

Try being a Flexitarian

Know you need to be eating more veggies and less meat, but can't handle going vegetarian? Now there's an easy answer

World Vegetarian Day on October 1 got us all thinking about the food we put on our plates.

Producing meat uses on average 10 times more land, 11 times more fossil energy and 100 times more water than producing a food such as soya. Not to mention animal rights issues and the drugs used to keep them healthy and fatten them up – some of which make it through to our meals.

There's never been a better time to go vegetarian, but it just doesn't suit most of us. Now there's a compromise, with the rise of "Flexitarianism". It describes those "vegetarians" who occasionally eat meat, fish or poultry. It's also what you can call yourself if you have at least one day a week when you don't eat animal foods.

Sir Paul McCartney, Sir Richard Branson, Joanna Lumley, Chris Martin, Ricky Gervais, Sheryl Crow and a host of other celebrities are behind "Meat Free Monday", a campaign encouraging us to ditch meat for one day a week starting this World Vegetarian Day.

Paul McCartney says: "I think many of us feel helpless in the face of environmental challenges, and it can be hard to know how to sort through the advice about what we can do to make a meaningful contribution to a cleaner, more sustainable, healthier world.



Having one designated meat-free day a week is actually a meaningful change that everyone can make, that goes to the heart of several important political, environmental and ethical issues all at once."

• **Join Meat Free Monday at www.supportmfm.org, where you'll also find veggie recipes like this one from Linda McCartney (below).**

Salt, pepper...Seagreens

The people at Seagreens are on a mission to help replace the nutrients that are going missing from our foods.

Their goal is to get a shaker of Seagreens granules on every table. Adding the nutrient-rich sprinkle-supplement can turn children's favourites into more healthy food without them even knowing. Adding a quarter teaspoon of granules, per child, to meals like chicken nuggets, pasta, pizzas, hamburgers and chips not only provides virtually all the nutrients they'll need, but it helps their food to be digested more thoroughly, say Seagreens.

Simon Ranger, the man behind Seagreens, is persuading chefs and restaurants to switch to Seagreens instead of salt, and wants the food industry to ditch sodium chloride as a food additive as well. "The average daily intake of common salt for an adult is about 9g, which is almost three times as much as doctors say is safe against coronary and kidney problems and strokes", he says. "We can reduce our intake by at least a third if we use less salt at the table and in cooking."

Seagreens is an organic low sodium, low salt alternative, containing a variety of minerals, trace elements, vitamins and amino acids, and encourages alkaline digestion.

Even "low-sodium" salts and salt substitutes often have vastly increased amounts of compensating salts like potassium, which can be just as imbalancing for the body as too much sodium.

What makes Seagreens unique? It comes from three special seaweeds, sustainably harvested, on remote conservation islands some 60 miles off the Arctic coast of Norway. Like the sea, the mineral salts in Seagreens have a balance remarkably similar to human plasma.

Linda McCartney's Melting Aubergines with Sweet Peppers

(Serves 4)

This makes an excellent light lunch or supper dish, or you can serve it as a first course for a more formal meal.

Ingredients:

2 medium aubergines cut into 1.5 cm slices
3 tbsp olive oil
2 canned pimientos, drained and quartered or
1 large fresh red pepper, skinned and quartered
230g soft goats' cheese or any soft cheese sliced
Freshly ground black pepper and sea salt to taste
Pitted olives for garnish

Instructions:

Brush the slices of aubergine with olive oil and place on a large baking sheet. Bake in a preheated 220 degree C oven until soft and golden brown, 10-12 minutes.
Layer the aubergine slices with the pimientos, and goat cheese into stacks onto a baking tray, seasoning with freshly ground black pepper as you go along. Top each stack with a piece of cheese. Return to the oven and bake 5 minutes to heat through. Garnish with a pitted olive or two, and serve immediately.

