



## CREATING PLANT-BASED ENTRÉES



RESTAURANT  
TOOL KIT

As a general rule, restaurant consumers purchase what is familiar. Tastes can change, but it takes time and significant marketing effort. So it should not be surprising that there are a limited number of commonly consumed items on most restaurant and food service menus.

Of the 20 most commonly offered dishes in the United States only one is entirely plant-based – the ubiquitous veggie sandwich or wrap – while two are predominantly plant-based (Caesar Salad and Specialty Salad).<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, it is very easy to modify most common menu items to make them plant-based.

In fact, plant-based dishes are most successful when they are similar to dishes that are already familiar to consumers. Implemented correctly, plant-based entrées can meet or exceed the popularity of their animal-based counterparts if they are competitive on price and taste.

<sup>1</sup> Better Buying Lab: Innovating for Impact, World Resources Institute.

### Getting Beyond the Veggie Wrap

The Good Food Institute's analysis of the top 100 restaurant menus revealed that the ten most common menu items could all easily be made plant-based with minor tweaks.

- |                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Burgers                   | 6. Tacos    |
| 2. Chicken Sandwich/Wrap     | 7. Burritos |
| 3. Entrée Salad with Chicken | 8. Pasta    |
| 4. Deli Sandwiches/Subs      | 9. Hotdogs  |
| 5. Chicken Tenders           | 10. Pizza   |



CAPITALIZE ON THE SHIFT TO PLANT-BASED EATING!

[goodfoodscorecard.org](http://goodfoodscorecard.org)

## How you promote plant-based entrées matters:

1. Do not include the words “vegetarian” or “vegan” in the name
2. Integrate plant-based foods into the main menu rather than a separate “vegetarian” or “meat-free” section<sup>1</sup>
3. Make the default configuration of dishes like pasta and salads meat-free; charge the consumer more to add animal-based protein
4. Use indulgent language when describing plant-based entrées
5. Since consumers routinely seek it out, add “protein” to the name or description

<sup>1</sup> J. Holzer, *Don't Put Vegetables in the Corner: Q&A with Behavioral Science Researcher Linda Bacon*, World Resources Institute (2017). See also WRI's *Better Buying Lab*.



Review the Good Food Institute's "Marketing Plant-based Foods" fact sheet for more information.

## Easy plant-based substitutions

**OATMEAL:** Make it with water or plant-based milks like soy milk or almond milk

**BREAKFAST SANDWICHES:** Create a plant-based version using soy sausage, dairy-free cheese, and vegetables

**SANDWICHES:** Add plant-based deli slices in subs and sandwiches or use fillings like falafel or hummus

**PIZZA:** Offer a dairy-free cheese option and plant-based sausage and pepperoni toppings

**SALADS:** Remove cheese and add plant-based protein toppings like falafel, chickpeas, or plant-based meat alternatives

**CHICKEN:** Offer plant-based chicken tenders, nuggets, and sandwich patties

**BURGERS:** Offer a plant-based burger; make cheese an add-on or offer a dairy-free cheese

**BBQ:** Use jackfruit, seitan or tofu

For more entrée ideas, check out The Good Food Institute's Plant-Based Entrée Database, featuring a curated collection of plant-based dishes from restaurants around the US.

 [goodfoodscorecard.org/entrees](https://goodfoodscorecard.org/entrees)

## Common plant-based ingredient alternatives

**CHICKEN/TURKEY:** Beyond Meat, Lightlife, Gardein, Field Roast, Quorn, Alpha, Tofurky, Hungry Planet

**HOTDOGS/SAUSAGES:** Lightlife, Field Roast, Tofurky

**BEEF:** Beyond Meat, Impossible Foods, Gardein, BOCA, Tofurky, Hungry Planet

**BBQ:** Upton's Naturals, The Jackfruit Company

**FISH:** Good Catch, Sophie's Kitchen

**SEAFOOD:** New Wave, Ocean Hugger, Good Catch, Loma Linda, Hungry Planet

**CHEESE:** Daiya, GoVeggie, Field Roast, Follow Your Heart, Heidi Ho

**BUTTER:** Melt Organic, Earth Balance

**EGGS:** Follow Your Heart, Hampton Creek, Ener-G,

**DRESSINGS:** Hampton Creek, Follow Your Heart, Hilary's

To find plant-based products to use as entrée ingredients, visit The Good Food Institute's Plant-Based Product Database, our collection of plant-based foodservice products available in bulk quantity from major distributors.

 [goodfoodscorecard.org/products](https://goodfoodscorecard.org/products)



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