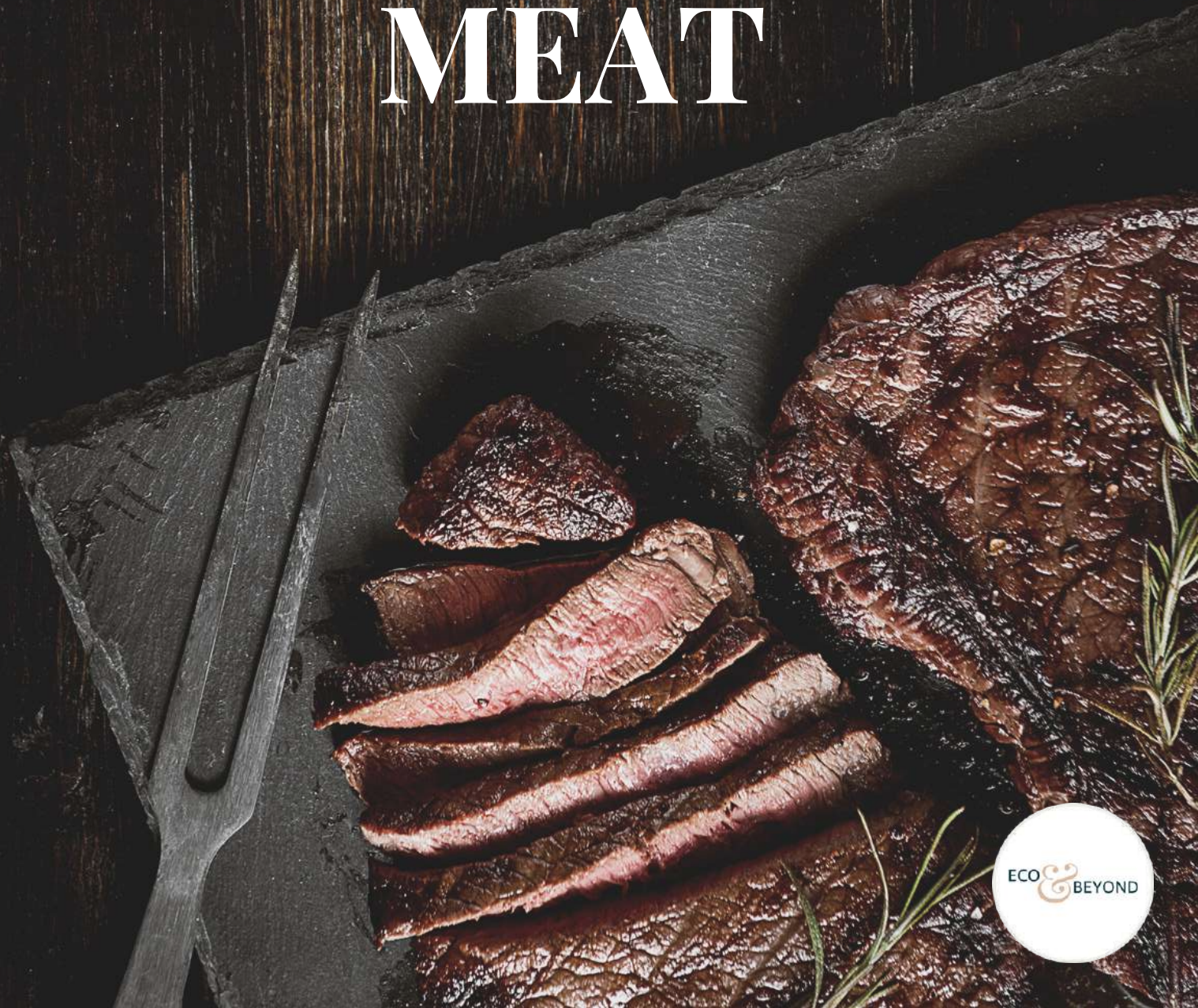



10 PRACTICAL TIPS TO HELP YOU EAT LESS MEAT





Most meat production practices contribute significantly to issues such as climate change, deforestation, and soil degradation. This is in addition to concerns over animal welfare and a number of moral objections to killing animals for food.

One way to reduce the impact of meat production on our planet is to eat less meat. But this is a challenging transition for most meat-eaters.

Some people do opt for a vegetarian or vegan diet. But they are very much the minority. For those of us who care about our food and our environment – but love meat – it is still possible to do our bit.

Thankfully, we don't need to go the full monty and cut out meat entirely. Simply reducing the amount of meat in our diet will have a significant impact, both for the environment and our health.

Here's some really simple things you can do that will ultimately reduce the total amount of meat you consume on a weekly basis.

SIGN UP FOR MEATLESS MONDAY

Meatless Monday is a movement that encourages people to not eat meat on Mondays. You can sign up on the [Meatless Monday website](#) to get weekly newsletters full of tips and stories. There's also a wealth of information, recipes and news related to reducing meat consumption on their website – fill your boots.

Tell everyone. Post it on Facebook. Tweet about it. Put a reminder in your diary for every Monday morning. The more people you tell about your new commitment, the more likely you are to follow through and develop a new habit.



BUY A VEGETARIAN, PLANT-BASED OR RAW COOKBOOK

There's literally thousands of cookbooks with recipes that don't contain meat. A quick Amazon search returned 10620 vegetarian, 9594 vegan, 1819 raw and 733 plant-based cookbooks.

Having a cookbook on hand helps when you're not motivated to cook meatless or when you need a bit of culinary inspiration. A quick flick through a great cookbook will get your taste buds going and give you loads of ideas for dishes you would probably not otherwise have thought of.

Challenge yourself and see how many of the cookbooks you can cook your way through.

CREATE A MEAL PLAN THAT INCORPORATES MEAT FREE MEALS

It's difficult to cut meat out of your meals – and stick to it – without planning. As some wise person once said, 'failing to plan is planning to fail'.

Meal planning doesn't have to be a chore, especially if you've got new recipes you want to try out. The important thing is making sure you plan in advance so you don't end up with an empty fridge and reach for your favourite takeaway menu.



ADD MORE GRAINS AND VEGETABLES TO YOUR MEATY MEALS

The easiest way to eat less meat is to eat more of something else!

Add more grains, pulses or vegetables to your plate instead of meat. You'll get used to eating less meat and get all the benefits of eating a higher volume of plant-based foods.

If you're particularly resistant to removing meat from your meals to begin with, this is a great way to ease yourself into reducing meat. For example, if you normally have two sausages in a meal, have just one and a handful of greens instead. If you love two rashers of bacon on your breakfast sandwich, replace one with sliced avocado or tomato.

Reducing meat in this way lead to a lower weekly food bill as well as improved overall health.

SWAT UP ON PROTEIN

Eating less meat doesn't mean sacrificing protein. There are plenty of protein packed vegetables, pulses and grains.

The key is to re-think meals. So many of us have grown up eating meat every day that it becomes a habit and we might not know where else to look for protein rich foods.

Get started with learning how much protein you actually need, often it's a lot less than you'd imagine. If your BMI is in the 'healthy' range, men need approximately 55g of protein and women need 45g.

Next up, learn which foods have the highest amounts of protein:

- Dairy sources include eggs, cheese, milk, yogurts, fortified soy, oat or rice drinks.
- Pulses high in protein include beans, peas, lentils, or chickpeas.
- Vegetables high in protein include spinach, watercress, asparagus, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and most varieties of leafy greens.
- Grains include teff, quinoa, whole wheat pasta, wild rice and couscous. Additionally, adding nuts or seeds to any meals will also give you a protein boost.

Swap out some of your meat for these protein rich sources and enjoy a balanced diet with lower impact on the environment.

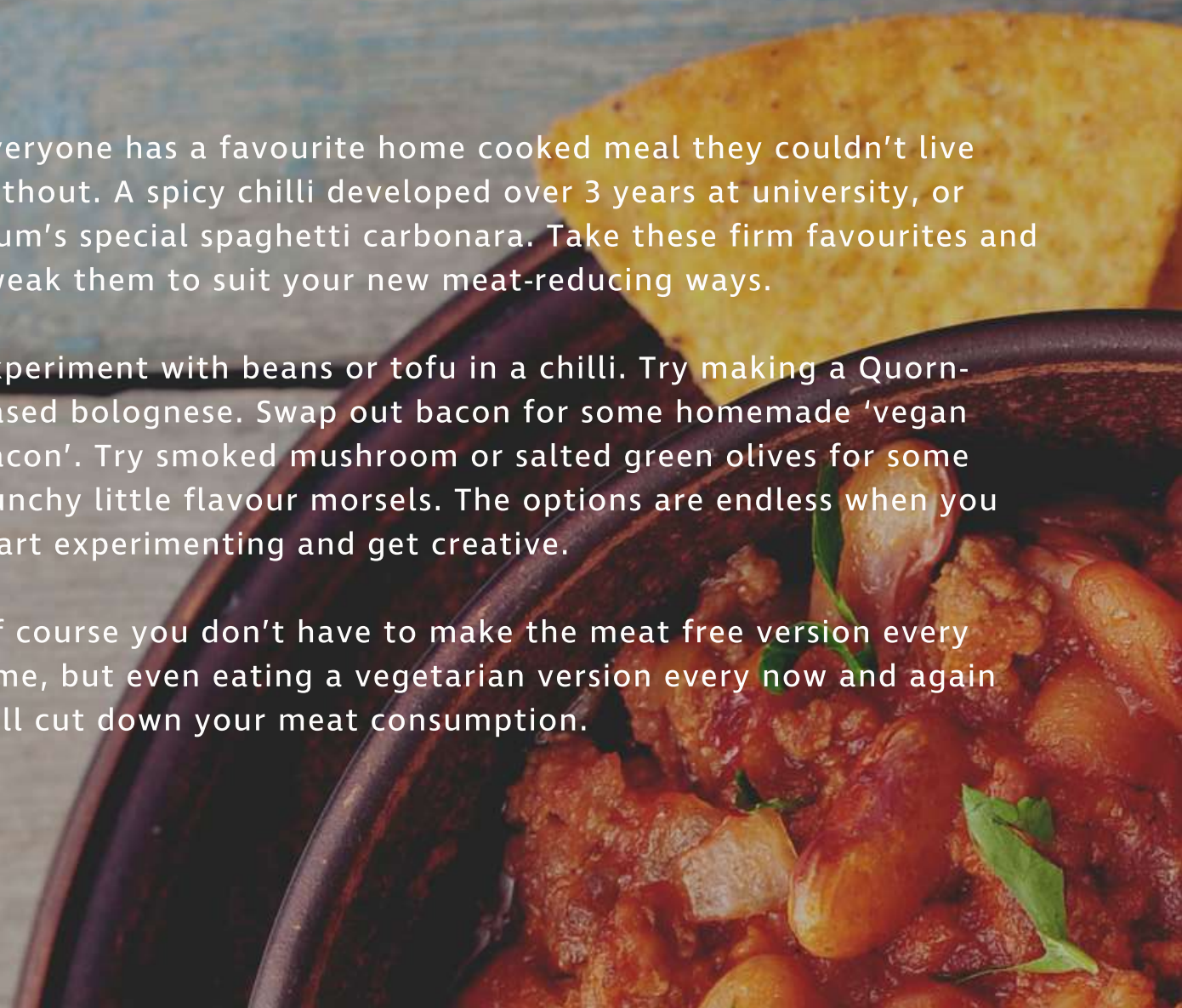


CREATE MEAT FREE VERSIONS OF YOUR FAVOURITE DISHES

Everyone has a favourite home cooked meal they couldn't live without. A spicy chilli developed over 3 years at university, or Mum's special spaghetti carbonara. Take these firm favourites and tweak them to suit your new meat-reducing ways.

Experiment with beans or tofu in a chilli. Try making a Quorn-based bolognese. Swap out bacon for some homemade 'vegan bacon'. Try smoked mushroom or salted green olives for some punchy little flavour morsels. The options are endless when you start experimenting and get creative.

Of course you don't have to make the meat free version every time, but even eating a vegetarian version every now and again will cut down your meat consumption.

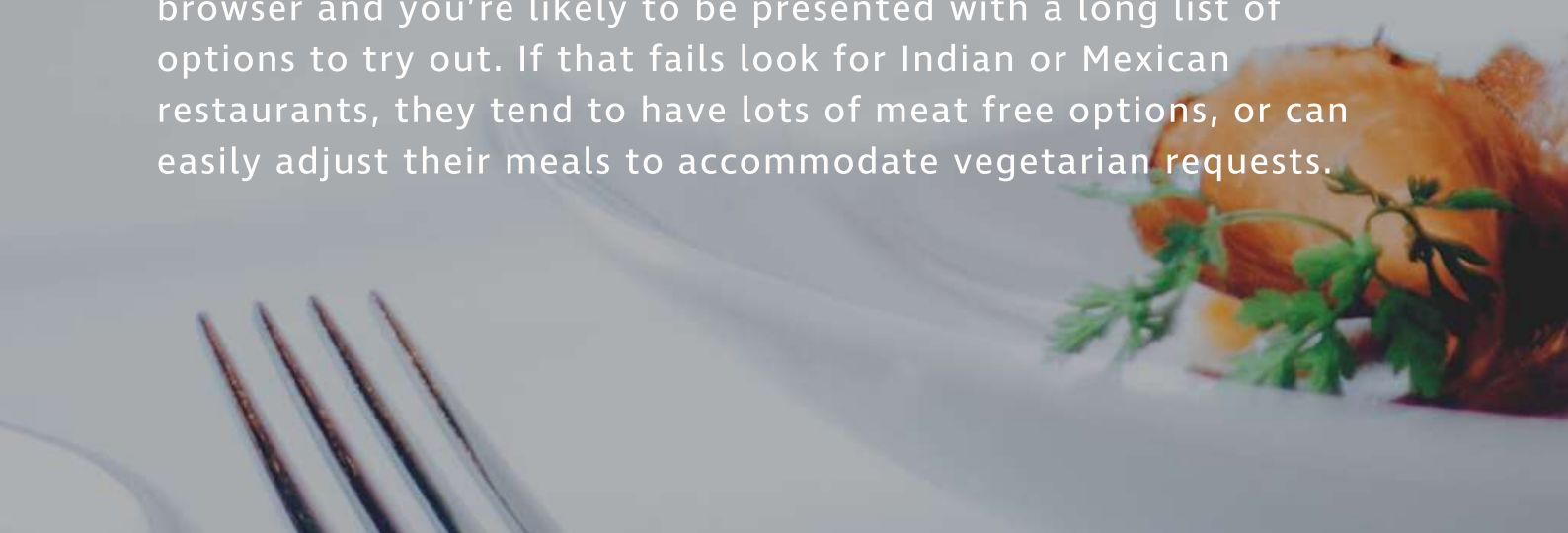


HUNT DOWN VEGAN AND VEGETARIAN RESTAURANTS

Reducing your meat intake provides you a great opportunity to get out and about. Use a website like [Happy Cow](#) to track down vegan and vegetarian restaurants in your local area - and all over the world!

Even if you go to a traditional, meaty restaurant, take a look at the meat-free options. Many mainstream restaurants are fighting to attract the new wave of vegetarian and vegan eaters so you'll find a growing selection of options on most menus these days. And if you're into fast food, even McDonalds and Burger King have jumped on the plant-based bandwagon.

Search for 'vegetarian restaurants near me' in your favourite browser and you're likely to be presented with a long list of options to try out. If that fails look for Indian or Mexican restaurants, they tend to have lots of meat free options, or can easily adjust their meals to accommodate vegetarian requests.



EXPERIMENT WITH VEGAN AND VEGETARIAN MEAT ALTERNATIVES

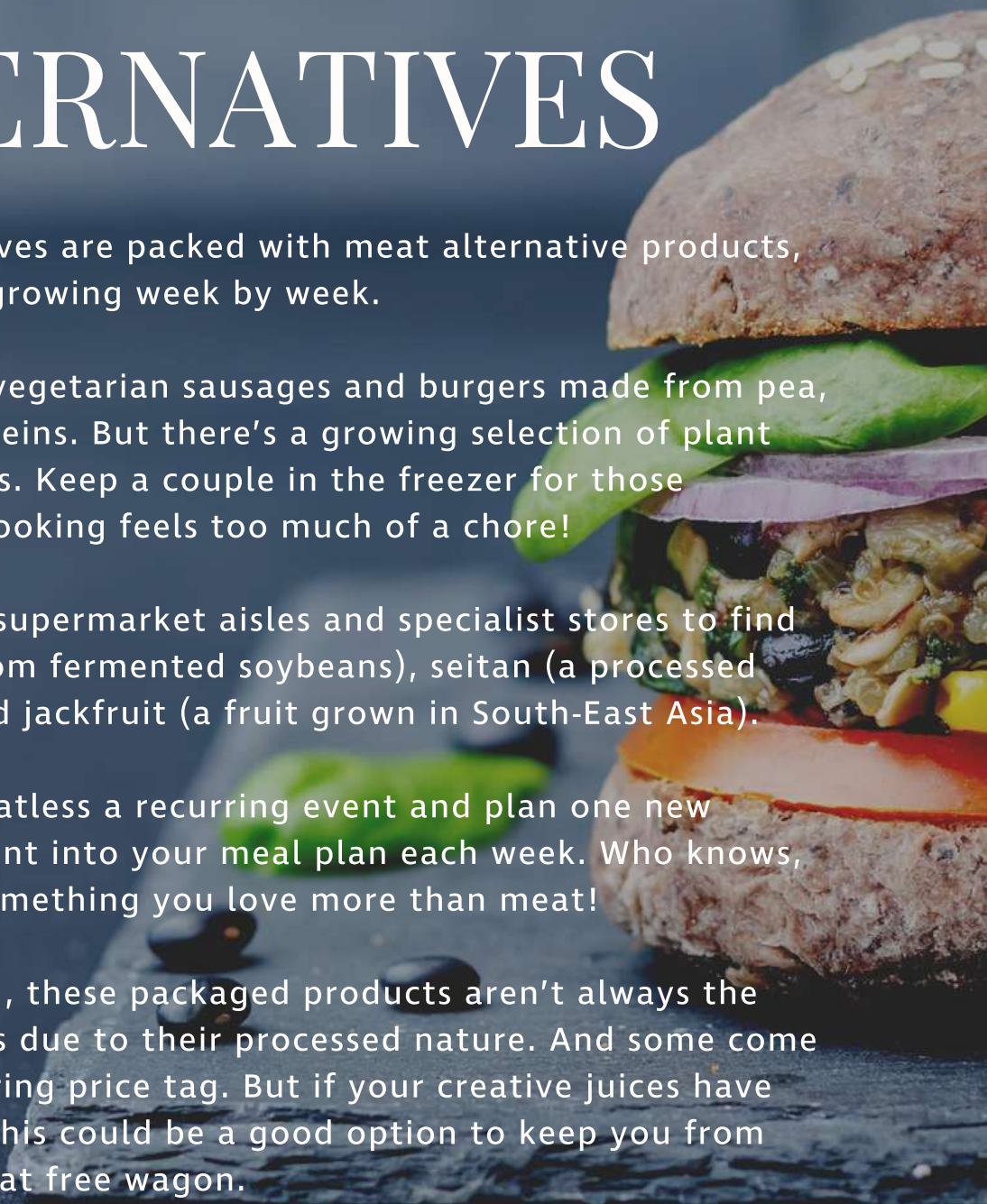
Supermarket shelves are packed with meat alternative products, and the range is growing week by week.

You'll likely find vegetarian sausages and burgers made from pea, wheat or soy proteins. But there's a growing selection of plant based ready meals. Keep a couple in the freezer for those occasions when cooking feels too much of a chore!

Hunt around the supermarket aisles and specialist stores to find tempeh (made from fermented soybeans), seitan (a processed wheat gluten) and jackfruit (a fruit grown in South-East Asia).

Make cooking meatless a recurring event and plan one new culinary experiment into your meal plan each week. Who knows, you might find something you love more than meat!

Be careful though, these packaged products aren't always the healthiest options due to their processed nature. And some come with an eye-watering price tag. But if your creative juices have stopped flowing this could be a good option to keep you from falling off the meat free wagon.



BUY BETTER QUALITY, HIGHER WELFARE MEAT

Reducing the amount of meat you eat presents an opportunity to buy less but at higher quality. You'll still get to enjoy the meat you love, but you'll also know that the impact on the environment is less.

There are a couple of options when it comes to eating better quality meat:

1. Look for lowest environmental impact. Incorporate more poultry products in your meals and reduce the amount of beef and lamb. Better yet, visit your local butcher and ask what local wild game is in season.
2. Chose grass fed meat. Grass-fed cattle forage for their own food rather than being force fed grain. As a result, grass-fed beef is leaner and has a higher percentage of Omega 3s than grain-fed beef.
3. Look for higher welfare meat. Support businesses that treat their animals in a more humane way, use stun guns before slaughter and don't expose their cattle to live transport.
4. Buy from sustainable sources. Be on the lookout for farms that practise sustainable agriculture. This helps protect the environment, public health and local communities.

Higher quality meat will cost more. But since you'll eat less of it you might not spend more overall. Knowing your meat has less impact on the planet will also make the meat that much more tasty!

SET A GOAL AND TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

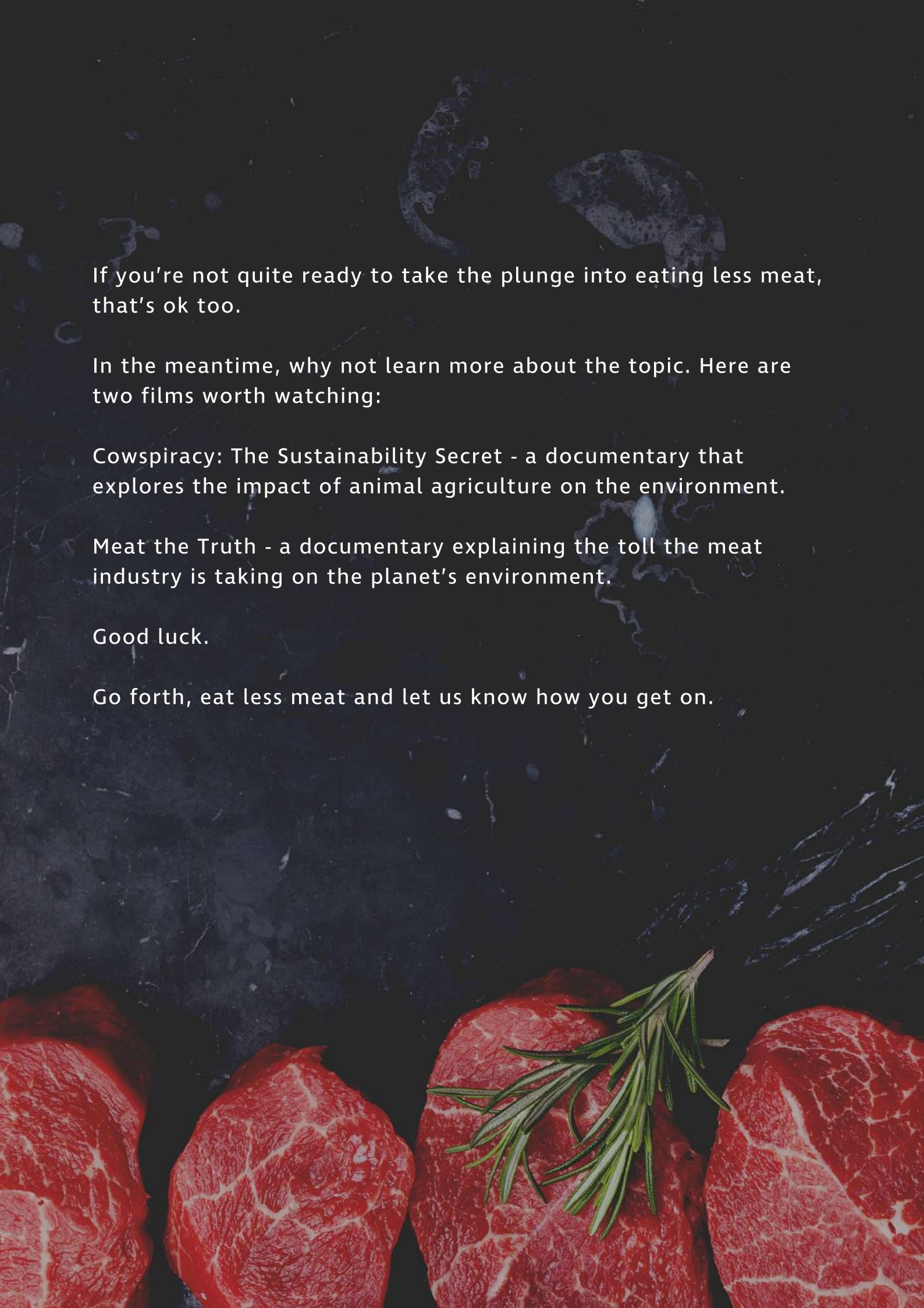
There's no need to go all in on becoming vegan or vegetarian – unless you want to. Reducing your meat intake will have a positive impact, so set a pace that you're comfortable with.

Set yourself a realistic target for how much meat you'd like to cut out of your diet. Decide how many meals a week you want to be meat free. Or, work out how much you'd like to reduce your meat intake by overall.

Track each meat free meal you eat, in a diary or tracking app. Look back over time to see if you're keeping to your target – and to see how far you've come!

If you're not happy with your progress, don't beat yourself up. Refocus, set a new goal and take steps to adjust course. It's all part of the eco-friendly journey.

When you reach your goal, celebrate! Tell your friends, shout it out on social media, or silently dance around your living room. No matter how you express yourself, make sure to celebrate your win and congratulate yourself for making a difference!



If you're not quite ready to take the plunge into eating less meat, that's ok too.

In the meantime, why not learn more about the topic. Here are two films worth watching:

Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret - a documentary that explores the impact of animal agriculture on the environment.

Meat the Truth - a documentary explaining the toll the meat industry is taking on the planet's environment.

Good luck.

Go forth, eat less meat and let us know how you get on.