leaves.
- 10** Fill and boil the kettle.
- 11** Drain the lentils through a sieve into the sink, then add to the pan.
- 12** Crumble in the stock cube and pour in 400ml boiling water.
- 13** Stir well, turn the heat up to high and bring to the boil.
- 14** Season with pepper, reduce to a low heat, then cover and simmer for around 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 15** Remove the lid and continue cooking for 15 to 20 minutes, or until thickened and reduced. Meanwhile...
- 16** Re-fill and boil the kettle.
- 17** Carefully fill a large pot three quarters of the way up with boiling water, add a tiny pinch of salt and bring back to the boil.
- 18** Add the spaghetti and cook according to packet instructions – you want to cook your pasta until it is al dente. This translates as 'to the tooth' and means that it should be soft enough to eat, but still have a bit of a bite and firmness to it. Use the timings on the packet instructions as a guide, but try some just before the time is up to make sure it's perfectly cooked.
- 19** Using a microplane, finely grate the Parmesan cheese onto a clean chopping board (if using).
- 20** Once the spaghetti is done, ladle out and reserve a cup of cooking water and keep it to one side, then drain in a colander over the sink.
- 21** Taste the Bolognese sauce and season with a little more pepper, if you think it needs it.
- 22** Carefully pick out and discard the bay leaves.
- 23** Put half the sauce into a container, leave to cool, then freeze for another day.
- 24** Stir the spaghetti into the remaining sauce, adding a splash of pasta water to loosen, if needed.
- 25** Divide between bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese (if using), then serve.

# Mini meat-free burgers

Serves 8



## Equipment list

- Mixing bowl
- Food processor (standard blade)
- Tin opener
- Sieve
- Weighing scales
- Measuring spoon
- Microplane
- Spatula
- Large baking tray
- Clingfilm
- Chopping board
- Knife
- Serving board
- Large frying pan (30cm)
- Fish slice



If you like a bit of heat, try adding some finely chopped fresh red chilli into the mix to give your burgers a bit of a kick.



I like to think of these as my happy cow burgers, as they're made with beans instead of meat. They taste delicious, are fun to eat and bring together a variety of ingredients and textures to give you a full-on flavour extravaganza. Keep things interesting by varying the beans you use and have fun with the topping and flavour combos you choose.

## Ingredients

- 1 bunch of fresh coriander
- 1 x 410g tin of mixed beans
- 200g frozen broad beans
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 lemon
- 1 heaped tablespoon plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- olive oil
- 2 large ripe tomatoes
- 4 gherkins
- 1 little gem lettuce
- optional:** 75g feta cheese
- 8 mini burger buns

Allergy info  wheat, gluten, dairy



For nutritional information ask your teacher

# Here's how to make it

- 1** Pick the coriander leaves into a bowl, adding the stalks to a food processor.
- 2** Drain the mixed beans over the sink into a sieve, then tip into the processor.
- 3** Add the broad beans, a tiny pinch of salt and pepper, the cayenne pepper, ground cumin and ground coriander.
- 4** Finely grate the zest from the lemon using a microplane, then add to the processor along with 1 heaped tablespoon of flour.
- 5** Whiz until fine and fully combined, scraping down the sides of the processor with a spatula, if needed.
- 6** Divide the mixture in half, then divide each half into 4 equal-sized pieces.  
Roll each piece into a ball and flatten into a patty about 2cm thick, dusting your hands and the burgers with flour as you go.
- 7**
- 8** Place the burgers onto an oiled baking tray, pat with a little olive oil, then cover with clingfilm and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes to firm up, if you can. Meanwhile...
- 9** On a chopping board, slice the tomatoes and gherkins, so they're roughly the thickness of a pound coin.
- 10** Click the leaves off the lettuce discarding any tatty outer leaves, then wash and spin them dry.
- 11** Crumble the feta (if using), then arrange nicely onto one side of a serving board with the tomatoes, gherkins, lettuce and coriander leaves.
- 12** When you're ready to cook the burgers, add 1½ tablespoons of olive oil to a large frying pan on a medium heat.
- 13** Add the burgers for 2 to 3 minutes, pressing them down slightly with a fish slice.
- 14** Once golden on the bottom, flip over and cook for a further 2 to 3 minutes, or until golden and cooked through.

- 15** Use a fish slice to place a burger into each burger bun, add whichever lovely toppings you like, then serve with a crunchy slaw and some tomato ketchup.

Your notes... 

# Super squash curry



Serves 8



## Equipment list

- Chopping board
- Knife
- Teaspoon
- Microplane
- Large saucepan with lid (25cm)
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Measuring jug
- Weighing scales



If you can't find butternut squash, sweet potato works really well in its place - just make sure you peel it before adding it to the curry.



Squash works brilliantly in a curry, but feel free to experiment with other veg combos - just remember to adjust the cooking time accordingly. Chunky veg will need slightly longer, and more delicate veg, such as peas, can go in for the last few minutes.

## Ingredients

- 2 onions
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1 thumb-sized piece of ginger
- ½ a fresh red chilli
- 1 bunch of fresh coriander
- 1 butternut squash (1.2kg)
- groundnut oil
- 1 organic vegetable stock cube
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 x 400g tin plum tomatoes
- 120g red lentils
- 300g frozen spinach
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ½ a lemon

Allergy  
info



peanuts



For nutritional  
information, ask  
your teacher

# Here's how to make it

**1** On a chopping board, peel and finely chop the onions and garlic.

**2** Using a teaspoon, scrape all the skin off the ginger.

**3** Finely grate the ginger onto the board using a microplane.

**4** Hold the stalk end of the chilli steady, then run a teaspoon down the cut side to scoop out the seeds and white pith.

**5** Finely slice the chilli, then wash your hands thoroughly.

**6** Pick and roughly chop the coriander leaves and finely chop the stalks.

**7** Carefully trim the stalky end off the butternut squash, then cut in half.

**8** Peel the squash, then use a spoon to scoop out and discard the seeds.

**9** Place the squash on its flat side, then carefully cut into 2.5cm chunks.

**10** Fill and boil the kettle.

**11** Add 1 tablespoon of groundnut oil to a large saucepan and place on a medium-low heat.

**12** Add the onion and fry for around 10 minutes, or until softened.

**13** Next, add the garlic, ginger, coriander stalks and chilli and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring regularly.

**14** Crumble in the stock cube, then add the ground coriander, cumin and garam masala and stir well.

**15** Add the squash and stir well to coat.

**16** Pour in the tomatoes and 600ml boiling water.

**17** Turn the heat up to high, stir in the lentils and bring to the boil.

**18** As soon as it starts to bubble, turn the heat down to low and cook with the lid on for 30 to

35 minutes, or until the squash is cooked through.

**19** Add the frozen spinach and cook for a further 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**20** Have a taste and season a tiny pinch of sea salt and black pepper, if you think it needs it.

**21** Squeeze in the lemon juice, using your fingers to catch any pips.

**22** Scatter over and stir through the coriander leaves.

**23** Delicious served with rice and a dollop of natural yoghurt.

Your notes... 