



Max Anderson  
Councilmember District 3

CONSENT CALENDAR  
February 24, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Max Anderson

Subject: Declaring Mondays to be “Meatless Mondays” in the City of Berkeley

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution declaring Mondays to be “Meatless Mondays” in the City of Berkeley since the city is committed to the well-being and good health of its citizens and dedicated to the preservation of the environment and natural resources.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Berkeley adopted the Berkeley Climate Action Plan on June 2, 2009 with the goal of reducing community-wide GHG emissions 33% by 2020. The Berkeley Climate Action Plan states, “Sustainable food systems ... prioritize the consumption of organic food over conventional food, and the consumption of vegetables rather than meat. Organic food production requires far less fossil fuel inputs than conventional systems, which in turn reduces GHG emissions. Likewise, a meat diet requires twice as much energy to produce as a vegetarian diet.” The United Nations recognizes that “Livestock are one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems” and recently wrote, “Eat less meat, poultry, and fish” as a way individuals can make a difference to curb climate change. The National Resources Defense Council writes, “Eat less meat. Either reduce the quantity in your meals and/or eat it less often. Be sure to replace it primarily with plant-based foods, not eggs and dairy, as producing these animal products causes many of the same environmental problems as meat.” Recent studies and reports have demonstrated that we can lower our carbon footprint simply by reducing the amount of animal-based foods we eat.

In Alameda County, 28.7 percent of children are overweight or obese. Those who are obese are at increased risk of developing many chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, and many types of cancer. The economic costs associated with obesity in Alameda County are estimated at \$1 billion.

The Association of Nutrition and Dietetics recognizes that reduced meat consumption decreases the risk of various health problems, stating, “Scientific data suggests positive relationships between a vegetarian diet and reduced risk for several chronic degenerative diseases and conditions, including obesity, hypertension, diabetes mellitus and some types of cancer;”

The EPIC-PANACEA Study published in 2010 by the American Society for Nutrition concluded, "...a decrease in meat consumption may improve weight management;".

According to its CEO Nancy Brown, "The American Heart Association recognizes the role of plant-based foods in a healthy dietary pattern..." and says we can "Use Meatless Mondays as another opportunity to eat a well-balanced diet."

Kaiser Permanente writes "If you find you cannot do a plant-based diet 100 percent of the time, then aim for 80 percent. Any movement toward more plants and fewer animal products can help improve your health;"

Nearly all animals that are raised for food in the U.S. are confined on massive factory farms, and The Humane Society of the United States reports that taking a weekly holiday from meat and enjoying more delicious plant-based meals could spare many animals from severe suffering.

Numerous schools, colleges, and universities in California and nationwide have implemented Meatless Mondays in their cafeterias, including Oakland Unified School District, California State University – East Bay, Piedmont Unified School District and Mills College.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

NONE

CONTACT:

Councilmember Max Anderson    Council District 3    510 981-7130

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

DECLARING MONDAYS TO BE "MEATLESS MONDAYS" IN THE CITY OF  
BERKELEY

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is dedicated to the preservation of the environment, natural resources and is committed to the well-being and good health of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley adopted the Berkeley Climate Action Plan on June 2, 2009 with the goal of reducing community-wide GHG emissions 33% by 2020; and

WHEREAS, as the Berkeley Climate Action Plan states, "Sustainable food systems ... prioritize the consumption of organic food over conventional food, and the consumption of vegetables rather than meat. Organic food production requires far less fossil fuel inputs than conventional systems, which in turn reduces GHG emissions. Likewise, a meat diet requires twice as much energy to produce as a vegetarian diet"; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations recognizes that "Livestock are one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems" and recently wrote, "Eat less meat, poultry, and fish" as a way individuals can make a difference to curb climate change; and

WHEREAS, the National Resources Defense Council writes, "Eat less meat. Either reduce the quantity in your meals and/or eat it less often. Be sure to replace it primarily with plant-based foods, not eggs and dairy, as producing these animal products causes many of the same environmental problems as meat."; and

WHEREAS, recent studies and reports have demonstrated that we can lower our carbon footprint simply by reducing the amount of animal-based foods we eat; and

WHEREAS, in Alameda County, 28.7 percent of children are overweight or obese. Those who are obese are at increased risk of developing many chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, and many types of cancer and the economic costs associated with obesity in Alameda County are estimated at \$1 billion; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Nutrition and Dietetics recognizes that reduced meat consumption decreases the risk of various health problems, stating, "Scientific data suggests positive relationships between a vegetarian diet and reduced risk for several chronic degenerative diseases and conditions, including obesity, hypertension, diabetes mellitus and some types of cancer";and

WHEREAS, the EPIC-PANACEA Study published in 2010 by the American Society for Nutrition concluded, "...a decrease in meat consumption may improve weight management;" and

WHEREAS, according to its CEO Nancy Brown, “The American Heart Association recognizes the role of plant-based foods in a healthy dietary pattern...” and says we can “Use Meatless Mondays as another opportunity to eat a well-balanced diet;” and

WHEREAS, Kaiser Permanente writes “If you find you cannot do a plant-based diet 100 percent of the time, then aim for 80 percent. Any movement toward more plants and fewer animal products can help improve your health;” and

WHEREAS, nearly all animals who are raised for food in the U.S. are confined on massive factory farms, and The Humane Society of the United States reports that taking a weekly holiday from meat and enjoying more delicious plant-based meals could spare many animals from severe suffering; and

WHEREAS, numerous schools, colleges, and universities in California and nationwide have implemented Meatless Mondays in their cafeterias, including Oakland Unified School District, California State University – East Bay, Piedmont Unified School District, Mills College, and more.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the Council hereby declares all Mondays as "Meatless Mondays" in support of comprehensive sustainability efforts as well as to further encourage residents to eat a more varied plant-based diet to protect their health, protect animals, and protect the environment, and to encourage restaurants, grocery stores, and schools to offer a greater variety of healthier and more sustainable plant-based options.