



Activity Bank:

Vegetarian Diets
Vegetarian Cuisine

With the emphasis in Foods Studies 11/12 on food promotion and marketing practices, their impact on specific groups of individuals, and the development of a food philosophies, this activity bank provides teachers with a variety of ways in which to investigate a vegetarian diet with their students.

Suggested Grade/Subject Levels

Food Studies 11 – 12

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The following are the curricular competency and content connections for the courses this activity could work for:

Subject Area	Curricular Competency	Content
Food Studies 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct user-centered research to understand design opportunities and barriers • Critically analyze how competing social, ethical and sustainability considerations impact designed solution to meet global needs for preferred futures • Use project management processes when working individually or collaboratively to coordinate production • Analyze the role and impact of technologies in societal change and the personal, social, and environmental impacts, including unintended consequences, of their choices of technology use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components of recipe development and modification including ingredients, functions, proportions, temperatures, and preparation methods • Food promotion and marketing practices, and their impact on specific groups.
Food Studies 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct user-centered research to understand design opportunities and barriers • Critically analyze how competing social, ethical and sustainability considerations impact designed solution to meet global needs for preferred futures • Use project management processes when working individually or collaboratively to coordinate production • Analyze the role and impact of technologies in societal change and the personal, social, and environmental impacts, including unintended consequences, of their choices of technology use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition and health claims and how they change • Development of a food philosophy by an individual or group

Teacher Background

There are many reasons by people are vegetarians. Some religions are based on the omission of certain animal foods from the diet and many followers adopt a vegetarian regime. Other people are concerned about eating the antibiotics that beef cattle and other animals may have consumed in their feed. Some vegetarians take an ethical stance against the killing of animals, while others believe that eating beef is environmentally unsustainable. Some believe that many people can be fed from the grain required to feed one beef cow, so become vegetarian may be a solution to feeding the world's hungry. For some nutrition may drive the decision, as a vegetarian diet is usually lower in fat content and higher fiber content, which may help to decrease the risk of obesity and heart disease. And then there are other who just don't like meat.

While internet access has allowed many of today's youth to be versed in various aspects of ethics, nutrition and health surrounding a vegetarian diet, there are still many who have a limited understanding. No matter the reason for making the choice to embrace a vegetarian diet, it is important for students to understand their nutritional requirements for optimum health. These 35 activity suggestions will help students to critically analyze what motivates people to follow vegetarian eating plans.

Learning Activities

1. Review types of vegetarianism and the motivations for choosing these diets. With the class, critique a vegetarian meal plan, focusing on the needs of complimentary proteins and nutritional balance. Then ask students to plan nutritionally balanced vegetarian meals for a one week period. Have students prepare a sample meal from one of the suggested menus.
2. Create a poster highlighting the various reasons that some becomes a vegetarian. Include at least 4 reasons. Write a report about one or two of the reasons for becoming a vegetarian in more detail.
3. Plan, prepare, and present a dish featuring:
 - Legumes (ex. Main course, soup, salad, dip etc)
 - Milk or egg or a combination of both (ex. Quiche, soufflé, frittata, omelet, etc.)
 - Complementary proteins for a vegan
 - Tofu (ex. Drink, stir fry, casserole, soup, etc.)
 - A protein substitute (ex. Meat, milk or egg substitute)Analyze the dishes as far as protein, fat, iron, calcium, and calorie content.
4. Discuss the following problems associated with being a vegetarian:
 - a. The reliability of nutritional information
 - b. Make sure you consume the necessary nutrients or take vitamin supplements
 - c. Palatability of vegetarian foods
 - d. Attitudes towards eating patterns
 - e. Time required for vegetarian dishes
 - f. Eating in restaurants
5. Develop and analyze meal plans for ovo/lacto or vegan vegetarians for at least 3 days. Begin with the main meal of the day. Start with a protein source (grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, meat substitute). Add milk products or substitutes, vegetables and fruit to complete the meals. Meals should have food from each food group, a variety of flavors, a variety of colors, a variety of textures, and a variety of temperatures.
6. Have students taste samples of milk, soy milk, and cow's milk. Ask students for their reactions. Discuss how milk from plants and other vegetarian foods help vegetarians meet specific nutrient needs. Identify other foods that help meet vegetarians' nutrient needs.
7. Ask the students to list the four basic types of vegetarians. Then, under each type, list the definitions, food choices, fat and protein contents, and pros and cons of each.
8. Invite a guest panel of students/adults who represent different types of vegetarian eating plans to discuss the similarities/differences in what they eat. If preferred the panel may be in talk show format. Students can provide the "host" with a list of questions to ask about the vegetarian plans.
9. Ask students to research non-animal sources rich in iron and calcium. Plan a one-day vegan meal plan with students, including as many of the iron- and calcium-rich sources as possible. Discuss how supplementation may be necessary for vegans to meet vitamins D and B12 needs. Ask students how these vitamin needs can be met through foods in other vegetarian eating plans.

10. Have students research and share their findings on vegetarianism today. Then have the students write a paragraph that describes the growth of vegetarianism since 1908. Have several volunteers read their paragraphs in class, have the rest of the students pick out the best line or two from each paragraph. Then, with the class, write a consensus paragraph.
11. Provide students with cookbooks. Have students look for recipes that vegetarians could use. Have students identify the recipes and determine which of the four vegetarian types could use the recipes.
12. Have students develop a checklist of essential vitamins and minerals. Have students use their checklists to analyze typical vegetarian menus. Discuss which menus provide protein, fat, iron, calcium, and vitamins B12 and D.
13. Have students locate recipes for vegetarian entrees. They are to collect the recipes into a multi-page document. Give each student a copy for discussion. Which recipes are appropriate for all types of vegetarian eating plans? Which recipes provide high calcium foods? High-iron foods?
14. Have students visit a supermarket and record the specialized vegetarian products available such as veggie hotdogs, veggie burgers, and veggie deli meats. Permit time for them to discuss and compare their findings.
15. Divide the class into four groups. Provide each group with the ingredients and basic vegetarian recipes, each using one or more of the following:
 - Soy milk
 - Tofu
 - Seitan
 - Vegetable proteinAsk students to discuss their recipe. How was the vegetarian ingredient used? Ask students to evaluate the taste and appearance of the dishes. Then, as a class, write a menu description for each recipe.
16. Have students plan and write out a one-day, well balanced, vegetarian eating plan.
17. Have students research vegetarianism in other countries. What type of recipes do they use? Do they follow the same guidelines as vegetarians in Canada? What are the differences? Ask the students to use the internet and other sources to research eating patterns, celebrations, food-related taboos, and table etiquette for a selected vegetarian culture.
18. Have students form two debate teams. One group is to argue vegetarian eating plan benefits, others the challenges. Each team should anticipate what the other team may debate. Have teams stage a debate in front of an impartial jury of their peers.
19. Provide read-made pizza crusts and a variety of toppings for vegetarians. Have half the students create two different vegan pizzas, the other half, two different lacto-ovo vegetarian pizzas. Have students compare and critique the pizzas. Ask students to draw pizza box covers for their creations. Each group should also name their pizzas.
20. Have students work in groups to solve the following problems that occur in a vegetarian diet. How can a vegetarian reduce fat consumption? How can a vegetarian avoid an iron shortage? How can vegans avoid deficiencies of vitamins B12 and D?

21. Provide students with restaurant menus. Have students select menu items for a meal to be eaten by a vegetarian/vegan.
22. As a class, have students select one food that offers versatility in menu planning (ex. Pumpkin, carrots, rice, etc). Form pairs and have each pair present it at a tasting buffet. Encourage students to be creative and to focus on the quality of their presentations.
23. Form pairs and challenge each pair to plan, purchase, and prepare a vegetarian lunch for themselves, plus one guest, within a limited budget. Have students submit supply receipts, time plans, and self-evaluations. Ask them to compare costs of a similar meal at a commercial food outlet.
24. Invite students in small groups to plan after-school dinners for their families. Have each group plan a vegetarian menu, develop a market order, schedule for preparation time, and assign kitchen duties.
25. As a class, brainstorm the nutritional significance of eating a variety of foods. Challenge each student plan and prepare a one-dish vegetarian meal that uses foods from each of the four food groups.
26. Assign each student an unusual fruit or vegetable to research (ex. Guava, leek, artichoke, kumquat, plantain) with a focus on its origin, growth, nutritional value, and uses. Have students prepare dishes using these foods to share at a tasting buffet.
27. Lead a brainstorming session to determine how cultural values are reflected in social gatherings and at mealtimes. Plan a multicultural celebration at which students demonstrate the preparation of dishes that reflect heritages that have a vegetarian food focus.
28. Suggests that students investigate eating patterns from their own and other countries and describe how these patterns meet nutritional needs. Ask them to relate food choices to geography, economics, and agriculture of the various countries.
29. Lead a class discussion on local environmental issues related to food production and consumption. Focus on vegetarian diets, "everyday diets", pesticides hormones, genetic engineering, additives, packaging, and recycling.
30. With the class, brainstorm factors that affect fluctuations in the supply and cost of BC communities. Throughout the year, ask students to chart the local cost of selected foods (ex. Goods that would be included in a vegetarian diet). Have them relate their findings to climatic conditions, seasonal availability, and the existence of marketing boards.
31. Engage students in a debate on current food issues, including vegetarianism and ask them to draw conclusions.
32. Have students use video, print and internet resources to research a range of global environmental and health issues related to the production and consumption of food (ex. Famine, malnutrition, food distribution). Ask them to identify organizations and strategies that address these concerns.