



## Planning a Plant-Forward Menu for Meals on Wheels



**Juliane Steenkamer MS, RD**  
Nutrition Coordinator  
FeedMore, Richmond, VA  
[jsteenkamer@feedmore.org](mailto:jsteenkamer@feedmore.org)

MEALS ON WHEELS AMERICA

2018 MEALS ON WHEELS ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO



# Planning a Vegetarian Menu

## Generate Interest

- Explain the health benefits of a more plant-based diet to clients and staff.

## Survey Clients

- Ask clients if they would like to see more vegetarian options available on the menu.
- Ask clients what items would they like to see on a vegetarian menu.
- If you already have vegetarian items on your menu, what do they like and what would they like to see added or deleted and why.

## Sample Survey

Question:	Answer:
Why did you choose the vegetarian MOW diet?	
Do you think choosing a vegetarian menu is healthier and why?	
What items do you like the most on the menu?	
What items would you like added to the menu or deleted and why?	

## Our Survey Results

Why choose a vegetarian diet?

- Weight control
- Animal protein not tolerated
- A cultural or religious preference
- For my health and it makes me feel better

Do you think a vegetarian diet is healthier and why?

- YES! It is easier to digest
- You know what you are eating- no “mysteries” or “hormones”
- I feel healthier and have more energy

## Survey Results Continued:

What items do you like the most on the menu?

- Salads
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Sandwiches

What items would you like added to the menu?

- Seafood, rice and beans, casseroles and chicken (“Cluckitarian”)



## Planning a More Plant-Forward Menu

- Start with minor changes to existing menu
- Make changes that should be easy to implement
- Make the choices a collaborative effort
- Taste test
- Introduce new menu items on a special vegetarian day to improve participation and awareness

## Planning a Plant-Forward Menu

Make sure a nutritional analysis is performed on vegetarian recipes for DARS guidelines.  
At least 14gm protein/entrée and 23gm total.

PROTEIN SOURCE	AMOUNT OF PROTEIN (Gm)
1 Egg	6 gm
1 C Quinoa	8 gm
2 T Nut Butters	8 gm
1 C (Cooked) Dried Beans (Black)	12gm
6 oz Greek Yogurt	15 gm
3 oz Seitan ("wheat meat")	18 gm
1 C Cooked Lentils	18 gm
4 oz Tofu	21 gm
4 oz Tempeh (fermented soybean cake)	22 gm



## Examples of Minor Menu Changes:

- Change meat stock to vegetable-based stock
- Substitute meat in meat sauce or soups/stews with seitan, tofu, beans or lentils
- Replace milk with non-dairy soy, nut or rice milks
- Use tofu for cottage cheese or ricotta cheese
- For “meatier,” chewier tofu, freeze for 3 days, thaw, squeeze out water and crumble.
- Use Kosher or other plant-derived protein for gelatin

## No Vegetarian Menu on the Horizon? Try This:

- Use more sweet potatoes, parsnips and rutabaga instead of white potatoes or white pasta
- Add cauliflower to mashed potatoes
- Add lentils into casseroles, stews, hamburgers, turkey burgers, meatloaf or fish cakes
- Introduce more 'ancient grains' to menu such as a side - barley, millet, farro/spelt, bulgur, sorghum, quinoa







## FeedMore

- A non-profit hunger relief organization that collects, prepares and distributes food to neighbors in need across 34 cities and counties in Central Virginia.
- FeedMore includes the Central Virginia Food Bank, Meals on Wheels and a Community Kitchen
- Through our comprehensive programs FeedMore distributes more than 20 million meals every year.
- Our Children's Programs serves healthy snacks, lunches, summer feeding programs, and weekend backpacks
- We also participate in the USDA sponsored CSFP & TEFAP



## Meals on Wheels

- We serve about 650 clients daily and average 26,300 meals/month
- We serve one main meal - goes out cold and can be microwaved
- We serve a second meal (sandwich) to those who have no support in the home, access to food or cannot put a simple sandwich together.
- We have 14 therapeutic or allergy restricted diets including: General/Diabetic, Renal, Renal/Diabetic, Soft, Renal/Soft, Diabetic/Soft, Pureed, Bland, Vegetarian, No Eggs, No Pork, No Seafood and No Peanuts.

## Meals on Wheels Menu

- We have a 4 week cycle menu and provide a weekend box on Fridays to clients who qualify for weekend meals.
- Weekend meals are made up with surplus items from the previous 2 weeks and are frozen until distributed.
- Recipes are derived from mostly heart healthy resources and are placed in a data base.

# Meals on Wheels Menu

- This software program analyzes the recipes for nutritional values.
- Registered Dietitians review meals for DARS compliance.
- We change the 4-week cycle menu 2 times a year - a Fall/Winter and a Spring/Summer.
- When developing the menu, we use data collected from client feedback surveys which are distributed 2 times a year.



**Meal Satisfaction Survey**  
Spring/Summer 2017



Dear Meal Recipient:

We are always trying to provide meals that are both healthy and delicious. Please take the time to complete this survey (both sides) and return to a Meals on Wheels **volunteer** or **mail** it to:  
Meals on Wheels  
1415 Rhoadmiller Street  
Richmond, VA 23220

If you would like to be contacted about your comments please provide your name.

Please <b>check the box</b> indicating your rating for <b>each question</b> below:	Excellent 😊😊	Good 😊	Satisfactory 😐	Poor 😞
The overall <b>appearance</b> of your meal tray is...				
The <b>variety</b> of foods you receive is...				
The overall <b>quality</b> of the meals is...				
Friendliness and service from <b>staff</b> is...				
Friendliness from <b>volunteers</b> delivering meals				

The meal **portion sizes** are... Too Small ☐ Too Large ☐ Just right ☐

The **taste/ flavor** of your food is... Too spicy ☐ Too bland ☐ Just right ☐

Please tell us your age: \_\_\_\_\_ Are you male or female? Male ☐ Female ☐

If you receive a second meal, have you been pleased with them?

Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐

What other foods would you like on the menu? \_\_\_\_\_

What needs to be improved? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out the other side → → →

MAIN MEAL		SECOND MEAL	
Egg, Bacon and Swiss Casserole	Italian Meatloaf with Gravy	Chicken Salad Sandwich	Old Fashioned Potato Salad
Polynesian Chicken	Mediterranean Fish	Brown Rice & Asparagus Salad	Tomato-Cucumber Salad
Chicken Noodle Casserole	Roast Turkey with Mustard Cream Sauce	Tuna Salad Sandwich	Apple-Carrot Waldorf Salad
Bowtie Bake with Meat Sauce	Marinated Pork Tenderloin	Cranberry Turkey Salad	Green Pea Salad
Pot Roast with Gravy	Venezuelan Shredded Beef	Shaved Roast Beef Sandwich	Creamy Coleslaw
Baked Lemon Fish	Chicken Noodle Casserole	Turkey Pastrami Sandwich	Marinated Dill Cucumber Salad
Roast Turkey with Gravy	Chef Salad	Thai Noodle Salad	Greek Salad
Roast Pork Normandy	Custard Bread Pudding	Southern Macaroni Salad	Potato Salad w/ Blue Cheese
Salmon Teriyaki Cake	Sunshine Carrots	Egg Salad and Bacon	3 Bean Salad
Baked Breaded Chicken	Spinach Souffle	Mini Italian Sub Sandwich	White Bean and Tomato Salad
Salisbury Steak w/ Onion Gravy	Herbed Barley Pilaf	Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich	Roasted Mushroom and Baby Green Salad
Rosemary Chicken	Rice and Lentil Stuffing	Cheese Steak Style Sandwich	Pickled Beets
Pulled BBQ Pork	Acorn Squash	Salmon Salad Sandwich	Shaved Carrot Salad



## August 2018 Main Meal Menu

Approved by Juliane Steenkamer, M.S., R.D.  
FeedMore's Meals on Wheels (804) 673-5035

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		1 Cold Plate Egg Salad with Radish and Dill Cauliflower Salad Vegetable Vinaigrette Salad Tapioca Pudding Whole Wheat Crackers	2 Turkey Meatloaf w/ Gravy Mashed Potato and Cauliflower Seasoned Beets Sliced Peaches Whole Wheat Roll	3 Baked Fish w/ Citrus Sauce Wild Rice Pilaf California Blend Vegetables Fruit Cocktail Whole Wheat Roll
		6 Shepherd's Pie Seasonal Vegetable Cinnamon Baked Apples Graham Crackers Whole Wheat Roll	7 Spanish Pork Chop Egg Noodles Seasoned Broccoli Tropical Fruit Treat Whole Wheat Roll	8 Cold Plate Cranberry Turkey Salad with Almonds on Lettuce 3 Bean Salad Sliced Pears Fruit Jubilee/VW Crackers
		13 Chicken Pot Pie with Biscuit Topping Seasoned Green Beans Peach Crisp Whole Wheat Roll	14 Roast Pork with Apples Herbed Barley Pilaf Stemmed Red Cabbage Vanilla Pudding Whole Wheat Roll	15 Hamburger Steak w/ Onion Gravy Roasted Potatoes Seasonal Vegetable Fruit Cocktail Whole Wheat Roll
		20 Roast Turkey w/ Gravy Herbed Bread Stuffing Cranberry Glazed Carrots Fresh Fruit Whole Wheat Roll	21 Baked Cod w/ Veggie Relish Herbed Lentils Steamed Broccoli Vanilla Wafers Fruited Gelatin Salad	22 Mac and Cheese Baked Tomato Half Steamed Broccoli Cinnamon Applesauce Whole Wheat Roll
		27 Pulled BBQ Pork Seasoned Greens Baked Beans Creamy Cole Slaw Whole Wheat Roll	28 Honey Mustard Chicken Broccoli Lemon and Parmesan Louisiana Green Beans Fresh Fruit Whole Wheat Roll	29 Cold Plate Egg Salad with Radish and Dill Cauliflower Salad Vegetable Vinaigrette Salad Tapioca Pudding Whole Wheat Crackers
		30 Turkey Meatloaf w/ Gravy Mashed Potato and Cauliflower Seasoned Beets Sliced Peaches Whole Wheat Roll	31 Baked Fish w/ Citrus Sauce Wild Rice Pilaf California Blend Vegetables Fruit Cocktail Whole Wheat Roll	

Meal includes 1% milk or 100% fruit juice. Fruits are unsweetened. Bread includes 1 pat of butter. Menu is subject to change.



## August 2018 Second Meal Menu

Approved by Juliane Steenkamer, M.S., R.D.  
FeedMore's Meals on Wheels (804) 673-5035

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		1 Provolone w/ Grilled Veggie Sandwich Southern Macaroni Salad Fruited Gelatin Salad	2 Chicken Salad Sandwich Sandwich Garden Pasta Salad with Feta Fresh Fruit	3 Turkey and Cheese Sandwich Summer Crunch Salad Vanilla Wafers
		6 Grilled Chicken Sandwich Potato Salad with Blue Cheese Dressing Pineapple Tidbits	7 Steak and Veggie Sandwich Sweet and Sour Cole Slaw Fresh Fruit	8 Sliced Turkey Cheese Sandwich Greek Salad Sliced Peaches
		13 Tuna Salad Sandwich Summer Crunch Salad Grapes	14 Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich Summer Macaroni Salad Sliced Peaches	15 Egg Salad with Bacon Sandwich Pickled Beets Tropical Fruit Treat
		20 Sundried Tomato and Cheese Sandwich Marinated Broccoli Salad Sliced Pears	21 Chicken Salad Sandwich Old Fashioned Potato Salad Pineapple Tidbits	22 Cranberry Turkey Salad Sandwich Summer Succotash Salad Sliced Pears
		27 Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich 3 Bean Salad Tropical Fruit Treat	28 Egg Salad Sandwich Green Pea Salad Fruit Ambrosia	29 Provolone w/ Grilled Veggie Sandwich Southern Macaroni Salad Fruited Gelatin Salad
		30 Chicken Salad Sandwich Sandwich Garden Pasta Salad with Feta Fresh Fruit	31 Turkey and Cheese Sandwich Summer Crunch Salad Vanilla Wafers	

## Meals on Wheels Menu

- To keep costs down and to meet nutritional guidelines we try to limit the amount of processed foods.
- Through our partnership with the FeedMore, we are able to use donated product in the warehouse (onions, chicken, sweet potato, greens, apples, etc.).
- We place a “Seasonal Vegetable” or “Fresh Fruit” on the menu to use seasonal items available in the food bank.

## Take-Aways

- Survey and evaluate your client's food preferences- make adjustments to menu accordingly
- Try not to make changes all at once - incorporate some new meatless menu items in per month
- Use produce in season to keep costs down - veg or fruit of the day/week
- Always consider the protein content of entrée and sides- adjust to meet 1/3 DRI guidelines
- Continue to teach clients the benefits of a vegetarian menu. Your meals can be a great education tool.

