



Better Food
FOUNDATION

PLANT-BASED BY DEFAULT

Plant-based by default is an easy, evidence-based strategy that helps food service settings offer sustainable menus

Making plant-based meals the default while allowing opt-in for animal products naturally increases sustainable choices without limiting options.

In 2023, **NYC Hospitals** saw impressive results: **36% reduction in carbon emissions** and **saved \$462,000** (\$0.59 per meal) just by changing the default.



Changing how and what we eat offers a powerful solution for reducing carbon emissions, conserving natural resources, and promoting health for both people and planet.



Defaulting to plant-based food increases uptake by

60%



decreasing food's carbon footprint by

40%



and water usage by

24%

PLANT-BASED NUDGES

SIMPLE SHIFTS FOR SUSTAINABLE DINING

Small changes in how food choices are presented can make a big difference. Using behavioral science ‘nudges’, food service settings can offer the best choice as the easiest choice for diners.

Top 5 Nudges

01

Make plant-based the default choice!

Make plant-based the default option while still giving diners the flexibility to choose animal products. This is the most effective nudge!

02

Climate-Friendly Ratios

Aim for a 2:1 ratio of plant-based to animal products (or 50%).

03

Prime Placement

Incorporate plant-based items throughout your menu rather than separating them into their own section. Place at the top of the menu or at the beginning of the buffet line.

04

Subtle Substitutions

Swap commonly used ingredients for plant-based ones: Use oat milk instead of cow's milk or vegan mayo instead of egg-based mayo.

05

Tasty Titles

Use tasty descriptors focused on flavors, textures, and ingredients, rather than describing dishes as healthy, vegan, or vegetarian.

Want to learn more?

Attend a Nudge Training Session, a monthly workshop to get you started!



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