



Being in a school of 2,000 students, it isn't easy to spread a message of raising awareness of the effects of the meat industry on the environment and animals. However, my passion to broadcast Meatless Monday did not stop me in my school and I pursued to push forward no matter how difficult it was. As a vegetarian student, it is hard to pick food choices in my school because most of the cafeteria food are heavily meat-based. I wanted to widen food varieties for students and at the same time, spread out a message that is very important to hear.

I learned about the negative effects of the Meat Industry by watching documentaries such as *Cowspiracy*, *Earthlings* and *Food Inc*, and by reading articles. Additionally, I was surrounded by a group of teens who were vegetarian and vegan and they would tell me how it helped them and how great it is that just not eating meat can have a positive

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effect on your health, the environment, and animals. Due to the great messages my friends were telling and films they showed about the meat industry, I decided to transition as a vegetarian. "Over 56 billion farmed animals are killed every year by humans." (AnimalEquality) This is saddening to hear because we treat dogs and cats as our pets, yet we have little compassion towards cows, chickens, pigs and the like. Not only that, but to get those farmed animals in our table, they are kept in small spaces, cows suffer through forcible impregnation to produce milk and are killed and slaughtered before their natural lifespan. Fish are also being exploited, "Victims of commercial fishing nets tend to die of suffocation, or crushed under the weight of the other fish". (AnimalEquality) These animals have feelings and they deserve to live and enjoy life like dogs and cats. We should stop specializing when it comes to animals because why should we love one (dogs, cats, etc.) and be fine with killing the other (cows, chickens, fish, etc.).

The process of Meatless Monday wasn't easy, at all. Some students would say, " Why should we care?" and others would joke, saying " If we can have Meatless Monday, can we also have Fried Chicken Fridays?" The list goes on; there was a time where I wanted to quit but I asked myself, " If you won't do it, who will?" I received jokes about Meatless Monday but I was also greeted with wonderful students and teachers telling me how it would be so cool to have Meatless Monday. By being surrounded with compliments, praises and lovely people, I was inspired to pursue my passion.

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During this year, I decided to push the best of my abilities to make Meatless Monday happen. I made a poll asking students who go to my school what meatless food they would like to see and buy in our own cafeteria. I made a presentation for cafeteria staff and our administration, containing the results of the poll, how beneficial cutting out meat for only just one day and how this could open up students as well as teachers on the effects of the meat industry. With all of those, my plan to have Meatless Monday in our school happened. With the Meatless Monday around the corner, I decided to make a Facebook page called, " Killarney's Meatless Monday Campaign", where I would post recipes, facts, etc. to educate students.

Not only that, but I also got featured in our local newspaper, *Vancouver Courier* and they interviewed me on how Meatless Monday happened at Killarney. I was so proud to be featured because I am making my school be known for this movement and at the same time spreading a message for other teens who are in high school that they are capable of achieving something big.

In order to spike up Meatless Monday, I introduced the idea to have an Outreach table in our cafeteria to spread the message of Meatless Monday every Meatless Monday. We would have activities such as Spin the Wheel, Trivia (questions) and free food samples. By doing this, we are raising more awareness of Meatless Monday to students and teachers and boosting the cafeteria's Meatless Monday sales.

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For sure, Meatless Monday was difficult to achieve in my school and there was a lot of challenges but at the end, I am so happy with myself to have this idea and to make it happen. I am so proud that we are able to spread the message across Killarney Secondary School about the effects of the meat industry and to educate students and teachers. As I am a senior of Killarney, I am happy to look back and to see that I made it happen with the help of my peers and teachers and for the future, I plan to create a Meatless Monday in the college I will attend.

Thank you.

Works Cited

"Food." Food | Animal Equality. N.p., 2016. Web. 04 Feb. 2017.

Relevant Links

<http://www.vancourier.com/news/killarney-secondary-the-latest-school-to-sink-its-teeth-into-meatless-mondays-1.3136343>

<https://www.facebook.com/kssmeatlessmonday/>

Killarney secondary the latest school to sink its teeth into Meatless Mondays

Mo Meat, mo problems according to the Vancouver Humane Society

JOHN KURUCZ / VANCOUVER COURIER
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Grade 12 Killarney student Janelle Huinda presented the idea of Meatless Mondays to the school's environment club. Photo Dan Toulgoet

Bart Simpson once proclaimed that you don't win friends with salad, but the Vancouver Humane Society wants you to believe otherwise.

The local advocacy group recently launched a "Meatless Monday" campaign that's meant to curb the consumption of animal products, while at the same time calling attention to the spinoff effects that consumption has on the environment, and both human and animal welfare.

Colleges, high schools and hospitals across Vancouver have joined the initiative, which sees meat-based meal options replaced with vegetarian offerings at cafeterias in those facilities once a week.

"The impact of Meatless Monday is a really powerful way for people to make a meaningful difference for issues that are really growing and becoming more concerning," said Emily Pickett, the society's program coordinator for Meatless Monday. "These are all things we can care about. Even changing what we eat a little bit just one day a week can have a significant impact."

Three post-secondary institutions have joined the effort, including Capilano University, Langara College and BCIT, along with four secondary schools in Vancouver: Eric Hamber, Winston Churchill, David Thompson and Killarney.

Killarney's kick at the meatless can began Nov. 18, when bowtie pasta, salad and garlic bread replaced the traditional options like chicken sandwiches and spaghetti with meatballs.



The idea was brought to life by the school's environment club, which is headed up by Grade 12 student Janelle Huinda. A vegetarian since October 2015, she presented the idea to her clubmates early in the school year to raise awareness around animal welfare and the different types of lifestyle options available to students.

She promoted the idea en masse through social media,



Photo Dan Toulgoet

She promoted the idea en masse through social media, though there was some push back. “One person sarcastically asked if we could have Fried Chicken Friday,” she said. “I just ignored that comment.”

Huinda turned to vegetarianism as a means to help her cope with an eating disorder, a move that’s helped her both mentally and physically.

“You don’t have to worry about your calorie intake so much. It makes you feel healthy and you don’t think about the negative effects of the food you eat,” she said.

Killarney’s environment club teacher sponsor, Denise North, said the exercise has bolstered her students’ ability to empathize and has honed their abilities to get messaging out on a grand scale.

“You don’t want them to take on too much at one point, but through their initiative and word-of-mouth advertising, they’ve set it up for success,” North said. “It really strengthens their communication and leadership skills.”

The Meatless Monday phenomenon was first introduced at Maryland’s John Hopkins University in 2003. It has since taken off across North America, with the City of Vancouver proclaiming its first Meatless Monday on June 10, 2013.

Langara was the first Vancouver-based school to align itself with the humane society’s efforts in 2014. The company that oversees its food service, Chartwells, began offering up tofu, lentils and the like in 2015.

Like in the Killarney context, the movement was spurred on by Langara’s environment club. Since its inception, Meatless Monday has become the second most popular day of the week in the cafeteria after Indian food day.

“It’s gone off like gangbusters. That really speaks to how it’s been embraced by the students,” said Chartwells spokesperson Stephanie Baxter.

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Leaders in the meatless movement



VHS encourages citizens, schools, businesses and the community as a whole to embrace plant-based eating on Mondays. Since the 2015 launch of our Meatless Monday campaign, we've supported the following institutions in participating in Meatless Monday. VHS is also working with several others who are eager to join the movement:

- Langara College
- Capilano University
- British Columbia Institute of Technology
- Simon Fraser University
- University of British Columbia
- Eric Hamber Secondary
- Winston Churchill Secondary
- David Thompson Secondary
- Killarney Secondary
- Sutherland Secondary
- Lions Gate Hospital
- Richmond Hospital
- UBC Hospital
- Vancouver General Hospital
- St. Paul's Hospital
- Community Transitional Care Team
- Cabrito Tapas Restaurant on Commercial Drive

Killarney Secondary got featured in Vancouver Humane Society

Killarney Meatless Monday Campaign
@kssmeatlessmonday

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Killarney Meatless Monday Campaign
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Hello Meatless Monday Supporters! On Monday (January 16), come to our Outreach Table inside the cafeteria and try our food samples! Not only that, but we will have trivia questions, spin the wheel, and a pledge that can get you a chance to win FREE MEAL at the cafeteria. So mark your calendars !! We look forward to see each one of you.

Killarney Meatless Monday Campaign Facebook Page