

Some Restaurants Don't Offer Whole Food Plant-Based Items On Their Menu - but Here Is Why They Should

Adapted from VegSource and the Veg Resource Group by <http://healthyworldsedona.com>

The excuses:

1 - We've had no demand for it:

The Catch22 - many people who live a whole food plant-based (WFPB) lifestyle will look at the menu in a restaurant's window, or on their website and, upon seeing nothing plant-based, will go somewhere else. Hence, the restaurateurs see only a small portion of the actual demand.

2 - Losing one awkward WFPB (Vegan) customer won't make any difference:

Most people do not dine out alone, and many WFPB customers have mostly non-plant-based friends and family. When they're deciding where to eat, the WFPB customer may use a veto in the selection process. The restaurant does not just lose one awkward customer, they lose all their friends and family as well.

Add to that the fact that most people prefer to go back to the same restaurants over time, and "repeat trade" is crucial to the success of any business. The friends and family of a WFPB customer are likely to keep going back to a restaurant with WFPB options chosen earlier, even when that person is not with them.

3 - It is just too much hassle when there are so few WFPB citizens:

Actually, over 6% of Americans (19 million) are now committed to a WFPB lifestyle and, given that the percentage was 1% in 2014, that number is *rapidly* growing. But, interestingly, people who are *not* fully committed to a WFPB lifestyle actually eat more plant-based meals in restaurants than those who are 100% consistent, due to their numbers. They just like the idea of WFPB nutrition and having those options available. There have been many business surveys demonstrating this phenomenon for plant-based food over the last 20 years.

4 - WFPB diners are unpleasant, holier-than-thou folks, so why would we want them in our restaurant?

Some of the media still likes this stereotype, and a lot of people fall for it. But customers are increasingly recognizing the irrefutable nutritional science supporting a WFPB lifestyle, as well as the environmental and animal welfare impacts. WFPB diners are just people, all different, like everyone else. And, coming back to the point above, those not committed 100% of the time actually bring more total business than those who are.

5 - We offered a WFPB option, but the WFPB customers don't come back again:

If there is only one WFPB item on the menu, then the only option is take it or leave it. Why would anyone go back to a restaurant with only *one* edible dish on the menu?

The solution: offer a minimum of three or more clearly labeled WFPB options on your menu, for a genuine choice.

6 - There are no easy WFPB recipes suitable for commercial restaurant chefs:

There are a lot of WFPB cookbooks available these days (in hardcopy and especially electronic). Great examples are the "[PlantPure Nation Cookbook](#)", by Kim Campbell, the "[Forks Over Knives Cookbook](#)", by Del Stroufe or "[The Happy Cow Cookbook](#)", by Eric Brent and Glen Merzer. All a restaurant chef needs to do is scale up each selected WFPB recipe for restaurant production once, and then voila', all set for future customers!

CONCLUSIONS:

- Times are changing.
- Consumer demand for meals derived entirely from whole plants, *without added oils*, is significant and growing rapidly. See this link to the article by Dr. T. Colin Campbell of the Center for Nutrition Studies: "[Plant Oils Are Not A Healthy Alternative to Saturated Fat](#)".
- Many prospective customers now use smartphone applications like "[Happy Cow](#)" to search for suitable culinary options as they make decisions about where to dine, and *your restaurant* should be listed there as Vegan-friendly.
- The time to adapt to this new market is now.