

Schools Serve Healthful Lunches on ‘Meatless Monday’



More than 80,000 students in Baltimore, Maryland, are giving up chicken nuggets and burgers one day a week. That’s because Baltimore schools have gone meatless on Mondays. Instead of serving meat on Monday, cafeteria workers are serving healthful foods that include many vegetables and fruits grown in their own state.

As people learn more about healthful diets, lunches in lots of schools have been getting a makeover. So what foods can you find on the new “Meatless Monday” menus in Baltimore? Some of the most popular foods include cheese lasagna, whole-wheat crust pizza, fresh salads, black bean nachos, eggplant Parmesan, baked potatoes with broccoli, and fresh fruits. Nutrition experts say that foods such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables are low in fat and can help reduce the risk of heart disease. In addition, a plant-based diet is an excellent source of fiber. Foods rich in fiber make people feel full with fewer calories. People eat less and get good nutrition too.

In Baltimore, some “Meatless Monday” foods are grown on a farm run by the school district. Great Kids Farm is a 33-acre farm that grows fresh vegetables and fruits. The farm is also home to a flock of chickens that lay eggs for some district kitchens. Students can take field trips to the farm to learn about healthful foods and how they are grown. Soon, workers on the farm hope to start raising fish too. In addition, school leaders plan to start gardens at every one of the district’s 201 schools.

NEWS WORD BOX

makeover fiber
popular lasagna
calories district

MORE ABOUT MEATLESS MONDAY

- Last summer, workers ripped out deep-fat fryers at five high schools in Baltimore. They replaced the fryers with ovens so cafeterias can serve lower-fat oven fries.
- Besides being nutritious, Meatless Mondays are meant to save money too.
- Experts say eating less meat and more fruits and vegetables can help the environment. Cutting out meat one day a week can reduce water use and air pollution.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

Serving healthful foods to hundreds of kids is not an easy task.
Think about some of the healthiest things you like to eat.
Which of those things might be easy to prepare for large groups of kids?