

Plant-based eating: A toolkit for schools

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Thank you for being a changemaker in your school and community! Whether eating less animal products or going vegetarian or vegan, our food choices matter and have the power to make a difference. Making the change to more plant-based foods helps the lives of animals, can be good for our health and is a powerful solution to climate change. Another bonus is eating more plant-based foods is inclusive to dietary restrictions and can save us and our school money– it's a win-win! So, gather a crew and help spread the word about the power of plant-based!

The following toolkit has been created to offer information, tips and tools, ideas, and inspiration to help with your work in getting more plant-based food choices into your school. This toolkit provides informative factsheets, a step-by-step guide to joining or starting a club, and tips and templates to help your club make impactful change. Read on, changemakers, and thank you for your good work helping animals, people, and the planet.

For more free plant-based resources, go to plantuniversity.ca.

For further information and support, please contact:

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Plant-Based 101

What is plant-based?

A plant-based diet is made up of foods that come from plants. This includes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes (such as lentils, beans, and peas), nuts, and seeds. The newest version of [Canada's Food Guide](#) encourages more plant-based foods to promote personal health and well-being and reduce our environmental impact.

Why plant-based?

What we choose to put on our plate matters. There are wide ranging implications from our food choices. Eating a plant-based diet offers numerous advantages such as improving the lives of animals, supporting overall human health and well-being, reducing environmental impact and having significant cost-savings.

What we choose to put on our plate matters.





Factsheet 1

Animal welfare

The below science-based information shares the impacts on animal welfare from animal agriculture. These facts can be shared with peers to generate interest in your club and with school staff and key decision makers when advocating for more plant-based food choices in your school.

- If people throughout BC made even small changes to include more plant-based foods, it is estimated that [millions of animals could be spared inhumane treatment](#).
- [Farmed animals are very similar to dogs, cats and other companion animals](#). They have unique personalities and can form strong bonds with other animals. For example, pigs are sensitive animals, aware of the emotions of other individuals.
- [More than 841 million land animals were killed for food in Canadian slaughterhouses in 2022](#).
- The industrial animal agriculture system, or factory farming, is known for [horrific treatment of animals](#) including:
 - confinement in cramped, unnatural conditions
 - overcrowding
 - severely limited ability for animals to behave naturally
 - young separated from their mothers much too early
 - painful procedures without pain control
 - rough handling and the use of electric prods
 - lack of treatment for injury and disease
 - inhumane methods of euthanasia

Canada's current animal transport regulations allow for some species of farmed animals to be transported for up to

72 HOURS
without food, water or rest.



<https://plantuniversity.ca/individual-social-media-graphics/>



Factsheet 2

The environment

There are many environmental benefits to eating a plant-based diet and the below information provides credible, statistical data to support this. These facts can be shared with peers to generate interest in your club and with school staff and key decision makers when advocating for more plant-based food choices in your school.

- Eating less animal-based products and eating/serving more plant-based foods is [one of the most impactful things that can be done to fight climate change](#).
- Research suggests that moving to more plant-based eating has the potential to [reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions by up to 70 percent](#).
- Animal agriculture accounts for [14.5% of greenhouse gas emissions \(GHGs\)](#).
- [A study from 2023](#) analyzed the diets of over 55,000 people in the United Kingdom and found that plant-based diets can reduce greenhouse emissions by 75%, water use by 54%, and 65% less of an impact on biodiversity.
- [A 2023 impact report by the Vancouver Humane Society](#) found that replacing beef with lentils in an individual's diet could save over 1 tonne of CO2 on an annual basis, the equivalent to emissions created by 500 litres of gasoline.
- [Intensive farming systems contribute to](#) water pollution from the leaching of nutrients into the soil then into water systems and air pollution from ammonia emission and deforestation of land.
- A gram of plant-based protein such as peas or tofu takes [almost 100 times less land](#) to produce than a gram of protein from beef or lamb. A plant-based diet uses 75% less land.
- [Plant-based proteins take much less water](#) to produce. For example, it takes 149 litres of water to produce 1 kg of tofu, and 2,714 litres to produce 1 kg of beef.
- [Livestock production accounts for 70% of all agricultural land use and occupies 30% of the planet's land surface](#).
- George Monbiot, in his 2022 book [Regenesiis: Feeding the world without devouring the planet](#), states that animal agriculture has displaced millions of Indigenous peoples from their lands while destroying billions of hectares of wildlife habitat.



https://plantuniversity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/V3-PlantU_Digital-poster_1920x1080px.jpg



Factsheet 3

Health and well-being

The following information supports the numerous ways that eating plant-based foods can positively impact our health and well-being. These facts can support conversations with students, staff, and key decision makers to increase plant-based food options in schools.

- [Canada's Food Guide](#) recommends shifting to eating more plant-based foods, including plant-based protein foods, more often.
- If accessible, plant-based foods can offer numerous [health benefits](#), including:
 - lowered risk of cancer
 - lowered risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes
 - reduced blood pressure
 - reduced cholesterol levels
 - lowered risk of developing Alzheimer's disease
- [Canada's Food Guide also acknowledges that many of the well-studied healthy eating patterns from areas of the world where people statistically live the longest include mostly plant-based foods.](#)
- Plant-based foods are nutrient rich with a combination of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants and can [provide all the nutrients you need at any age.](#)
- Eating more vegetables, beans, and seeds is a great way to increase fibre intake, [which many Canadians are deficient in.](#)
- [The American Dietetic Association and Dieticians of Canada](#) have stated that "well planned vegan and other types of vegetarian diets are appropriate for all stages of the life cycle, including during pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence."
- Plant-based eating is more inclusive of anyone with allergies, sensitivities, dietary, and ethical restrictions.
- [The BC plant-based lifestyle survey](#) was conducted in December 2022 by the Vancouver Humane Society and found that 73% of those surveyed would view food services that offer a greater variety of plant-based options as more inclusive to all.

A well-planned plant-based diet is high in fibre, vitamins and anti-oxidants, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol.

This healthy combination helps protect against chronic diseases.



<https://plantuniversity.ca/individual-social-media-graphics/>



Factsheet 4

Cost-savings

The following factsheet outlines ways that including more plant-based foods and dishes can reduce costs. This information could be helpful when speaking with school staff and key decision makers in making the case for switching to plant-based options as an important cost-savings measure.

- [Prices for many grocery items have continued to increase and are 20% above levels in 2021.](#)
- [A December 2022 BC plant-based lifestyle survey](#) by the Vancouver Humane Society found that the overwhelming majority of surveyed British Columbians feel the impact of rising prices on their finances and are looking for ways to save on groceries. Two-thirds of those surveyed are open to exploring more plant-based options to save money.
- [A 2023 impact report by the Vancouver Humane Society](#) found [the greatest cost savings](#) were seen when replacing beef and seafood with plant-based alternatives.
 - Swapping all beef to lentils can create a savings of up to \$720/year, including:
 - \$60/month (100% transition from beef to lentils);
 - \$30/month (50% transition); and
 - \$15/month (25% transition).
 - Switching all general seafood to mushrooms could save up to \$768/year, including:
 - \$64/month (100% transition from seafood to mushrooms);
 - \$32/month (50% transition); and
 - \$16/month (25% transition).
- Choosing plant-based protein sources such as lentils, beans, split peas, tofu, peanut butter, and sunflower or pumpkin seeds [gives your wallet a break](#) as they are significantly less expensive sources of protein than meat, poultry, and fish.
- [A 2017 case study by Friends of the Environment](#) of a school district in the US switched their animal protein sources to plant-based, saving the school board a total of \$42,000 over the course of the two year program.
- [A 2022 cost-benefit analysis of food activity streams in the City of Vancouver](#) revealed a replacement of 20% of the most cost-intensive animal-based products with plant-based alternatives has the potential to save up to nearly \$100,000 annually.

100%

transition to plant-based alternatives
can save

\$50/month or
\$600/year



How to start a school club

A step-by-step guide: 6 steps to success

Step 1: Where to start

Be inspired to make changes at your school! Get inspired by reading stories of plant-based advocates through the [Chat with a Vegan blog](#) and read about youth advocates from the [Plant Powered Youth Steering Committee](#). The [Vancouver Humane Society](#) can also be invited to come in to present, answer questions and inspire action.

When you are fired up and ready to begin, find out what is needed to start a school club. This might mean talking to school administration to find out what steps are involved and how to set up club meeting times and meeting space. Also, your school may already have a club that could support your plant-based mission, such as an environmental club, a green team or animal welfare club. This could also be a great starting point instead of starting a whole new club.

The [Vancouver Humane Society \(VHS\)](#) is here to help at any step of the way. A presentation from VHS can be a good starting point to answer any initial questions, create interest, inspire an existing or new club, or a chance to celebrate your club's successes.

Reach out anytime, through our website <https://plantuniversity.ca> or email programs@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca

Step 2: Gather your support people

If there is an existing club at your school that you can work with, find a way to connect, share ideas and brainstorm creative ways to work together. If no similar clubs exist, then it may be time to start your own club. Begin by finding a staff member to sponsor your club. Some schools require a staff sponsor and some don't. Either way, it can be helpful to have staff involved, as they may have more knowledge about things such as booking spaces, contacting school and district decision makers, securing funds, school communications, etc. Consider asking a staff member who has an interest in animal rights, ethics, environmental sustainability, or plant-based nutrition.

Step 3: Decide on details

An existing club will most likely already have set meeting times and dates. If starting a new club, decide on a meeting time and space. If helpful, come up with a creative, catchy club name (e.g., Ethical Eating Club, Plant Powered Student Club, Clean and Green Club) and create a fun logo if you'd like. This can also be done when the larger group has come together.

Step 4: Define your club

If you are working with an existing club, find ways to collaborate and creatively weave in plant-based advocacy initiatives. As a new club, once you have a small group, decide what it is your group will do. Try to define a focus, as this will help develop clear messaging to the school community and generate interest for others to join in.

Some focus ideas for your club:

- Advocating for plant-based food choices in the cafeteria, vending machines, school stores and at school fundraisers
- Participating in menu planning and taste testing events for potential cafeteria recipes
- Raising awareness in your school about the benefits of plant-based eating

How to start a school club

A step-by-step guide: 6 steps to success

Step 5: Grow your club

There are many different ways to spread the word about your club, or help promote the club you are collaborating with. Choose the most effective method of communication depending on the culture of your school and the different communication tools your school uses.

Some ideas include:

- School daily announcements ([see appendix C](#))
- School newsletter ([see appendix C](#))
- Short presentations in advisory classes/ homerooms either pre-recorded and sent to teachers or done in person by club members
- School bulletin boards or posters around the school (make sure you are mindfully using resources and paper)
- Social media posts ([see appendix E](#))
- School website

Step 6: Welcome

Make sure your club is a welcoming and safe environment where everyone feels included and has their voices heard.

Plan and organize meetings:

- Ensure that meetings are organized, as planning for meetings helps things run more smoothly.
- An agenda for the meeting can help by outlining the topics to cover and help keep meetings on track.
- Have someone take the role of meeting facilitator. This person leads the meetings and keeps the agenda moving.
- Have a notetaker to capture ideas and main discussion points from the meeting.
- Keep track of member's names and what things they are interested in doing within the club.



Tips for your school club

Ideas for running a successful and sustainable school club

Set goals

Work together to set clear goals for your club to complete, both short term and long term. If you are joining an existing club such as a green team, work together to create a plant-based goal/ campaign.

Examples of short-term goals:

- Making a school announcement ([see appendix C](#)).
- Booking a presentation with the [Vancouver Humane Society](#) (VHS).
- Creating a newsletter ([see appendix C](#)).
- Creating social media posts for the school social media accounts ([see appendix E](#)).
- Set up a meeting with a key decision-maker (this could be school administration or district personnel related to school food distribution. Your club staff sponsor can assist in making these connections and setting up meetings.

Examples of long-term goals:

- Launching a petition campaign for more plant-based meals in the cafeteria ([see appendix B](#)).
- Ordering and distributing educational resource brochures from VHS ([see appendix G](#)) throughout your school.
- Organizing various guest speakers to come to your school to present (vegan chefs, plant-based advocate, vegan athlete).
- Creating a plant-based food tasting event
- Running a Meatless Monday campaign ([see appendix D](#)).
- Reaching a goal of 20% of the school cafeteria menu items being plant-based foods.

Keep your first goals simple and short-term. This will help build success and enthusiasm to achieve further goals.

Build community

While working hard, build a sense of community with your group of plant-based warriors and have fun to keep the momentum going.

Some ideas to build community include:

- Hosting a plant-based potluck with your club members
- Bringing plant-based snacks to meetings and share recipes
- Booking a guest presenter such as a vegan chef, vegan athlete or local plant-based advocate to meet with your club
- The [Vancouver Humane Society](#) can also be invited to come in to present, answer questions and inspire further action.

Celebrate and evaluate

Celebrate all your successes, both big and small, to acknowledge your hard work and build motivation to keep going. Continue to set goals that build on the accomplishments of your club. It is also good to reflect on the progress made. A possible template for reflection is the **START, STOP, CONTINUE** framework outlined below.

START

What do you want to start doing?
What new ideas and inspirations do you have?
What things would you like to try?

STOP

What isn't working?
What isn't resulting in your intended outcome?
What should be stopped?

CONTINUE

What has worked?
What should you continue to do?



Tips for your school club

Tips for talking to others about plant-based eating

These are a few tips that can help in making conversations positive and effective.

1. Share your story

Personal stories make a big impact and are a great way to make a connection with those you are speaking to. Your journey with plant-based eating is a powerful way to connect and inspire others.

To inspire change you will need to have persuasive conversations with others, including those who make decisions about food in your school.

2. Focus on the good

While there are many negative impacts of animal agriculture, try to focus on the positive side of the story as much as possible. Focusing on the positive and the impacts your school community could make gives others hopeful solutions and ways they can join in making positive change.

3. Be fact based

Make sure you have your facts correct and sources credible as this will be helpful in making your argument valid. Try to stick to the facts and not exaggerate your points.

4. Provide excellent examples

Highlighting examples of other schools moving to more plant-based foods showcases this work in action and can be a persuasive strategy to inspire change. One example is [Sutherland Secondary](#) in North Vancouver, where a student-led initiative successfully introduced Meatless Mondays to their school cafeteria.

5. Practice precision

Work on your “elevator pitch”. An elevator pitch is a one minute speech that is persuasive and to the point. Make your pitch brief, relevant, and interesting to listen to. Practice your elevator pitch until it comes naturally.

See [Plant University's Communication Tips](#) for further tips.

Top reasons for plant-based

The following provides key points for speaking to various audiences about why to eat more plant-based foods and why more plant-based food should be served in schools.

Top five reasons to EAT more plant-based foods

- Save animals lives. Even with small changes to more plant-based alternatives, millions of animals could be spared inhumane treatment.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and overall carbon footprint. Eating less animal-based products and eating more sustainable plant-based foods is a powerful way to tackle climate change.
- Reduce water and air pollution and increase habitat for wild animals. Animal agriculture creates both water and air pollution and requires a large amount of land for grazing animals and producing feed.
- Contribute to overall personal health and well-being, including lowering risk of cancer, heart disease and type 2 diabetes, and reducing blood pressure and cholesterol level.
- Save money, as making the switch from animal protein to plant-based protein sources can reduce grocery costs. Cost-savings are increased when replacing beef and seafood.

Top five reasons to SERVE more plant-based foods

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and school carbon footprint. Eating less animal-based products and eating more sustainable plant-based foods is a powerful way to tackle climate change.
- Contribute to student and staff overall health and well-being, lower risk of cancer, heart disease and type 2 diabetes, reduce your blood pressure and cholesterol level.
- Plant-based foods can be more inclusive of individuals with allergies, sensitivities, dietary and ethical restrictions.
- Save money, as making the switch from animal protein to plant-based protein sources can reduce grocery costs. Cost-savings are increased when replacing beef and seafood.
- Meet the increasing demand for plant-based options. A growing number of British Columbians are interested in exploring plant-based food options with people in younger generations more likely to reduce or eliminate animal products from their diets.





Ideas and inspiration for school clubs

Different types of food services in schools

There are many different ways to increase plant-based food options within your school or school district. It just takes some creativity, knowing your stuff and persistence. You've got this! For further ideas, resources, and information, visit plantuniversity.ca.

School meal programs

Where to start?

- Know your club's goals and be able to clearly say what your plant-based eating goals are for your school.
- Be prepared with facts and evidence that support your goal.
- Find out the current menu at your school and if possible, how the kitchen is set up. Consider what the school meal program is doing well at and identify what could use improvement. These insights can be a good starting point for talking about change. Speak with your club staff sponsor or school administrators about how school meal programs operate.

Who to talk to?

Work with your club staff sponsor or school administrators to find out the most appropriate people to speak to first. Who are the decision makers when it comes to food at your school? Is it the school's cafeteria staff, a food services manager or administration (principal and/ or vice-principal)? Keep in mind your school might contract out the meal program to a food service distributor or local contractor. If you can't reach the decision maker you have identified, then go down the ladder until you can at least speak with someone who knows the decision makers.

What do they need to know?

Share your club's goals and what you want to see at your school. Be clear about the facts and have the evidence to back it up (see factsheets). Share ideas and inspiration for how your club can be helpful in saving money, serving delicious and nutritious food, reducing the carbon footprint of your school and meeting the demand for a more inclusive, plant-based menu. Some of these ideas may include:

- Finding out, through surveys or polls, how students feel about plant-based foods and their interest and support in having more plant-based options included in the school meal program.
- Gathering student input, such as using surveys, to help find out what kinds of plant-based options students would like to see on the menu or what current items are their favourite to see if they can be modified.
- Sharing [examples](#) of other schools that have success in adding more plant-based foods.
- Participating in activities such as creating the names for plant-based menu items (e.g., "Crunchy Carrot Bites").
- Creating signs for the cafeteria promoting a featured plant-based dish.

School meal programs cont'd

Ideas to pitch to decision makers on how to market plant-based menu items:

- Make the default option plant-based whenever possible to make it easier for people to choose plant-based.
- Make easy “grab-and-go” plant-based options
- Offer a promotion or incentive on plant-based menu items (e.g. discounts, punch card for a free item, draw prizes).
- Offer a sample of new plant-based items to get student feedback.
- Food names are important. Avoid naming dishes as “vegetarian” or “vegan” because it implies those dishes are only for those who identify as vegetarian or vegan. Instead consider using a symbol (like a leaf) to show that a dish is vegan or include the allergen information (dairy-free, egg-free, etc.).

School fundraising events serving food

Where to start?

- Find out who the fundraising groups are at your school.
- This may include PAC (Parents Advisory Committee), music and sports programs, social justice clubs and student groups, outdoor and eco student clubs, as well as classes (e.g. class trip fundraiser, class community action campaigns).

Who to talk to?

Work with your club staff sponsor to book a meeting to talk to the main organizers of these various fundraising groups and give them the heads up about your club and the work you do.

What do they need to know?

Work with student fundraising groups and with parents/ school community well in advance of their fundraising events. Try to connect with them before they start advertising to share information and encourage consideration of plant-based foods and use of minimal or no-animal products in their fundraising event.

School cooking programs (home economics classes and culinary programs)

Where to start?

- Similar to addressing school meal programs, know your club’s goals and be able to clearly share your club’s plant-based eating goals.
- Work with your club staff sponsor or school administrator to find out the general outline of curriculum taught and the dishes made in the home economics classes or culinary programming.
- Prepare an example or two of how easily current dishes and animal products can be replaced with plant-based meals and foods.
- Speak with your club sponsor or school administrators about school culinary programs.

Who to talk to?

Ask for a meeting with your home economics teacher or any main teacher who coordinates the culinary programming. Your club staff sponsor can help with this.

What do they need to know?

Share your club’s goals and what you want to see at your school. Be clear about the facts and have the science to back it up (see factsheets). Share ideas and inspiration for how your club can be helpful in saving money, serving healthy and inclusive food and reducing the carbon footprint of the school. Potentially share recipe options and examples (see appendix F). Reflect on the connections between plant-based eating and the curriculum being taught (e.g., sustainable lifestyle choices, healthy food systems, and sustainable local and global communities).

Plant-based food choices can highlight diverse cultures and backgrounds. Plant-based foods are also more inclusive for anyone with allergies/sensitivities, dietary and ethical restrictions.

School vending machines and school stores

Where to start?

- Find out who oversees the vending machine or school store purchases, your club staff sponsor can help with this.
- Make a list of the products currently found in your vending machines and school stores.
- Speak with your club staff sponsor or school administrators about how vending machine contracts work and how to include more plant-based options.

Who to talk to?

Work with your club staff sponsor or school administrators to book a meeting with the food supplier or the school personnel responsible for stocking the machines and/or store. School districts or large schools may have more influence on pricing with food and beverage vendors. A meeting with someone who works within the school board office may be needed if those are the individuals who are making vending machine purchases for schools.

What do they need to know?

Share your club's goals and what you want to see at your school. Be clear about the facts and have the science to back it up (see factsheets). Share ideas and inspiration for how your club can be helpful in saving money, serving healthy and inclusive food and reduce the carbon footprint of the school. Work to develop a plan to include more plant-based foods in vending machine and school store sales. Look at the contract process for your district for selecting vendors and build criteria and processes that favours companies who are offering plant-based food options. Suggest asking for samples from vendors and possibly holding a tasting event for students and the school community.





Inspirational school stories

Inspiring others

There are many youth throughout this province leading the efforts to bring more humane, healthy and sustainable plant-based foods to their schools. [Learn more](#) about these changemakers and how they are working to educate and empower their school community through such initiatives as clubs, fundraisers, and [Meatless Monday campaigns](#). These initiatives have an impactful ripple effect, empowering students, making positive change throughout the school, and even reaching out into the community.



Sutherland Secondary School

Students of Sutherland Secondary School are a shining examples of change in action. The Sutherland Secondary Sustainability and Meatless Monday club, in partnership with the Vancouver Humane Society, worked hard to implement Meatless Mondays in their school. Their campaign met with great success and led to a growing demand for plant-based menu items. This resulted in their school's food service provider committing to plant-based foods for 20 percent of the cafeteria's daily menu. Club members went on to present their work to the District of North Vancouver Council. For all their efforts, Sutherland Secondary's Sustainability and Meatless Monday Club received a Civic Youth Award, where the City of North Vancouver acknowledged the club's achievements and contribution to the community.

Share your stories with us! We would love to hear about your club's inspiring work and initiatives to bring more plant-based foods to your school!
programs@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca

APPENDIX A: Letter writing tips and templates

Name of Club/Organization]
[Contact Info]
[Date]

Include the name of the organization, the contact person, and their position. Use full names and titles when you can.

Dear [school administrator and/or cafeteria manager],

I am writing on behalf of [Club/Organization], which represents [Number] of students, to express our support for more plant-based options on our school's cafeteria menu.

Canada's new Food Guide recommends shifting consumption to more plant-based foods. Plant-based foods offer health, economic and environmental benefits. Eating a more plant-based diet can contribute to a lowered risk of cancer, heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Plant-based foods are also more inclusive for anyone with allergies, sensitivities, dietary and ethical food restrictions. Moving from animal protein sources to plant-based proteins is economically beneficial and can be a cost-savings measure for schools and districts.

Studies show that dietary change is a powerful way to help address climate change. A growing body of research shows the massive environmental footprint of the animal agriculture industry and its contribution to climate change. Livestock production is a major contributor to air and water pollution, water use, land degradation and deforestation. The industry's greenhouse gas emissions are equal to emissions from all the world's vehicles.

As hubs of learning, schools are ideally placed to educate students about the impact of our food choices on ourselves, our community and our planet. Schools have the power to demonstrate, by example, how delicious and healthful plant-based foods can be. Our club asks that you consider [school name]'s cafeteria offering 20% of the menu as plant-based options. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[Signature]
[Name]
[Title], [Name of Club/Organization]

Modify the ask to add your own specific goal (e.g. offer 20% more plant-based options)

Use a strong first sentence and be clear and straight to the point as to what your letter is about.

Use facts and numbers to back up your argument.

Show passion and that you care; add personal reasons why. Continue to keep a polite tone to the letter.

APPENDIX B: Petition tips and templates

What is a petition?

A petition is a formal document that begins with a request to someone in a position of authority. A petition aims to gather a large number of signatures showing that many people are in favour of the request.

How do I write a petition?

The introduction

- The introduction gives context for the petition and briefly outlines the issue.
What is the call to action?
- Clearly outline your request and the issue you would like changed. Describe the problem and what you want to solve.
What is the impact?
- Briefly describe the impact the problem has on the people you are trying to have sign the petition.
Why does this matter?
- Finally, when you ask people to sign on, tell them why this matters. Make sure you say who the decision-maker is and why their petition signature matters.

The petition

This is where people will sign. It is important to get the proper information within this section.

- Leave enough room for people to print their name, address and email.
- People must write their signatures by hand. The names must also be as clear as possible.
- Write a brief line that lets people know you will only be sending their information to the recipient of the petition. It is important that those signing know where the information is going.
- Set a goal of how many signatures you hope to get and a deadline.

For more information on petitions, visit Change.org, <https://www.change.org/l/us/how-to-write-a-petition>.



APPENDIX B: Petition tips and templates

Petition example:

We, the undersigned, request that school food service providers replace 20% of animal-based food items in the cafeteria with plant-based alternatives. *NOTE: 20% is being recommended as a minimum benchmark. This percentage has been shown to be effective in demonstrating impact of change, while remaining reasonable and attainable to accomplish.*

Our school cafeteria serves most lunches with animal products, including both meat and dairy. Animal agriculture results in an enormous number of animals suffering inhumane treatment. It also has a large environmental impact, requiring more resources to produce animal products and contributing largely to greenhouse gas emissions.

Making the change to more plant-based foods helps the lives of animals, can have positive impacts on our health and is a powerful solution to climate change. As our schools face the challenge of feeding students delicious, healthy food on a tight budget, moving to plant-based foods is not only an environmentally sustainable, humane choice, it is also a cost-saving option for schools. Furthermore, plant-based foods are more inclusive of anyone with allergies, sensitivities, dietary and ethical restrictions.

By signing this petition, you are showing your support for moving to a more inclusive plant-based menu and calling on our food service providers to make this critical change to at least 20% plant-based food options on our cafeteria menu.

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Signature</i>
1.				
2.				
3.				



APPENDIX C: School announcements and newsletters

School announcements

The following provides a basic template that could be used when creating your school announcements to share over the speaker or video for daily announcements. School announcements are a great way to share information with your whole school community. Keep it engaging, short and to the point!

1. Club introduction announcement example

Good morning (school name)! What do better treatment of animals, protecting the environment, saving money and eating delicious food all have in common? Plant-based eating is the answer. At our school, we are starting a club to make sure there are more plant-based options in our school. Our club will meet (day, time and location) and our first meeting is this week. Come join us in making a difference, every small changes makes an impact!

2. Fundraiser bake sale announcement example

Good morning (school name)! Our names are (names) and we are from our school's plant powered club (or other club name). Brownies, cupcakes, blueberry muffins and other delicious baked goods will be for sale next week on (day/ time location). All items are free of animal products and funds raised will support the work of our club to increase the number of plant-based foods offered in our school. Everything will be sold for \$1 or \$2. Try new, delicious treats and learn more about what plant-based means. See you at our plant powered bake sale next week!

School newsletters

The following page provides a basic template that could be used when creating a school newsletter. This is a great opportunity to spotlight plant-based advocates (local chefs, plant-based athletes, celebrities), share recipes and club news, plus add any fun facts or other engaging and relevant pieces you think your school community will enjoy.



Plant-Based Spotlight

"I am the owner and head baker of Level V Bakery. I always had an interest in baking and loved creating desserts to share with friends, family, and co-workers. Since becoming vegan in 2015, I had to learn how to substitute things like milk, butter, and eggs with vegan alternatives. Although I never had any background in culinary or pastry arts, I think my post-secondary education in nutritional and food sciences did come in handy when developing recipes that are now a staple in my bakery, such as vegan croissants and cream puffs." - Monica <https://levelvbakery.com/>

PLANT POWERED

THE POWER OF PLANT-BASED EATING

NOVEMBER 2023

Club News:

Our Plant-based eating club is now meeting every Wednesday at lunch recess in room 119. Bring a friend and come join in!

FUN FACTS!

Research suggests that moving to more plant-based eating has the potential to reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions by up to 70 percent.

RECIPE- Black Bean Burger

Wet Mixture:

- 1/2 onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tbsp cumin ground
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 tbsp oil
- 3 sundried tomatoes halves
- 1 tbsp tahini or sub for any nut butter

For instructions on how to make these black bean burgers, please visit <https://plantuniversity.ca/recipes-individual/black-bean-burger/>

Dry Mixture:

- 796 ml canned black beans, or use 3 cups cooked black beans
- 1 cup cooked quinoa packed tightly (slightly over cooked quinoa works best!).
- 1/2 zucchini grated
- 1 cup carrot grated, or use 1 small yam or sweet potato
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar or lemon juice
- 1 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 1/4 cup whole grain flour for gluten free, use buckwheat, millet or brown rice flour
- 3 tbsp cilantro
- 1 1/2 tsp salt



APPENDIX D: Awareness and fundraising campaigns

Awareness building and educational campaigns:

Awareness building and educational campaigns are powerful ways to increase understanding of issues and gain support. It is important to focus the goal of the campaign and the pathway for how to get there. The following offers tips and ideas to get started.

Set goals

- Determine who your audience is (students, staff, school community). What do you want your audience to learn about? What do you want your audience to be able to do?
- Set a goal that will help you to determine if you have met the intended outcome of your campaign (e.g., # number of signatures on a petition, increased number of club members).

Make a budget

- Is there a cost to your campaign? Do you need money for supplies, promotional materials, etc.?

Awareness/ Educational campaign examples

- [Meatless Monday campaign](#)
- Letter writing campaign ([see appendix A](#)).
- Petition campaign ([see appendix B](#))
- Social media campaign ([see appendix E](#)).

Planning an awareness/ educational or fundraising campaign

Guiding questions for planning any campaign:

1. What is the goal of the campaign (what outcome do you want to reach)?
2. How can that goal be achieved (what are the actions needed to achieve that goal)?
3. Who is going to do what (who will take on what action)?
4. What materials are needed (what are the supplies required)?
5. What is the timeline for each action/activity?
6. How are people going to know about your campaign? What communication tools will be used to get people excited and interested (e.g., create posters, make school announcements, post on school social media or in the school newsletters)?

Fundraising campaigns

Fundraising campaigns are useful in both raising awareness and funds to further club projects. The following offers some tips and ideas for organizing a successful campaign.

Set goals

- What do you want to raise money for (e.g. a guest speaker, an event)?
- How much money do you want to raise? It is always helpful to research the cost of what you are raising funds for. Make sure your fundraising goal is realistic and achievable.
- What fundraiser do you want to create to raise this money?

Make a budget

- Is there a cost to putting on your fundraiser? If so, how much and how will you get the money?
- Does your school have funds available and are there grants you can apply for? Your staff club sponsor teacher is a great person to ask for advice on this. Make sure the money you will make will be more than your costs.

Do your research

Brainstorm different ways to raise money.

Research successful fundraising ideas that other clubs or school groups have done.

Fundraising examples

- Create a cookbook of plant-based recipes for sale
- Bring in a guest speaker (ie. a plant-based baker or chef, a vegan athlete)
- Host a plant-based bake sale
- Have a taste testing fundraising event to test potential new menu items
- Host a plant-based cooking class
- Work with plant-based companies to set up a fundraising sale where partial proceeds of all sales go to your club

APPENDIX E: Social media ideas

Use social media images created by [Plant University](#) or other organizations to promote your club, cause, event or fundraiser (be sure to credit the source). Have fun and create your own social media images too! Post your images using existing school social media accounts.

If Canadians swapped one beef-based meal for a plant-based meal each week, Canada could reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by 30 million tonnes of CO2.

The equivalent to taking six million cars off the road.



Ask about our plant-based options.

[DOWNLOAD](#)

A well-planned plant-based diet is high in fibre, vitamins and anti-oxidants, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol.

This healthy combination helps protect against chronic diseases.



Plānt UNIVERSITY.CA

[DOWNLOAD](#)

Canada's current animal transport regulations allow for some species of farmed animals to be transported for up to

72 HOURS
without food, water or rest.



Plānt UNIVERSITY

[DOWNLOAD](#)

According to national survey data,

nearly 40% of British Columbians 35 and under say they follow a vegan or vegetarian diet.



Plānt UNIVERSITY.CA

[DOWNLOAD](#)

SWIPE



3 Benefits of a Plant-Based Diet

ONE
It's good for you

A well-planned vegan diet is high in fibre, vitamins and antioxidants. Plus, it's low in saturated fat and cholesterol. This healthy combination helps protect against chronic diseases.

Plānt UNIVERSITY.CA

TWO
It's good for the planet

Shifting Western diets to plant-based eating patterns has the potential to reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions by up to 70 percent.

Plānt UNIVERSITY.CA

THREE
It's good for the animals

Every time we sit down to eat a plant-based meal we're helping to create a kinder world for animals.

In fact, by going plant-based you can save more than 370 animals per year, including 22 land animals and hundreds of fish.

Plānt UNIVERSITY.CA

[DOWNLOAD](#)

Meatless Monday has a great list of social media posts that are informative and engaging.

LESS MEAT=LESS HEAT



Join the global Meatless Monday movement. It's a simple step to help cool the planet.


#MeatlessMonday MeatlessMonday.com

425 GALLONS OF WATER
That's the amount of water it takes to make just one 1/4 lb. beef burger.



#MeatlessMonday MeatlessMonday.com

GLOBAL LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION CREATES MORE GREENHOUSE GAS THAN THE ENTIRE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR.



#MeatlessMonday MeatlessMonday.com

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION USES 75% OF THE EARTH'S AGRICULTURAL LAND.



#MeatlessMonday MeatlessMonday.com

[DOWNLOAD](#)



The following recipes are a few examples of the many delicious and nutritious plant-based meal recipe ideas. These recipes can be found on [PlantUniversity.ca](https://plantuniversity.ca) where you can also learn how these recipes can be sized up to meet the needs of a school cafeteria.

APPENDIX F: Recipe ideas

Black Bean Burrito Bowl

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cups dry black beans (or use 3 cups of canned beans, rinsed)
- 1/2 tsp each of garlic powder and sea salt (or to taste, for seasoning beans)
- 2 cups brown rice (rinsed)
- 1/4 tsp sea salt (for seasoning rice)
- 1/4 tsp black pepper (for seasoning rice)
- 1 1/2 avocado
- 2 plantain (sliced)
- 3 cups romaine lettuce (diced, packed)
- 2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil (1 tbsp for frying plantain, 1 tbsp for seasoning rice)

Pico de gallo

- 1 1/2 tsps lime juice
- 1 1/2 cups tomato (diced)
- 1/4 cup cilantro (packed and roughly chopped)
- 1/4 cup red onion (diced)
- 1 tsp garlic (minced)

Chipotle dressing

- 12 ozs soft tofu
- 1-2 tbsps chipotle pepper in adobo sauce (adjust to taste)
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 2 tsps lime juice
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 tbsp tamari or soy sauce

INSTRUCTIONS

- Soak dry black beans in water for 1-8 hours. Drain, rinse, and cook in fresh water until soft and tender. Or you can use canned beans by rinsing and heating in a sauce pan.
- Rinse brown rice and cook on stove top or rice cooker.
- While the beans and rice are cooking, prepare the other ingredients.
- Prepare the pico de gallo by combining the tomatoes, red onion, cilantro, minced garlic, and lime juice in a bowl. Gently toss and set aside.
- Prepare the chipotle dressing by blending the soft tofu, olive oil, chipotle peppers, gluten-free or regular tamari, lime juice, and sea salt. Pour into jar or bowl and set aside.
- Chop the romaine and slice the avocado and set aside.
- Prepare the plantain by slicing and frying in a bit of olive oil until browned on each side
- Assemble each bowl by adding rice, beans, pico de gallo, plantain, romaine, and avocado, and then drizzle with chipotle dressing.

For full recipe, visit <https://plantuniversity.ca/recipes-individual/black-bean-burrito-bowl/>



Vegan Pad Thai

INGREDIENTS

Sauce

- 3 tbsp vegan 'fish' sauce store-bought or homemade – [see recipe](#)
- 3 tbsp brown sugar (or sub another sweetener)
- 3 tbsp vegetable broth (sub water if you don't have broth on hand)
- 2 tbsp white vinegar or rice vinegar
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1+ tsp chili paste mild, such as sambal oelek
- 1 tbsp tomato paste or tamarind paste (optional)

Pad Thai

- 200 g thick rice 'stick' noodles
- 1 bell pepper any colour
- 1/2 onion medium
- 1 large carrot or use 2 medium
- 2 cups green vegetables such as broccoli florets, bok choy, chopped zucchini, snap peas, etc.
- 1/2 cup loosely packed herbs Thai basil (sub for regular basil, green onion and/or cilantro)
- 1/2 cup chopped toasted nuts peanuts or cashews are my favourite
- 2+ tbsp oil

INSTRUCTIONS

- Soak dry rice noodles in plenty of water for about 30 minutes to soften, until they are limp but still firm to the touch. (You can skip this step if using fresh noodles).
- While the noodles are soaking, prepare veggies by chopping fine into stir-fry cuts.
- Shake up sauce ingredients in a jar.
- Add oil to heating pan and stir-fry veggies for about 3–5 minutes (depending on veggie types), until softening a bit.
- Drain noodles and add them to the veggies, along with the sauce.
- Cook until noodles soften but are not over-cooked. The noodles will have a darker appearance from soaking up the sauce and will break when pressed between two fingers.
- Garnish with herbs and crushed nuts. Serve with stir-fried veggies and optional baked tofu.

For full recipe, visit <https://plantuniversity.ca/recipes-individual/vegan-pad-thai/>



Chickpea Salad Sandwich

INGREDIENTS

Chickpea salad:

- 1 can of chickpeas (398ml), or 1 1/2 cups cooked chickpeas
- 2 pickles, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp capers
- 1 tbsp fresh dill chopped, or 1 tsp dried dill
- 1 clove garlic minced or grated
- 2 tbsp vegan mayo
- 1 tsp dijon or other mustard
- 2 tbsp red onion or shallot finely chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

Other ingredients:

- 6 Buns or sandwich bread

INSTRUCTIONS

- Add all to a mixing bowl and mash with a potato masher or use a hand blender. Mixture should be not too mushy but should stick together.
- *For curried variation, add 1 tsp curry powder to the mayo and omit the dill, pickles and capers. Add a chopped bell pepper if you like.

For full recipe, visit <https://plantuniversity.ca/recipes-individual/chickpea-salad-sandwich-2/>



Trail Mix Snack Balls

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup almonds whole, raw
- ¼ cup rolled oats
- 8 Medjool dates
- 2 tbsp almond butter
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds raw
- 2 tbsp raisins
- 2 tbsp unsweetened shredded coconut
- 2 tbsp dairy-free mini chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

- Add dates to hot water. Soak for 10 minutes. Drain and remove pits (if necessary).
- In food processor, process almonds and rolled oats until a medium-fine meal forms. Remove and set aside.
- Process pitted dates until smooth.
- Add nut and oat mixture, nut butter, and salt. Process until combined.
- Transfer the mixture to bowl and stir in rest of ingredients: pumpkin seeds, raisins, coconut, and chocolate chips.
- Dough may appear crumbly, but should stick together when pinched together. If dough is not sticky enough, add an extra tablespoon of nut butter.
- Spoon 2 tablespoons of dough and form into a ball.
- Enjoy immediately or store in fridge or freezer.

For full recipe, visit <https://plantuniversity.ca/recipes-individual/trail-mix-snack-balls/>

For more great plant-based recipes,
please visit

<https://plantuniversity.ca/eat-plant-based/recipe-library/>

APPENDIX G: Educational resources

Educational resources: Beginner's guide to plant-based eating

Page 1

When spreading your message and goals at fundraising or club events, having information to hand out to your audience can be a powerful way to spread your message and achieve your goals. The following Beginner's Guide to Plant-Based Eating can be given to fellow students, educators, or decision-makers to raise awareness about the benefits of plant-based eating. The How Can I be An Animal Ally brochure can be given to students to raise awareness about the inner lives of animals and how they can help.

Chickpea 'Tuna' Sandwich

Ingredients

- 1 can (398ml) chickpeas, canned or 1 1/2 cups cooked chickpeas
- 2 pickles, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp capers
- 1 tbsp fresh dill chopped or 1 tsp dried dill
- 1 clove garlic minced or grated
- 2 tbsp vegan mayo (e.g. vegan Hellman's, Earth Island)
- 1 tsp dijon or other mustard
- 2 tbsp finely chopped red onion or shallot
- salt and pepper to taste

**Optional: 6 buns or sandwich bread*

Instructions

1. Add all the ingredients to a mixing bowl and mash with a potato masher or use a hand blender. The mixture should not be too mushy but should stick together.

****For a curried variation, add 1 tsp curry powder to the mayo and omit the dill, pickles and capers. Add a chopped bell pepper if you like.**



Find more resources on plant-based eating at:

www.PlantUniversity.ca

Want to learn more? Dive into the wide variety of FREE resources on the Plant University website, including plant-based recipes, where to buy plant-based alternatives, and helpful blogs.



VANCOUVER HUMANE SOCIETY
HELPING PEOPLE HELP ANIMALS

Plant University is a project of
the Vancouver Humane Society
#303 - 8623 Granville Street
Vancouver, BC V6P 5A2

PlantU.ca
A place for plant-based learning

Beginner's Guide to Plant-Based Eating



This brochure has paper copies available for distribution.
Send us an email, programs@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca, if you would like some brochures mailed to your school.

Educational resources: Beginner's guide to plant-based eating

Page 2

Let Your Plant-Based Journey Begin!

Taking your first steps into the world of plant-based eating is a big accomplishment! In this brochure you'll find tips for incorporating more plant-based foods into your diet and a beginner's recipe. Whether you're contemplating the switch or already on your way, keep this guide handy!

For additional plant-based insights and resources, visit PlantUniversity.ca!

What Are Plant-Based Foods?

What do people mean when they say "plant-based"?

Plant-based foods are foods that come from plants—think fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds and legumes. These foods do not include animal-based products like meat, dairy, and eggs.



Advantages of Eating Plant-Based Food



Good for you

Plant-based foods contain vitamins, minerals, other essential nutrients; they are low in cholesterol and high in fiber. They can reduce your risk of diseases like heart disease, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes.



Good for the environment

Eating more plant-based foods can be a great way to reduce your impact on the environment. Animal agriculture is a big contributor to issues like greenhouse gas emissions and deforestation.



Good for the animals

Farmed animals are often raised in industrialized environments where they're subjected to inhumane treatment and living conditions. If you want to show some love to our animal friends, eating more plant-based helps reduce the demand and spare animals from this treatment.



Good for your wallet

Whole plant-based foods like whole grains, vegetables, and legumes tend to be less expensive than meat, dairy, and processed foods. A cost-benefit analysis done by the Vancouver Humane Society found that even just switching beef servings to lentils could save individuals up to \$60/month.



Tips for Transitioning to Plant-Based Eating

Start Slow

You don't have to go fully plant-based overnight! Even small changes can make an impact.

Find or make plant-based versions of your favourite foods

There are so many tasty plant-based alternatives that you may be surprised at how little you miss animal-based products.

Find some go-to recipes

Follow plant-based food bloggers, check out the PlantUniversity.ca recipe library, or search for hashtags like #meatlessmonday on social media for inspiration.

Plan your meals

This may sound like lots of work, but planning your meals ahead of time can help ensure you have a variety of plant-based options available all week.

Don't be afraid to ask for help

If you have friends or family who are already eating more plant-based meals, ask for their advice or support!

This brochure has paper copies available for distribution. Send us an email, programs@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca, if you would like some brochures mailed to your school.

Educational resources: How can I be an animal ally?

Page 1

ANIMAL WELFARE

Like you and I, animals can experience pain, fear, and distress. Although animals can't use words to tell us how they are doing, examining an animal's living situation can give us an idea how they are doing, called "welfare."

An animal in a good state of welfare is:

- healthy,
- comfortable,
- well-nourished and hydrated,
- safe, and
- able to express the natural behaviours of their species.

Protecting an animal's welfare means making sure their physical and mental needs are met.



We often take care that animals like dogs and cats live in a good state of welfare.

We make sure they have food, fresh drinking water, ways to play, and cozy places to rest. We give them names and consider them members of the family. When they are sick, we take them to the vet where we **advocate** for them, letting veterinary staff know what we've noticed about the animal's health and behaviour.

On industrial farms, most pigs, chickens, and cows are not treated so kindly.

RESOURCES FOR ANIMAL ALLIES!

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HAPPY HERD FARM ANIMAL SANCTUARY



WHAT IS ANIMAL WELFARE?



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE VANCOUVER HUMANE SOCIETY



HOW CAN I BE AN ANIMAL ALLY?



This brochure has paper copies available for distribution.
Send us an email at programs@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca
if you would like some brochures mailed to your school.

Educational resources: How can I be an animal ally?

Page 2

SANCTUARY LIFE



Pickles is a pig who lives at The Happy Herd Farm Sanctuary. Pickles loves running around the sanctuary, snuggling with his pig and goat friends Linus and Mousse and receiving belly rubs! Pickles also enjoys other natural pig behaviours like rooting and creating nests out of straw.

LIFE ON INDUSTRIAL FARMS

Pigs raised for their meat are often kept in small, barren spaces with hard floors instead of straw.

They chew on each other's tails because of the cramped conditions.

Pregnant and mother pigs are usually kept alone in cages so tiny they can barely move. They chew on the cage bars, hurting their mouths.

BE AN ANIMAL ALLY!

Millions of animals suffer each year in Canada to meet the demand for meat and dairy products from Canadians.

When we choose to eat less animal products, we reduce the demand for meat and dairy products, helping create a future with less animal suffering.

Explore ways to help create a better world for animals:



The cows at The Happy Herd are often found grooming each other with their tongues! Cows are social, herd animals.

Cows mothers and babies form strong bonds and like to stay close to each other.

Mother cows can even recognize their individual baby's call.

Cows have their young taken away from them shortly after birth. This way the milk the mother cow makes for her baby can instead be sold for humans to use.

85% of egg-laying hens (female chickens) in Canada spend their whole lives in cages where, on average, their living space is smaller than this piece of paper.



Shift towards a plant-based diet! This means consuming less products that come from animals (i.e. meat, dairy, eggs) and instead getting nutrition from nuts and seeds, legumes like lentils and beans, fruits and vegetables, and meat and dairy substitutes.



The choice to consume less animal products also benefits the planet, reducing water consumption, land use, and carbon impact!



Pidgey was rescued by Happy Herd after falling out of a cramped truck transporting her to be killed for meat.

Chickens like Pidgey need space to roam, perch, and make nests. Chickens are curious and clever animals that can communicate with each other using more than 30 different vocalizations.

When these animals need to be moved to a new location, they can endure terrifying and long journeys. Canada's current transport regulations allow for some species to be transported for up to 36 hours, without food, water, or rest.

Undercover footage recorded on farms and at slaughterhouses, places where these animals are killed, often show animals being hit or kicked.



Research animal sanctuaries like The Happy Herd in your community. Learn more about the animals living there online and find out if it's possible to visit, volunteer, or donate supplies. Share what you learn about the animals you're researching with your friends and family!



Speak to a trusted teacher about starting a school club for animal advocacy.

This brochure has paper copies available for distribution. Send us an email, programs@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca, if you would like some brochures mailed to your school.

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