

A GUIDE TO VEGETARIAN SCOUTING

by

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Purpose

The purpose of this Guide is to help the Boy Scouts of America, its Councils, and Units retain Vegetarian Scouts, Venturers, and Scouters. No Scout, Venturer, or Scouter should have to leave Scouting due to their dietary needs.

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Chapter I. What is a Vegetarian?

A vegetarian is someone who lives on a diet of grains, pulses, legumes, nuts, seeds, vegetables, fruits, fungi, algae, yeast and/or some other non-animal-based foods (e.g. salt with, or without, dairy products, honey and/or eggs). A vegetarian does not eat foods that consist of, or have been produced with the aid of products consisting of or created from, any part of the body of a living or dead animal. This includes meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, insects, by-products of slaughter or any food made with processing aids created from these. (Vegetarian Society of the UK, n.d.)

According to a 2015 Harris poll 3.4 percent of people in the United States say they are currently a vegetarian. Included in this 3.4 percent, are 0.5 percent vegans in the United States. 6 percent of people surveyed between the ages of 18 and 34 identified themselves as vegetarians. Also, 7 percent of people in the survey who have a median income of less than \$50,000 are vegetarians. (Herzog, 2016)

A. Types of Vegetarians

There are four different types, or levels of vegetarians, lacto ovo vegetarians, lacto vegetarians, ovo vegetarians, and vegans. These are in order from least restrictive to most restrictive diets. Lacto ovo vegetarians eat egg products and dairy products, such as milk, cheese, and yogurt. Lacto ovo vegetarians are the most common type of vegetarian. Lacto vegetarians consume dairy products. Ovo vegetarians consume egg products. Vegans do not consume either dairy or egg products. Vegans also do not use any products that come from animals, such as honey or gelatin. (Vegetarian Nation, n.d.)

B. Religious Vegetarianism

Vegetarianism is promoted by several of the religions that originated in India, Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism.

1. Hinduism

According to a 2006 survey, about one third of all Hindus in India are vegetarians. (Yadav and Kumar, 2006) Hindus are forbidden to eat beef, as they consider the cow to be sacred. (Nelson, 2009) There are an estimated 2.3 million Hindus in the United States. (Hindu American Foundation, n.d.)

2. Jainism

All Jains are lacto vegetarians. In addition, Jains cannot eat gelatin, or anything that grows in the ground, such as potatoes and carrots. (Shah, 2016)

3. Buddhism

Vegetarianism in Buddhism varies greatly sect to sect. Some predominately Buddhist countries have few vegetarians. For example, Japan is 50 percent Buddhist (Buddhist Studies, n.d.) and only 8 percent vegetarian. (Y-N, 2009) There are about 1.2 million Buddhists in the United States. (Pew Research Center, n.d.)

4. Christianity

The branch of Christianity that supports vegetarianism the strongest are the Seventh-day Adventists. (Kahn, 2013) About 50 percent of Adventists are lacto ovo vegetarians. (International Vegetarian Union, n.d.) There are about 1 million Seventh-day Adventists in the United States. (Nation Master, n.d.)

C. Health Benefits of Being a Vegetarian

Many recent medical studies have concluded that there are quite a few health benefits from being a vegetarian.

1. Lower Risk of Death

Researchers from Loma Linda University studied more than 73,000 people during a six year period and found that vegetarians “were 12 percent less likely to die from all causes combined compared to non-vegetarians.” (Torgan, 2013)

2. Living Longer

In 2003, researchers from Loma Linda University reviewed data from 6 studies and found that long term vegetarians of 20 years or longer, had a 3.6 year gain in life expectancy. (Singh, Sabate, and Fraser, 2003)

3. Less Risk of Cancer

In 2013, researchers at Loma Linda University studied the risk of cancer for different types of vegetarians (lacto, vegan, etc.) who had a low risk of cancer. They concluded that “vegetarian diets seem to confer protection against cancer.” Vegans had the lowest risk for cancer and female vegans had a lower breast cancer risk. (Tantamango-Bartley, Siegl, Fan, and Fraser, 2012)

4. Less Chance of Heart Disease

A 2013 study of 44,500 men and women living in England and Scotland found that vegetarians had a 32 percent lower risk of ischemic heart disease than non-vegetarians. The researchers thought that this was the result of vegetarians having lower non-HDL cholesterol and systolic blood pressure than non-vegetarians. (Crowe, Appleby, Travis, and Key, 2013)

5. Lower Blood Pressure

Researchers in Japan performed a meta-analysis to study the relationship between vegetarian diets and blood pressure. They found that the systolic blood pressure of vegetarians was 4.8 mm Hg lower than non-vegetarians in clinical trials and 6.9 mm Hg lower in observational trials. They also found that the diastolic blood pressure of vegetarians was 2.2 mm Hg lower than non-vegetarians in clinical trials and 4.7 mm Hg lower in observational trials. (Yokoyama, Nishimura, Barnard, Takegami, Watanabe, Sekikawa, Okamura, and Miyamoto, 2014)

6. Less Risk of Diabetes

In 2013, researchers studied the incidence of diabetes in vegetarians in over 41,000 participants. They found that cases of diabetes developed in 0.54 percent of vegans, 1.08 percent of lacto-ovo vegetarians, and 2.12 percent of non-vegetarians. Controlling for age and other variables, vegans and lacto-ovo vegetarians had a lower risk of diabetes than non-vegetarians. (Tonstad, Stewart, Oda, Batech, Herring, and Fraser, 2013)

7. Less Likely to Be Overweight

Researchers from Loma Linda University who looked at the Body Mass Index (BMI) of participants in the Seventh Day Adventist Study-2 found that the BMI of vegans was the lowest at 23.6 kg/m², lacto-ovo vegetarians had a BMI of 25.7 kg/m², and non-vegetarians had the highest at 28.8 kg/m² in. (Tonstad, Butler, Yan and Fraser, 2009) According to the Mayo Clinic, in this study the average vegans' BMI is normal and the average non-vegetarian's BMI would be considered very overweight. (Mayo Clinic, 2011)

D. Adolescent Vegetarians

According to a 2010 Vegetarian Research Group – Harris poll, 7 percent of 8-18 year olds in the United States do not ever eat meat, where meat is defined as beef, pork, veal, and lamb. This poll also revealed that 3 percent of youth in the United States ages 8-18 are vegetarians who never eat meat, fish/seafood, or poultry. Interestingly, 12 percent of 10-12 year old males said they never eat meat. About 1 percent of youth in this age group are vegans. (Stahler, 2010)

Youth choose to become vegetarians for several reasons including an interest in animal rights, environmental concerns, religious or cultural beliefs, family preferences, health concerns, and personal food likes and dislikes. (Ransonhoff, 2013) Teens with eating disorders also “may be using vegetarianism to disguise their eating patterns.” (California Department of Public Health, 2000, p. 10-2)

E. Nutrition for Adolescent Vegetarians

A healthy vegetarian diet includes a variety of “fruits, vegetables, plenty of leafy greens, whole grain products, nuts, seeds and legumes.” Some vegetarians may choose to add dairy products, such as milk, cheese, and yogurt and/or egg products to their diets. “The key to a healthy vegetarian diet is variety.” (Mangels, n.d.)

1. Energy (Calories)

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, (AAP) boys require an average of 2,800 calories per day, while girls require an average of 2,200 calories per day. Youth who participate in Scouting activities will need an additional amount of calories per day. (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016) Vegetarian diets may be lower in calories than non-vegetarian diets, because plant products provide less fat than animal products. Fat has 9 calories per gram, whereas, protein and carbohydrates only have 4 calories per gram. (Coleman, n.d.) “Good sources of energy include dried beans and peas, nuts and nut butters, dried fruits, and whole grains and seeds.” Some vegetarians may choose to add fat in their diet through eating dairy products, such as milk, cheese, and yogurt and egg products. (California Department of Public Health, 2000, p. 10-2)

2. Protein and Amino Acids

Boys and girls between ages 11 and 14 need a half of a gram of protein per pound of body weight. Protein should make up about 10 to 12 percent of an adolescent’s calories each day. (American Academy of Pediatrics, n.d.) With good menu planning the protein needs of adolescent vegetarians can be easily met. (California Department of Public Health, 2000, p.10-2) Excellent sources of protein for vegetarians include “beans, breads, cereals, nuts, peanut butter, tofu, and soy milk.” (Mangels, n.d.). Some vegetarians may get their protein from cow’s milk, cheese, and other dairy products.

When the body digests protein, amino acids are left. Essential amino acids cannot be made by the human body, so they must come from food. (Wax, 2015) Plants and animal protein have different amino acid compositions. As plant protein lacks one or more of the essential amino acids for proper adolescent growth, a mixture of plants eaten throughout the day will provide all the essential amino acids for proper adolescent growth. Adolescent vegetarians can pair plant food combinations to make sure they receive all essential amino acids. (California Department of Public Health, 2000, p.10-3 and Mangels, n.d.)

3. Calcium and Vitamin D

Calcium is essential for adolescents of proper bone development. Cow’s milk and dairy products are great sources for calcium. Adolescent vegetarians who do not drink cow’s milk or eat dairy products should supplement their diet with calcium fortified soy milk. Other good sources of calcium include calcium fortified orange juice, green leafy vegetables, kale, sunflower seeds, nuts, breakfast cereals, broccoli, and tofu processed with calcium. (Mangels, n.d. and California Department of Public Health, 2000, p.10-3)

For vegetarians who drink milk, Vitamin D is not a problem. Vegetarians who do not drink milk need to supplement their diets with foods that are fortified with Vitamin D such as fortified soy milk and breakfast cereals. (California Department of Public Health, 2000, p.10-3)

4. Iron

During adolescence, iron requirements increase dramatically for both boys and girls. (Mangels, 2003) While “most studies show that vegetarian teens have a higher intake of iron than” non-vegetarian teens, adolescents “should be encouraged to include iron-rich plant foods at every meal.” (California Department of Public Health, 2000, p.10-3) The human body does not absorb iron from plants as well as it absorbs iron from meat. Foods containing Vitamin C increase the absorption of iron in a meal. Because of this, adolescent vegetarians should eat foods containing Vitamin C with their meals. Citrus fruits and juices, such as orange juice, broccoli, and tomatoes are all good sources of Vitamin C. (Mangels, n.d. and California Department of Public Health, 2000, p.10-3)

5. Vitamin B-12

Only vegans need to supplement their diet to avoid a vitamin B-12 deficiency. Vegan adolescents should supplement their diets with soy milk, cereals and vegetarian burgers that are fortified with vitamin B-12. (California Department of Public Health, 2000, p.10-4)

Chapter II. How do Various Scouting Groups deal with Vegetarians?

A. Boy Scouts of America (BSA), National Council

1. BSA National Council's Policy on Vegetarians

According to Mr. Richard Bourlon, the Director of Health and Safety at the Boy Scout National Office in Irving, TX, there is no national BSA policy for vegetarian Scouts. He is “not sure” that BSA will ever have a vegetarian Scout policy, as BSA “does not feel a need” to develop any policies for vegetarian Scouts. He said that there was a need for BSA to develop *Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies*, as a severe allergic reaction to food can “kill someone.” Mr. Bourlon says that BSA likes to “make things as simple as possible” for Scouts. He thinks that vegetarian Scouts need to “work that out locally” with their patrol or Troop and manage their vegetarianism “on their own.” Mr. Bourlon believes that if Scouts and Scouters use the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, the Scout Oath, and the Scout Law when dealing with vegetarian issues, everything should be all right. Mr. Bourlon said that BSA does not keep data on the number of Scouts who are vegetarians and that there are no “specific BSA education programs” for Councils, Troops or Scouters to deal with vegetarian Scouts. According to Mr. Bourlon, *the Boy Scout Handbook* and the *Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet* “are program documents and not BSA policy.” (Bourlon, 2016)

2. Boy Scout Handbook

In the 12th Edition of the *Boy Scout Handbook* issued in 2009, the Boy Scouts of America added information on vegetarians to its Cooking chapter. The *Boy Scout Handbook* states that when planning meals for Scout camping trips, Scouts need to consider “special food needs.” The *Boy Scout Handbook* also mentions that Scouts who are planning these meals should discuss any special food needs with their patrol members. “Vegetarians don’t eat meat but have plenty of other options for good nutrition. Some religious groups avoid certain foods.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2009, p.316)

3. Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet

The *Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet* has quite a bit of information regarding food preparation for vegetarians. It states that Scouts should:

Consider the needs of vegetarians when creating menus. People who do not eat meat, fish, or poultry are considered vegetarians. They must be careful to get the correct proper amount of nutrients, particularly protein and iron. Vegetarians do, however, eat eggs, cheese, and other dairy products. [Note: Only lacto ovo vegetarians eat eggs, cheese, and other dairy products.] To stay healthy, they get protein from beans, peas, and nuts.

Vegans (“vee-guns”) are vegetarians who do not eat any kind of animal products, including dairy products and meatbased broths. These vegetarians must pay special attention to their protein and iron intake. They often rely on meat substitutes such as tofu to provide their needed protein.

Substitute nonmeat items for meats from the same food group. For example, a bean burrito would make a good substitute for a chicken burrito. Tasty substitutes are available for burgers, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, bacon, sausage, and all varieties of cold cuts. Some of these foods are made from tofu, which is a soybean product, or from seitan, a seasoned wheat gluten that is said to resemble meat in both taste and texture. (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p.57)

Interestingly, the *Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet* also states that “most Americans eat too much red meat and high-fat meats like bacon, which should be eaten sparingly.” “Fish, nuts, and seeds contain healthy oils,” so these foods should be chosen “more often than meat or poultry.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p.51) It also lists meat alternatives such as “black-eyed peas, chickpeas (garbanzo beans), falafel, lentils, lima beans, navy beans, split peas, tofu (bean curd made from soybeans), soybeans, veggie burgers” and “if you are not allergic to nuts ... hazelnuts, peanuts, peanut butter, and pecans.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p.51)

The *Cooking Merit Badge Workbook* uses the MyPlate food guide for food groups. One of these food groups is proteins, not just meat, so vegetarians have been included in the merit badge requirements, (Boy Scouts of America, 2016)

B. Boy Scout National Camps

1. Florida Sea Base, Islamorda, FL

Florida Sea Base is very accommodating for vegetarians. A Dietary Notification Form must be received 14 days before an Adventure, to make the necessary food substitutions. They cannot guarantee equal substitutions for all items. While on base, the staff at Sea Base tries “to mimic each meal with a vegetarian version or options.” All of Sea Base’s meals have vegetarian options. For example, Sea Base “almost always offer[s] a starch, vegetable and salad bar.” “Within the salad bar,” Sea Base tries to “offer a non-meat protein,” such as hard-boiled eggs or chickpeas. They “offer peanut butter and jelly 24/7.” For those Scouts who take an Adventure off of Sea Base, they add items to the standard items to supplement the provisions for vegetarians. These items include, “additional lettuce, tomato and cheese, Garden and Black Bean Burgers, Fava Bean Snack, Extra white rice and black beans, and if available Tofu Dogs, Tofurkey Deli Slices.” Sea Base also mentions “vegans are more difficult to provision” for. They suggest that vegans “bring some food for themselves such as snacks.” (Murphy, 2016)

2. Northern Tier, Ely, MN

Northern Tier is accommodating for vegetarians. A Dietary Restriction Notification Form needs to be completed 45 days prior to arrival to assure that vegetarian options will be provided. The food staff is aware that when they remove meat from a meal, they need to replace it with non-meat items high in protein. (Chris, 2016)

3. The Summit Bechtel Reserve (SBR), Glen Jean, WV

“A regular menu and Special Menu is provided to each SBR participant that may require a special meal option. Normally, individuals can choose from the regular menu and supplement with a special needs item/s.” The Summit’s 2016 Season Special Dietary and Allergenic Menu contained vegan options, as well as Gluten Allergy, Lactose Free, Celiac Disease, Nut Free, Halal, and Kosher Menu items. The Summit’s Vegan Menu Items include Vegan Cheesy Backed Bean Enchilada, Brown Rice and Veggie Bowl, Apple Toaster Pops, Strawberry Toaster Pops, Breakfast Scramble, Oatmeal Bowl, Roasted Vegetable Tamale, Veggie Sausage, and Black Bean Burger. There are also several vegetarian items on the other special menus including Gluten Free Veggie Pot Pie, Dairy Free Mac and Cheese, Soy Milk, Gluten Free Black Bean Chili, and Penne Pasta with Veggies. The regular and Special Dietary and Allergenic Menus “provided a 99% solution for most campers and participants this past year.” (Perkins, 2016)

4 Philmont Scout Ranch, Cimarron, NM

According to Steve Nelson, Director of Business Operations at Philmont Scout Ranch, “When an individual in your crew is allergic to some food products, requires a special diet, or has specific religious food needs; suitable food substitutions must be purchased at home and brought or shipped to Philmont.” He suggests that a Scout who will be attending Philmont, “Review this year's Trail Menu and ingredient list found on” Philmont’s Dining in The Backcountry web “page and determine which items in each meal will cause a problem and prepare a substitute for the specific items in the meal.” (Nelson, 2016a) “The trail food diet is, by necessity, a high-carbohydrate, high-calorie diet rich in wheat, milk products, and sugars.” According to Philmont Scout Ranch, “when purchasing these substitute food items,” a Scout should “keep in mind that Philmont participants need approximately 3,000 calories a day.” (Philmont Scout Ranch, n.d.) Mr. Nelson says that “Every participant will still be provided the standard trail menu and it will be up to them to remove the individual packages at each commissary.” He further states that “This same protocol would also apply to participants with specific religious food needs. However, Philmont will replace the main dinner entrée for these participants using either: My Own Meals, Kosher MREs, J&M Halal certified MREs, or simply vegetarian options for Hindu and any other religion with specific requests.” He stipulated that “Participants must make these arrangements prior to arrival at Philmont.” (Nelson 2016a) When I asked Mr. Nelson if these policies meant that vegetarians who were Hindu had their main dinner option replaced, whereas, vegetarians who were not Hindu do not have their main dinner option replaced, it sounded like this was true and that it was because of meal cost. He did say that Philmont would “work with all vegetarians,” (Nelson, 2016b) but he did not specify how they would work with vegetarians who visit Philmont Scout Ranch.

“On the afternoon” of a crew’s “arrival at Philmont,” the “crew’s Ranger, Crew Leader, and the individual(s) with the substitute food should bring the food bags and the crew’s ‘Crew Leader Copy’ (the crew receives this earlier at Philmont) to the Logistics staff. They will then group the

meals by backcountry commissary corresponding to” the crew’s “itinerary and will arrange for them to be delivered to those commissaries so that they will be available when the crew makes its regular food pickup. The key thing to be sure of is that baggies are clearly labeled. For meals taken in the dining hall, appropriate substitutions can be arranged by speaking to the dining hall manager upon arrival at Philmont.” (Philmont Scout Ranch, n.d.)

C. Boy Scout Councils and Council Camps

1. San Francisco Bay Area Council, San Leandro, CA

At the San Francisco, CA Bay Area Council, Mr. Jason Lewis, the Director of Support Services has an excellent system for planning camp meals for all types of Scout’s food needs. For each campout, he prepares a chart with the regular menu in the first column and the various special meal tracks in the other columns. His special meal tracks include vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, Halal, Kosher, nut allergies, Hindu, and others. For the special meal tracks, he works down the list of the regular menu and when necessary, substituting foods for the special meal tracks. He thus prepares quite a few menus for a particular Council campout. When omitting meat from a Scout’s vegetarian or vegan meal, Mr. Lewis understands that it is not just a simple substitution. He knows that it is very important to supplement vegetarian and vegan meals with enough protein and calories, so that Scouts receive a meal that is both nutritious and contains enough energy for a very active Scout at Camp. All of the menus that he prepares are “submitted to an outside registered dietician” for review and approval to make sure that each Scout receives the proper nutrition from their camp meals, no matter what their particular diet is. According to Mr. Lewis, at Bay Area Council’s camps, “about 70 to 80 percent of Scouts choose the regular menu and about 20 to 30 percent of Scouts choose one of the alternate menus.” He mentioned that the Districts in his Council are aware of the ways to plan camp meals for different Scout’s food needs. (Lewis, 2016)

Food preparation is very important when preparing meals for each of the different tracks, according to Mr. Lewis. Food preparation workers must be trained very well. For example, they cannot use the same spatula when preparing the different special meal tracks. Each of their Council’s campouts has two grills for burgers, one for meat burgers and the other for veggie burgers. He said that all the camps in his Council adhere to BSA’s *National Camp Standards*. (Lewis, 2016) According to BSA Food Standard 601, in the *National Camp Standards*, “A Cub, Boy, or Venturing residential “camp that provides food for staff and participants” needs to” have “a food plan that provides for safe and nutritious food.” Further, “reasonable provision” should be “made to ensure food is available to meet special dietary needs” and “if the camp is unable to meet these needs, the need for the participant to bring such food” should be “clearly communicated to the participants in published materials in advance.” (Boy Scouts of America, National Camp Accreditation Program, 2013)

2. Camp Emerald Bay, Avalon, CA, Western Los Angeles, CA Council

Camp Emerald Bay, founded in 1925, is operated by the Western Los Angeles, CA Boy Scout Council. It is located on the West end of Santa Catalina Island about 30 miles off the coast of Los Angeles. The camp ‘is one of the largest and most popular Scout camps in’ the United States, serving about 7,000 Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and YMCA youth. Camp Emerald Bay has “broken ground in many areas of Scouting.” They “created the Buddy System” “to help keep kids safe in the water.” Camp Emerald Bay’s goal is to be so good at what they are doing “that the rest of the Scout camps in the country will follow suit.” They believe that if they “can do it on a desert island” Scout camps “can do it anywhere.” (Wilder, 2011) The Camp’s kitchen serves about 194,000 meals per year. (George, 2016)

In 2010, the Western Los Angeles, CA Boy Scout Council brought Camp Emerald Bay’s food services “in house,” as these services were contracted out before then. (Gunn, 2016) At about the same time, the staff at Camp Emerald Bay initiated discussions with camp management “with the goal of making the [Camp] food more nutritious, fresher, and more healthful.” Everyone in camp management “quickly and enthusiastically jumped on board.” (Wilder, 2011) It should be noted, that Camp Emerald Bay’s management and staff are a “tight-knit community” that supports the “sharing of ideas” to make the camp experience the best it can be for youth and adults. (Gunn, 2016) After some discussion by an “ad-hoc” staff committee, the staff committee developed the following vision statement for the camp on food and nutrition. “Camp Emerald Bay is a leader in providing nutrition education and healthful, appealing food.” (Wilder, 2011)

About “three to four years ago,” Camp Emerald Bay staff started a “big initiative” for guests with special diets. The camp staff realized that lots of groups who used their facilities wanted special diet meals. (Gunn, 2016) Currently, the Camp regularly “serve[s] food that satisfies the nutritional needs of vegetarian diets, lactose free diets, [and] gluten free diets” and “operates a nut free kitchen.” (Camp Emerald Bay, 2016) Each meal provided at the Camp includes a vegetarian alternative. (Camp Emerald Bay, n.d.) According to Mr. Peter George, the Director of Food Services for the Western Los Angeles, CA Boy Scout Council, Camp Emerald Bay staff works “with a registered dietician” to develop their camp menus each year. Starting in 2017, this registered dietician will write the special menus for the Camp’s vegetarian, lactose free, and gluten free guests. These policies for special diets “are consistent across all Council camps.” (George, 2016) Mr. Scott Gunn, the Camp Program Director, estimates that between 5 to 10 percent of all guests eat special diet meals and about 25 percent of the guests in their adult groups eat special diet meals. (Gunn, 2016) To request a special meal, guests, prior to their arrival, fill out a Special Request Form online listing their dietary restrictions. (Camp Emerald Bay, 2016) If a guest has special dietary needs, they can also bring supplemental food with them to camp. “The Emerald Bay kitchen will store supplemental food that is received in a labeled and sealed container.” The kitchen will also “heat and serve supplemental foods.” (Camp

Emerald Bay, 2016) According to Mr. George, “we don’t want to have any kid not coming here because of their dietary needs.” (George, 2016)

3. Crossroads of America Council and Ransburg Scout Reservation, Indiana

The Crossroads of America Council of Boy Scouts serves Central Indiana and has its headquarters in Indianapolis, IN. According to Mr. Lee Murdoch, Crossroads of America Council’s Director of Outdoor Programs, “we work to accommodate all dietary accommodations like Vegetarian, Vegan, Gluten-Free, etc as we are made aware of them by our unit leaders for our programs like summer camp.” Ransburg Scout Reservation is the premier summer camp in the Crossroads of America Council. Its Summer Camp 2016 menu has vegetarian options listed for each meal. These include

Vegetarian options for Lunch - Cheese Pizza, Veggie Sloppy Joe, Vegetarian Meatball Sub, Black Bean Burger, Veggie Corn Dog, Chix Sandwich, Vegetarian Hot Dog, Veggie Chicken Nuggets, Grilled Cheese

Vegetarian options for Dinner – Lentil Loaf, Breaded Eggplant Cutlet, Veggie Chili Mac, Veggie Enchilada Casserole, Veggie Chicken Parmesan, Veggie Jambalaya, Stuffed Shells, Veggie Pork Noodles (Murdoch, 2016)

D. Boy Scout Troops

Typically, many Troops have meal and food allergy policies. Here are examples of menu and snack policies from Boy Scout Troops in New Jersey and Indiana.

“A Scout is expected to eat what their Patrol is eating. They are involved in menu planning and duty rosters at the Troop meeting before each campout so no surprises or disappointments occur on the outings.” “Patrol menu planning will always make certain there is sufficient food for everyone.” “All menu plans are reviewed to make certain they do not place the health of a member at risk.” (Troop 109, 2013, p. 13) Usually, “Scouts are highly discouraged” or prohibited “from bringing their own food or snacks for campouts unless there is a special medical or religious dietary need.” (Troop 202, 2013, p. 12) Troops do not have the ability to make certain a food or snack will place the health of a Scout at risk “when a Scout brings his own food or snacks.” (Troop 109, 2013, p. 13) For weekend campouts, “each patrol determines the menu and cost of food for the patrol for the weekend.” “The Troop Committee has endorsed a food budget for outings, which includes \$2 for each meal and \$1 for each cracker barrel (evening snack). For a typical weekend, this will total \$10 per person.” “After the outing,” the Grubmaster “must submit his [food] receipts for reimbursement. If he exceeds the budget of \$10 per person, [the Grubmaster] must cover the remaining cost himself. (Troop 202, 2013, p. 10)

A good example of a vegetarian Scout working with his patrol comes from Troop 8880 in Woodstock, GA. Before his first Boy Scout outing, Rajpal Sagoo's patrol was planning their menu for a camping trip. All the meals that his patrol planned contained meat and Rajpal was a vegetarian. Rajpal asked his patrol to "set aside some stuff for" him to eat and asked that he be able to "have some input into" what the patrol was planning to eat. He now makes sure the meals that his patrol prepares for campouts "have a vegetarian option, either by leaving out meat, or adding it after he has taken his serving." (*Boys' Life*, 2007, p. 9)

E. Girl Scouts of the USA

"Girl Scouts does not have a policy on vegetarians or vegans. Food preference is a personal, family choice." Girl Scouts of the USA, Nov 3, 2016) According to a representative at the National Office of Girl Scouts, "Girl Scouts of the USA has no jurisdiction over their local councils" on issues such as this, as each council is their "own separate non-profit" entity. (Aaliyah, 2016) If a Girl Scout feels "that there are not enough vegetarian/vegan options being provided at Girl Scout events or meetings," the Girl Scout should "speak with the[ir] troop leader or, ... a Membership Specialist at the[ir] local council." The Troop leader or Council Membership Specialist "can help address any issues or, provide information on what the protocol would be in such situations." (Girl Scouts of the USA, Nov. 1, 2016)

According to Ms. Diana Keely, the Director of Program at Girl Scouts of Central Indiana in Indianapolis, IN, Girl Scouts of Central Indiana considers the needs of Scouts who are vegetarian, have food allergies, require gluten free meals and others, when planning camp meals. Ms. Keely said that Girl Scouts of the USA has "always supported a diverse diet" and they encourage all Scouts to bring with them any, or "all food for meals to camp" in labeled Tupperware containers. (Keely, 2016)

Ms. Keely said that Girl Scouts of Central Indiana "residential camps always have a vegetarian meal selection such as veggie burgers, tofu hot dogs, or black beans." She further explained that Girl Scouts of Central Indiana follows the Summer Food Services Program (SFSP) guidelines for nutrition set by the US Department of Agriculture at their day camps. (Keely, 2016) So that children get their required protein at lunch and dinner, these nutritional guidelines specify that children eat one serving of meat or meat alternate. One serving of meat or meat alternate equals,

- Two ounces of lean meat, poultry, or fish, or
- Two ounces of alternate protein product, or
- Two ounces of cheese, or
- One large egg, or
- One-half cup of cooked dry beans, or peas, or
- Four tablespoons of peanut, or other nut, or seed butter, or
- Eight ounces of yogurt, or
- One ounce of nuts and or seeds

Note: Nuts and seeds may meet only one-half of the total meat or meat alternate serving and must be combined with another meat or meat alternate to fulfill this requirement. (United States Department of Agriculture, 2016)

Ms. Keely said that Girl Scouts encourages Scouts to “advocate for themselves” for vegetarian meals at Troop campouts, as Scouts “come up with their own Patrol menus.” She said, Girl Scouts “encourages girls to become Troop leaders” on this and all issues. (Keely, 2016)

In 2015, Girls Scouts USA started offering vegan Girl Scout cookies. There are now five varieties of Girl Scout Cookies that are vegan, Thin Mints, S’mores, Thanks-A-Lots, Lemonade, and Peanut Butter Patties. For Thin Mints, all varieties are vegan, however, for the other 4 varieties only those made by ABC Bakers are vegan (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, 2016). According to a representative at the National Office of Girl Scouts, Girl Scouts started offering vegan Girl Scout cookies due to their “high demand.” (Aaliyah, 2016)

F. The UK Scout Association

The UK Scout Association (formerly the British Boy Scouts) located in Gilwell Park, London, England, is the largest National Scout organization in Europe. In their *Diversity Guidelines for Event Organizers* published in 2007, the UK Scout Association believes that “where possible individual needs should be met by making reasonable adjustments. This should include asking people if they have specific needs before they attend an event.” Specific needs “covers medical, religious, dietary and mobility needs as well as personal preferences.” They believe that key points for consideration for events are dietary requirements, food, and how food is served. The UK Scout Association acknowledges that “there is a wide range of dietary requirements; some are personal preferences whilst others may be required for medical or religious reasons.” They recommend that if a Scout organization is “catering for a large number of people” and it does “not have information on individual needs” the Scout organization “should ensure that 50 percent of all food served is vegetarian or vegan. Different catering preferences should be served on separate plates, have separate serving utensils and be clearly labeled.” (UK Scout Association, 2007, p. 1-2)

The UK Scout Association recommends that the following labels be used

- Vegan – Vegan food contains no animal or dairy products e.g. eggs are not [part of the] vegan [diet]
- Vegetarian - Vegetarian food contains no meat or fish. Food such a cheese should be labeled as suitable for vegetarians or vegan, if it is not it should be considered to contain animal products i.e. rennet
- Halal (Islamic) or Kosher (Jewish) food or meat should be labeled. Note – Kosher and Halal are not the same and not limited to just food and drink
- Fish and Shellfish should be labeled separately
- ‘Contains Nuts or may have been prepared in an area that contains nuts’ should be used where appropriate

- Alcohol – All food and desserts that contain alcohol should be labeled (UK Scout Association, 2007, p. 2)

They also recommend that “a range of different drinks should be served; ideally this should include de-caFFEinated tea and coffee, herbal/fruit teas and water. Any biscuit selections should contain ordinary digestives (for diabetics). Fruit should also be available as an alternative to snacks and desserts.” (UK Scout Association, 2007, p. 2)

Chapter III. Recommendations for Scouting

A. Boy Scouts of America (BSA) National Council

When Scouts recite the Scout Oath, they say, “To keep myself physically strong...” According to the *Boy Scout Handbook*, “taking care of your body prepares” a Scout “for a lifetime of great adventures.” A Scout can build their “body’s strength and endurance by eating nutritious foods.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2009, p. 23)

“In 2011, the Boy Scouts of America aligned with the [President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition] (PCFSN) with the shared goal of together promoting good health for America’s youth.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2012) Good health for America’s youth is an extremely important issue for Scouting, according to former Chief Scout Executive Robert J. Mazzuca. “In my travels, I see many bright, smiling faces, but all too often, I also see evidence of unhealthy lifestyles among our young people.” (Jacobs, 2009) As part of this program, Boy Scouts of America designed the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA), which promotes healthy eating goals such as eating one half of a plate of fruits and vegetables at every meal, choosing “lean sources of protein,” including “beans or peas in main dishes,” and eating whole grains. (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.) These goals would be a good start for Boy Scouts of America National Council to develop Guidelines for a Healthy Diet, including vegetarian eating.

There are many health benefits to vegetarian eating including a lower risk of death, (Torgan, 2013) living longer (Singh et al., 2003), a lower blood pressure (Yokoyama et al., 2014), less likeliness of being overweight (Tonstad et al., 2009), less risk of cancer (Tantamango-Bartley et al., 2012,) less chance of heart disease (Crowe et al., 2013), and less risk of diabetes. (Tonstad et al., 2013) “Recent research from Thomas Jefferson University shows that the percentage of boys in the United States ages 8 to 17 with high blood pressure has increased from 15.8 to 19.2 percent.” Teenagers “risk of developing hardening plaque in their arteries increases 2 to 4 percent each year they are obese.” (Barnard, 2013) As a vegetarian diet has many health benefits and may prevent health problems in teens, it is important for Boy Scouts of America to support eating a vegetarian diet in their Guidelines.

Boy Scouts of America National Council’s new Guidelines for a Healthy Diet should reflect the *Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet*. “Most Americans eat too much red meat and high-fat meats like bacon, which should be eaten sparingly.” “Fish, nuts, and seeds contain healthy oils,” so these foods should be chosen “more often than meat or poultry.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p.51) According to Ms Ruth T. Reynolds RN, BSN, the Medical Coordinator for the Boy Scouts of America, “youth and leaders in Scouting are every bit as overweight as the rest of the population—if not more so.” (Jacobs, 2009) “It is unfair for Scout leaders to serve bacon and eggs in the mess hall and hot dogs around the campfire, and then blame Scouts for being overweight.” (Barnard, 2013)

Boy Scouts of America National Council’s Guidelines for a Healthy Diet should also reflect the *Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet*.

“Consider the needs of vegetarians when creating menus. They must be careful to get the correct proper amount of nutrients, particularly protein and iron.” “Substitute nonmeat items for meats from the same food group. For example, a bean burrito would make a good substitute for a chicken burrito. Tasty substitutes are available for burgers, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, bacon, sausage, and all varieties of cold cuts.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p.57) *The Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet* suggests meat alternatives such as “black-eyed peas, chickpeas (garbanzo beans), falafel, lentils, lima beans, navy beans, split peas, tofu (bean curd made from soybeans), soybeans, veggie burgers” and “if you are not allergic to nuts ... hazelnuts, peanuts, peanut butter, and pecans.” (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p. 51)

According to former Chief Scout Executive Robert J. Mazzuca, “our role is clear. We must continue to aggressively create and promote programs that help build healthier lifestyles for our Scouts. As leaders, we must do all we can to set the example for encouraging these healthy choices, not only for our Scouts, but for their parents and peers as well. Their future is Scouting’s future.” (Jacobs, 2009)

Boy Scouts of America National Council should develop and offer an online Supplemental Training class on MyScouting which covers Eating a Healthy Diet and Food Preparation for Scouts and Scouters who have food allergies, or are vegetarian, vegan, gluten free/Celiac Disease, Kosher, Hindu, Muslim, and others. This training should be required for all adult Scout and Venturing leaders.

Boy Scouts of America National Council should develop a space on their website to be used as a clearing house for best practices from Boy Scout Councils, Camps, Districts, Adult Leaders and Scouts/Venturers, and Parents on Eating a Healthy Diet and Food Preparation for Scouts and Scouters who have food allergies, or are vegetarian, vegan, gluten free/Celiac Disease, Kosher, Hindu, Muslim, and others.

B. Boy Scout National Camps

All Boy Scout National Camps, with the possible exception of Philmont Scout Ranch, are very accommodating for vegetarians. At Philmont, it seems that only Hindu vegetarians have their main dinner entrée replaced, while all other vegetarians must purchase their vegetarian meal substitutions before coming to camp and bring or ship these meals to Philmont. (Nelson 2016a and Nelson 2016b) Philmont Scout Ranch should provide all vegetarians with substitute entrées at all meals “keep[ing] in mind that Philmont participants need approximately 3,000 calories a day.” (Philmont Scout Ranch, n.d.) Mr. Steve Nelson, Director of Business Operations at Philmont Scout Ranch mentioned that Philmont would “work with all vegetarians,” (Nelson, 2016b) and it is hoped that in the near future, all vegetarians who make arrangements prior to their arrival at Philmont, will be provided with replacement entrées for all meals.

C. Boy Scout Councils and Council Camps

Every meal provided at a Boy Scout Council Camp should have vegetarian and vegan options. These Camps should provide special menus for vegetarians and vegans. These menus should be submitted to (or prepared by) a registered dietician for review and approval to assure that vegetarian and vegan guests receive the proper nutrition (protein and calories) from their camp meals. To request a special meal, unit leaders, or guests, prior to their arrival at camp, should notify the camp in advance by completing a Special Request Form, listing dietary restrictions.

Camp food preparation workers should be well trained for the preparation of vegetarian meals making sure that meat and non-meat options are prepared separately. The camp may need to purchase additional equipment for the preparation of vegetarian meals, such as an extra grill for veggie burgers and separate spatulas for these burgers.

If a camp guest has a special dietary need that the camp is unable to meet, the guest should be allowed to bring supplemental food with them to camp in a labeled sealed container. The camp kitchen should store, heat, and serve this supplemental food for the guest. The policies for vegetarian and vegan guests should be consistent across all Council Camps. These policies should also be followed by all Scout Districts, the Order of the Arrow, and Firecrafter, whether an event is at a Boy Scout Council Camp or not.

D. Boy Scout Units (Packs, Troops, and Crews), Adult Leaders, and Youth

Boy Scout Packs, Troops, and Crews need to be flexible when developing meal policies for outings and campouts. Units need to consider all special dietary needs, such as the needs of vegetarians and vegans, as well as the special medical and religious dietary needs of youth and adults. A Scouting unit's food policies should include allowing youth and adults with special dietary needs to bring their own supplemental food with them to unit events, upon approval from their unit leader. This food should be placed in a labeled sealed container. At no time, should a unit impose an exact food budget per youth for outings, with unreimbursed costs for a Patrol's Grubmaster, (Troop 202, 2013, p.10) as this would not be flexible enough for youth with special dietary needs, nor be consistent with the healthy eating goals of the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award and the *Cooking Merit Badge Pamphlet*.

At least once a year, Scouting Units should discuss with youth, the ScoutStrong PALA Healthy Eating Goals of eating one half of a plate of fruits and vegetables at every meal, choosing "lean sources of protein," including "beans or peas in main dishes," and eating whole grains. (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.) Units should also mention to youth that "most Americans eat too much red meat and high-fat meats like bacon, which should be eaten sparingly." (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p. 51) Scouting Units should remind youth to "consider the needs of vegetarians when creating [their] menus." (Boy Scouts of America, 2011, p. 57)

Youth and adults should also be well trained for the preparation of vegetarian meals. When preparing vegetarian meals, a patrol cook can prepare the vegetarian meal first, and after giving all vegetarians their servings, add meat for the non vegetarians in their patrol. Otherwise the patrol cook will need to prepare the meat and non-meat options separately, using different cooking equipment for each option.

Adult Scout leaders should have a good understanding and be supportive of the dietary needs of all their youth, including those with special dietary needs. Mr. Charles Stahler, the co-director of the Vegetarian Resource Group believes that “Adult leaders should not make too much of a deal” of having a vegetarian Scout in their Troop. (Stahler, 2016)

According to Mr. Stahler,

“the best way to help integrate vegetarianism is for the vegetarian Scout to have coping methods to deal with peer pressure and to make vegetarianism look as simple as possible so non-veggies don't think someone is ‘making a big deal about it.’ Scoutmasters and fellow Scouts will be more receptive if [a Scout is] able to find common ground with them rather than argue. The best thing [for a Scout] to do is keep a positive attitude. [A Troop] may want to have the Scout bring their own veggie food. (For example, if the rest of the troop is having hamburgers, make sure the vegetarian scout has a few veggie burgers if the boy is comfortable with that approach.) A lot of it does depend on the Scout's personal level of comfort regarding bringing up vegetarianism.” While some Scouts easily cope with being a vegetarian, “other kids may be too shy to ask their Scout leaders to make special meals. Empowering the vegetarian kid is just as, if not more, important than educating the Scout leader. It is important to know that making these changes may take years depending on how receptive folks are, but [the Scout should] always remember that patience is key and positive energy goes a long way.” (Dumais, 2016)

Erin Pavlina, the editor of *VegFamily* magazine says that “vegetarian Scouts can win support of [their Patrol] by volunteering to cook some [vegetarian] meals for everyone.” (*Boys' Life*, 2007, p. 9) Before his first Boy Scout outing, Rajpal Sagoo, an Eagle Scout from Troop 8880 in Woodstock, GA, asked his patrol to “set aside some stuff for” him to eat and that he “have some input into” what the patrol was planning to eat. Rajpal makes sure the meals that his patrol prepares for campouts “have a vegetarian option, either by leaving out meat, or adding it after he has taken his serving.” (*Boys' Life*, 2007, p. 9)

Ms. Sharon Graff, Vice President of the North American Vegetarian Society, thinks that it would be interesting for Scout Troops and Camps to have vegetarian meal options available for everyone at Scouting events, to see how many attendees would choose the vegetarian meal. She believes that in addition to vegetarians, many nonvegetarians would take advantage of vegetarian meal options at Scouting events. (Graff, 2016)

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Appendix. Sample Vegetarian/Vegan recipes for Scouts

A. Vegetarian Potato Bake

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 large baking potatoes, diced into 1 inch cubes
- 1 large onion, quartered and sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt free seasoning
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 pound mushrooms, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 bunch broccoli, chopped
- grated Parmesan cheese, Sunflower seeds, and Sour cream are optional

Preparation

Melt butter (or margarine) in a large stock pot. Add garlic, potatoes, onion, seasoning, and black pepper. Cover and simmer until the potatoes are fork tender. Add mushrooms, red pepper, and broccoli, cooking 10 minutes more to soften the mushrooms and broccoli. Serve with sour cream, parmesan cheese, and sunflower seeds, if desired. Makes 8 servings. (*Boys' Life*, 2007, p.9)

B. Vegan Rice and Beans

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small green pepper, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 14.5-ounce can vegetable broth
- 1 cup rice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 to 6 drops hot pepper sauce, as preferred
- 15-ounce can dark kidney beans

Preparation

Cook onion, green peppers, and celery in olive oil until tender. Add broth, rice, salt, pepper, and hot pepper sauce. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Add beans with liquid and heat through (approximately 10 minutes.) Served topped with salsa in a bowl, or in tortillas. Makes 6 servings. (*Boys' Life*, 2007, p.9)

C. Asian Takeout

Ingredients

- ½ cup peanut oil
- 2 pounds uncooked extra-firm tofu
- 1 11.8-ounce jar Kikkoman Teriyaki Baste & Glaze
- 1 bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 6-ounce package sliced almonds
- 1 head bok choy, chopped
- 1 sweet onion, cut into thin wedges
- 8 ounces snow peas
- 1 20-ounce can crushed pineapple in heavy syrup (do not drain)
- 1 head broccoli, cut into florets

Preparation

Heavy-duty aluminum foil is the only cookware necessary. It is easy to char or undercook foods in foil on a campfire or grill, if not careful, but it is also easy to get it right using a few simple techniques. On each of eight 18×18-inch sheets of foil, layer ingredients in the order listed, beginning with the oil on the foil and ending with the broccoli at the top. To trap the steam, seal packets very tightly by folding the edges over repeatedly. If the packets have been customized, write the name of each owner on the foil with a marker. With the broccoli side up, cook the foil packets over a low campfire, or on a grill grate over medium heat for about 20 minutes. Makes 8 Servings. (Connors and Connors, 2015)

D. Nachos to Go

Ingredients

- 1 15-ounce can vegetarian with beans chili
- 6 single-serving packages tortilla chips
- 1 8-ounce package shredded cheese (your favorite)
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/4 head iceberg lettuce, chopped
- 1 8-ounce container sour cream

Preparation

Briefly warm the chili in a small cook pot. Do not allow the chili to become hot to the touch! With the packages still sealed, crush the tortilla chips into small pieces. Open the bags, then carefully scoop about 1/4 cup of warm chili into each. Add cheese, tomatoes, lettuce and sour cream to each bag to taste. Eat directly from the bag using a fork. Makes 6 Servings. (Landis, 2015)