

Eating a plant-rich diet is the ultimate expression of Rotary values.

Rotary



ESRAG
ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY
ROTARY ACTION GROUP



PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Rotary supports activities that strengthen the conservation and protection of natural resources, advance environmental sustainability, and foster harmony between people and the environment.

The environmental benefits of a plant-rich diet include [reducing greenhouse gas emissions](#) and climate change, [marine and terrestrial biodiversity loss](#), [deforestation](#), air and water pollution, animal exploitation, and a host of environmental problems that contribute to food insecurity around the world.



DISEASE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Rotary supports activities that reduce the causes and effects of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, and prevention and treatment programs that limit their spread. By educating our communities about the **extraordinary health benefits of plant-rich diets**, we contribute to our communities' long-term well-being by [preventing and reversing many chronic diseases](#). Adopting plant-rich diets and reducing consumption of animal products can also reduce the growing incidence of [antibiotic resistance](#) and [zoonotic diseases](#) such as avian and swine flu.



WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

Rotary supports activities that encourage the management and protection of freshwater resources and provide universal and equitable access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene. [75% of global freshwater is used for crops and livestock](#). It generally takes more water to produce [animal products](#) than to produce crops for direct human consumption. Run-off of contaminants like manure from concentrated animal feed operations (CAFOs), as well as pesticides and fertilizers used to grow animal feed have [contaminated rivers](#), groundwater, and coastlines.



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Rotary supports activities and training to improve maternal health and reduce mortality for children under five. **Milk and egg allergies are the two most common childhood food allergies** in the United States, and now appear to be more persistent and [harder to outgrow](#). Obesity in [Pre-pregnancy](#) and childhood is on the rise, contributing to adverse pregnancy outcomes and [type 2 diabetes in children](#). Whole-food plant-rich diets have a well-documented positive impact on maintaining healthy body weights, and preventing, and often [reversing type 2 diabetes](#).



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rotary supports investments in people and communities to alleviate poverty, creating measurable and enduring economic improvements in poor and underserved areas. The height of the COVID pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in our lengthy food supply chains, concentrated in large industrial facilities. By moving away from industrial animal agriculture toward more plant-based diets, we can [increase opportunities](#) for more diversified, resilient, local, and **independent farms that provide productive work, sustainable livelihoods, and better environmental and natural resource management**. [Marginalized communities](#) can particularly benefit from this increased economic capacity.

Contact the [ESRAG Plant Rich Diet Task Force](#)



BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Rotary supports activities and training to improve education for all children, and literacy for children and adults. Children typically adopt the eating habits of their families, and children who are hungry or who suffer from [poor nutrition have academic and behavior challenges](#) in schools. By educating communities about the benefits of whole food plant-rich diets, we contribute to **better health and better learning outcomes for children and their families.**



PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

Rotary creates environments where peace can happen by addressing the underlying causes of conflict, including poverty, discrimination, ethnic tension, lack of access to education, and unequal distribution of resources. **Reducing consumption of animal-based foods among the world's wealthier populations** could free up significant amounts of land - [enabling the world to feed the 10 billion people anticipated in 2050](#), today, without agriculture further expanding into forested land. Global demand for animal products has led to increasing, and sometimes [violent displacement of indigenous peoples](#) from their traditional homelands.



THE FOUR-WAY TEST
Of the things we think, say or do:

Is it the truth?

Decades of scientific research by multiple entities has proven that whole food plant-rich diets are the best choice for optimum health for humans and the environment, and beneficial for animal welfare. The scientific community is in agreement that our current industrial agriculture systems are a major contributor to climate change.

Is it fair to all concerned?

The majority of the world's land and water are used for agriculture, with large portions devoted to grazing and growing feed crops for animals. The wealthiest nations consume the majority of these animal products while too many people around the world are food insecure. Terrestrial and marine wildlife is being lost at an alarming rate due to our animal product consumption, while most of the animals we consume are housed, transported, and slaughtered in cruel conditions. Industrial agriculture is a major contributor to climate change that is wreaking the greatest damage on the countries that contribute to it the least. Adopting plant-rich diets can bring greater fairness to humans, animals and the planet.

Will it build goodwill and better friendships?

Most Rotary meetings and events are centered around food. What better way to empower and educate Rotarians and friends than creating community around nourishing plant-rich eating that also supports our humanitarian work in other areas? Tremendous camaraderie and connection with others is possible when sharing recipes, products and other "discoveries" related to whole food plant-rich eating.

Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Rotarians following a whole food plant-rich diet will enjoy better health and vitality for themselves, and will be able to devote greater energy to projects and activities that benefit our communities and our world.

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