

Health and environmental concerns reduce meat intake in Australia

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Health and environmental concerns are changing Australians' attitude towards eating meat, causing more of us to go for a vegetarian or vegan diet.

Researchers from La Trobe University, Griffith University and Queensland University of Technology surveyed more than 3,000 Australians about their views on diet and eating habits.

Thirty-two percent of participants said they had reduced their meat consumption in the past 12 months.

La Trobe University researcher, Dr. Matthew Ruby said [environmental impact](#) was a key factor in convincing people to reduce their meat intake.

"A large amount of research conducted in recent years has found vegetarian and vegan diets are effective options for limiting deforestation and supporting [global food security](#)," Dr. Ruby said.

"A few years ago, our research team found that most Australians didn't think that reducing [meat consumption](#) was an effective pro-environmental action, so this study suggests that people's understanding is changing."

The study showed that poultry is the most frequently consumed meat product, and legumes the most frequently consumed source of plant-based protein.

The study, run in conjunction with Nourish plant-based living, also showed while many Australians are interested in eating more [meat](#) alternatives, they are often frustrated by their inconsistent availability in shops and restaurants.

More than half of respondents said availability and variety of options was a key barrier for choosing plant-based foods, especially when eating out.

Lead researcher Dr. Carla Riverola, Griffith Business School, said this finding shows the Australian market isn't yet meeting demand.

"Plant-based eating has been one of the biggest global food trends of the last decade and, unfortunately, some food retailers and restaurants haven't yet got up to speed and are missing out on potential business," she said.

"Our study really shows that if you run a restaurant, having just one single vegan or vegetarian option on the menu just isn't going cut it anymore.

"Expectations have changed, so consumers will simply go elsewhere where more options are provided," Dr. Riverola said.

Provided by La Trobe University

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