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Advocacy for Better Health and a Smaller Footprint: The Meatless Monday Campaign

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The Meatless Monday Campaign
■ Chairman, Meatless Monday campaign

■ Over 30 years of advertising and marketing experience

■ Main area of interest is applying traditional marketing techniques to health communication
Why a Health Campaign?

Causes of Death, 2000 (in thousands)

- Smoke and fire
- Accidental drowning
- Alzheimer’s disease
- Assault (homicide)
- Asthma
- Cancers (all types)
- Strokes and related
- Emphysema
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Falls
- HIV
- Injuries at work
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Suicide
- Drug-induced deaths
Meatless Monday

- Health communication and commercial marketing
Background of the Meatless Monday Campaign

“Meatless Mondays and Meatless Tuesdays”—war rationing

1947—This Seattle diner, specializing in hamburgers, closes to comply with the voluntary Meatless Tuesdays program. A number of other establishments ignore it. Photo Credit: Seattle Times.

Source: The National Archives.
Background of the Meatless Monday Campaign

- NCI 5-A-Day = $1 million budget
- Produce for Better Health Foundation (who now runs 5-A-Day) = $6 million total revenue

VS.

- McDonald’s = $1 billion advertising budget
- A “weekly holiday” for healthy eating
“Please don’t squeeze the Charmin.”

Photo source: Roadsidepictures. Some rights reserved.
Clear “call to action” = avoid meat (and high-fat dairy foods) one day a week

Why one day a week?
- Actual saturated fat intake = 11.5-12% of total calories
- Recommended maximum = 10% of total calories
- Difference = 15%
- Fifteen percent = one-seventh = one day out of seven = Meatless Monday!
Formative Research—Focus Groups

- Two in Chicago; six in Baltimore
- Mixed race; mixed income; mostly female; food-related decision makers in households with children

Goals
- Attitudes about meat and nutrition
- Perceptions of a campaign to reduce meat intake
- Strategies to reduce meat intake

Results
- Knowledge of relationship between high saturated fat intake and cardiovascular disease is high
- Attitudes toward lowering meat intake positive
- Reaction to “Meatless Monday” positive
- Main question: “What would I prepare instead?”
- Concern—serving meatless meals to husbands!
Traditional Health Promotion

- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October)

- What about the rest of the year?

- Keys to successful marketing
  - Reach
  - Frequency
Evolution of Meatless Monday

- From “Meatless” Monday to “Monday” focus
  - Healthy Monday campaign—in association with Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health

- One day a week to focus on all things health!

- Monday = a *health holiday* every week
Meatless Monday and Healthy Monday

**LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH FOR AMERICAN WOMEN (2002)**

- **Heart Disease**: 356,000
- **Stroke**: 100,000
- **Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease**: 64,000
- **Lung Cancer**: 68,000
- **Breast Cancer**: 42,000

Image source: National Heart Lung and Blood Institute, NIH.
A Campaign to Emulate

Image source: University of Minnesota.
Meatless Monday Promotions

Image source: Meatless Monday.
Meatless Monday Food Company Partners

Image source: Meatless Monday.
The Importance of Coalitions

New York Coalition for Healthy School Lunches

Everyday Choices For A Healthier Life

Image source: Meatless Monday.
Meatless Monday

MeatlessMonday.com