‘BRINGING VEGAN DINING INTO THE MAINSTREAM!’

**

The Challenge: invite chefs & restaurants to create new, delicious vegan menu options through a fun & friendly local competition!
Who Can Relate???

Trying to veganize a burrito plate at a Mexican Restaurant:

- Burrito filling?
- Tortilla?
- Cheese?
- Beans?
- Rice?
- Guac?
- Sauces?

Playing 20 Questions when Ordering:

'Is It Vegan?'
WHAT IF... THERE WERE A BETTER WAY?
One day in 2010, Eleni said to her omnivorous friend, Chef Shirle: ‘I will ask restaurants to add vegan options.’

Chef Shirle replied: ‘Don’t just ask: Chefs love a challenge. Make it FUN!’

That year, the Bull City Vegan Challenge was born in Durham, NC; starting with 10 participating restaurants.

After learning about Bull City’s event at Summerfest 2011, Bethany Davis adapted the event for Sacramento and has been organizing annual Vegan Chef Challenges (and more!) ever since.
What is a **VEGAN CHEF CHALLENGE**?  

**In brief: Chefs compete, you eat!**

1. **Challenge Organizers (YOU!) + volunteers help recruit 10-20 local restaurants** to participate.

2. **Chefs are challenged to create at least three new, original vegan menu items** to offer for an *entire month.*

3. **The dining public is encouraged to try as many restaurants & enjoy as many competing dishes as possible** during the month, and to **VOTE** for their favorites.

4. **Vegan Outreach helps your team promote the event** through notifying local press/media, the local vegan community and via social media.

5. **At the end, votes are tallied** and **winners in various categories** are decided.

6. **Chefs & restaurants are recognized** at an **awards celebration that YOU and your team host.**
What is a VEGAN CHEF CHALLENGE?

In a word: Delicious!!!
Goals and benefits: Outreach & Advocacy

‘Bringing Vegan Dining into the Mainstream’ by increasing awareness:

1. Chefs/Restaurants: discover that demand (and $$$$$) for plant-based options is HIGH!!!

2. Dining Public: discovers that vegan cuisine can be delicious & is beneficial for planet/people/animals.

Wins:

Increased availability & variety of delicious plant-based options for omnis AND vegans

* More ANIMALS are spared! *

Vegan Chef Challenge
**Why help host a challenge? Benefits:**

**During a Vegan Chef Challenge:**

1. **Vegan options increase for everyone!**
2. Generates **positive relations** between chefs/restaurants and vegan community.
3. **Media** covers events from a **positive angle**, and portrays vegan/plant-based cuisine in a **fun light**!
4. **Vegans** feel ‘welcomed to the table’ (i.e. **more choices** and **more places to dine!**)

**Long run:**

1. “Vegan” perceived positively -> **leads to dining public being more open to trying vegan/plant-based meals.**
2. **Restaurants** recognize demand -> **retain/increase and *promote*** plant-based options on their menus for the **long-term.**

= **win for animals!**
Results of a challenge: **Durham**

- **25+** Articles/mentions (newspapers, magazines, blogs, tv)
- **75%** Restaurants permanently adopt vegan dishes
- **50%** Restaurants continue to host vegan events and/or add options
- **60%** Of dining participants surveyed are not even veg, but omnivores!
Results of a challenge: Durham

Case Study: Guglhupf in 2016 (prior to participating in VCC) they had ZERO vegan options

“Given the positive feedback we received from you on this challenge, we are working to develop new vegan dishes for all of our menus throughout the day.”

--Guglhupf, a popular restaurant

Guglhupf continues to host events such as German and Vegan Wine Dinner, stating that:

“The Bull City Vegan Challenge [was] eye-opening on a number of levels. There’s tremendous interest and demand for vegan options. It’s really fun and adventurous to create flavorful, bold vegan dishes that surprise even the most seasoned diner that they are 100% plant based.”

Königsberger Klopse — tempeh meatballs with macadamia cream, capers and faux anchovies, served with a side of roasted potatoes topped with wood sorrel pesto
Results of a Challenge: Sacramento

100+

Restaurants have participated

* 30-35 restaurants participate annually
* 5-10 new venues added each year

90%

Restaurants permanently keep or increase vegan options on their menus!

100+

Articles/interviews Veg News, magazines, local newspapers, blogs, radio, TV spots

3500+

Facebook Followers

*Cumulative Post Reach During an Event: 60,000+
Results of a Challenge: Sacramento

Restaurants have become popular meet-up destinations for local & traveling vegans.

Cuisine includes: Sushi, Pizza, Mexican, Vietnamese, Thai, Ethiopian, Indian, Moroccan, Cajun, ‘diners,’ Bar & Grilles, wine bars, pubs, food trucks, specialty bakers, craft gelato, meal prep services, ‘pop-ups,’ and more!
Sacramento City Council Resolution!

WHEREAS, Sacramento, the Farm to Fork Capital of America, is a diverse urban center which is home to a variety of diets; and

WHEREAS, the Sacramento Vegan Chef Challenge began in 2011 under the leadership of its organizer, nutritionist Bethany Davis, and has been supported by the Sacramento Vegan Society, the Sacramento Vegetarian Society, and dozens of volunteers; and

WHEREAS, since it began, thirty-six restaurants and cafés have taken part in the Vegan Chef challenge by adding vegan items to their menus during the month of October; and

WHEREAS, organizers and supporters use events, communication, and outreach to raise awareness about vegan food and plant-based nutrition; and

WHEREAS, the Sacramento Vegan Chef Challenge works to maintain accessibility to its events by including casual, moderately priced restaurants and encouraging individual menu items in addition to prix fixe menus created by chefs; and

WHEREAS, the Permaine Journal, the peer reviewed medical publication associated with Kaiser Permanente, stated in 2013 that “physicians should consider recommending a plant-based diet to all their patients”; and

WHEREAS, plant-based meals use significantly less water to produce and result in fewer greenhouse gas emissions compared to other types of meals; and

WHEREAS, Sacramento Vegan Chef Challenge supports local business and creates a valuable forum to consider the health and environmental aspects of our food.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Sacramento that we hereby recognize the efforts and successes of the Vegan Chef Challenge and recognize the positive impact it has on the Sacramento region.

ISSUED: This 6th Day of November, 2014

CR02014-110

KEVIN MCCARTY, DISTRICT 6
Chefs love to participate!

Awesome prizes!
Happy vegans!

Sweet potato waffle, apricot schmear, buttermilk fried chicken strips, praline bacon 🍓, powdered sugar and cinnamon... #porchsaactown #farmtofork #midtown #saactown #eatlocal #lowcountry #nomnomnom #chickenandwaffles

Thank you @vegheadchick for celebrating your birthday with us. And thanks to all of our regular customers. We are family 😍 we support each other 💗 grateful #plantbased #vegan #exploremidtown #vegacramento

vegheadchick Reply 4h
How can I get started?

1. Go to [theveganchefchallenge.com](http://theveganchefchallenge.com) and click on 'Start a Challenge' to find videos, how-tos, and resources to begin organizing a Vegan Chef Challenge in your community.

2. Recruit volunteers and friends to join the party and help you launch your city's Challenge!

3. Invite local chefs and restaurants to participate, notify local media, then promote, promote, promote! Our team can assist with creating a webpage and social media links to help you get the word out.

4. At the end of your event, recognize top chefs and restaurants with awards and prizes.

Graphics by Dedicated Designs
How can I get started?

**Vegan Outreach is now coordinating the Vegan Chef Challenge program to expand nationwide!**

*A VCC program coordinator will be available to support your event launch*

*Vegan Outreach can provide logistical support, customized resources, templates, webpage, promotional support & funding partnership to get you started!*

Left, Jack Norris, President of VO, with Bethany Davis at Sacramento VCC Awards
**Vegan Outreach will support your event!**

**Vegan Outreach** will partner with your team to help fund your event!

- **Vegan Outreach** provides initial **$750 budget per Challenge.**

- **Restaurants/ Chefs** pay a participation fee of $50-$100 to **Vegan Outreach.**
  - **Vegan Outreach** will set up a custom donation url link for your city

- Additional donations may be solicited from local co-ops, veg-friendly groups, businesses, etc.

- **First $750 in chef/ restaurant donations** will reimburse **Vegan Outreach**

- Donations above initial $750 will be split between **Vegan Outreach**
  - (to cover program support costs) and **event organizers** (to cover additional event expenses)

**Funding Access:** All event-related **receipts** are submitted by organizer to **Vegan Outreach** for reimbursement
MEET OUR NEW NATIONAL VEGAN CHEF CHALLENGE COORDINATOR: Jackie VA
JackieV@veganoutreach.org

Vegan outreach will support your event!
Vegan outreach will support your event!

Vegan Chef Challenge COORDINATOR at VEGAN OUTREACH will support you on the 'how to's.'

VEGAN OUTREACH will:

- Help you organize chefs, social media, and obtain prizes
- Provide customized documents and printing support (i.e. invitational/recruiting handouts & program guidelines for chefs, posters, fliers, certificates, etc.) as needed
- Provide webpage & support as needed for your event on our national Vegan Chef Challenge site theveganchefchallenge.com
- Provide promotional support/assistance setting up FB, Instagram, & Twitter accounts as needed
- Generally support your efforts as Organizer & support your team for a SUCCESSFUL EVENT!!!
Vegan Outreach will provide templates and/or customized printed guidelines & materials for invite folders.
Quick Notes about the Guidelines:

**Participation Expectations:** (Provided to Chefs/Managers)

- **Vegan Chef Challenge Menu Items should be clearly marked** *(separate menu OR add to existing)*
- **Brief waitstaff regarding VCC specials** *(Ask Me buttons!)*
- **Offer VCC menu/promote VCC specials to EVERYBODY** *(not just vegans or ‘on request’)*

**All VCC dishes & side dishes, condiments, etc. must be PLANT-BASED**
=Free of animal products, honey, gelatin, animal-derived ingredients, etc.

**Oil-free, gluten-free, organic, ‘whole-foods plant based’ NOT required**

**Conventional sugar & conventional (i.e. non-organic) condiments are OK**

**Palm oil as ingredient in vegan margarine, frosting, fry oil, etc. is OK**

**‘Natural Flavorings’ listed on otherwise plant-based ingredients list is OK**

**Brief line cooks/kitchen staff on vegan ingredients & preparation precautions:**
=Dedicated OR well-cleaned utensils, prep surfaces, cooking surfaces

**Separate surfaces (grills, countertops) NOT required**

**Separate or dedicated fryer NOT required** *(as long as plant oil is used for frying)*
‘10 Weeks to VEGAN’ Concurrent Event!

Wouldn’t it be even MORE amazing if all of those diners who go out on the town to experience delicious options during a Vegan Chef Challenge were inspired to ‘Go Veg’ for the long-term?

VEGAN OUTREACH launched the 10 Weeks to Vegan campaign to support veg-curious folks in their quest!

Resources & website links will be provided & listed on your materials/templates that can be shared with chefs and the dining public to encourage them to Try Veg for the duration of your Challenge event, and beyond!
1) Pre-challenge: Organize a Volunteer Team

Though Organizing can be a one-person show, it's easier if you have a team of 3-6 volunteers to help you. Examples of roles include:

1. Lead Organizer/ Event Contact
2. Restaurant Recruiting / Invite Folder Delivery
3. Event Partners/ Donations Solicitation*
4. Poster Delivery*
5. Social Media Specialist (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)*
6. Press Manager/ Contact
7. Dine Outs/ Events Coordinator*
8. Awards Celebration Organizer
9. Local Prizes Coordinator*
10. Photographer (intern or volunteer)

Bull City dream team. Leeanne, center, ran her own challenge after Eleni (right) left in 2018!

Tip:
Sign-up volunteers for small tasks at local vegan events/dine-outs. Plan an initial Organizing Team Meeting. *Optional
2) Pre-challenge: Recruit Restaurants

With your team, create a list of local restaurants you would like to see participate.

- Include a variety of price points, cuisines, and places that are not ‘obvious’ veg destinations.
- Popular local ‘foodie’ locations & new restaurants encouraged! *Chains/franchises NOT encouraged.
- Deliver invitational packets w/ information, event guidelines, vegan ingredient clarifications, and preparation expectations are provided to chefs/managers.
- Chefs/Restaurants are asked to create at least three NEW, original VEGAN menu items to offer alongside their regular menus for up to an entire month. (i.e. appetizers, soups, salads, entrees, desserts, brunch items)
- Chefs/Managers SIGN UP online to participate & submit participation fee.

Tips

Start with a big name Chef/Restaurant to “name drop” to other restaurants.

Go IN PERSON to the restaurants during non-busy hours (between 2 PM - 4 PM) and ask to speak to the Chef or Manager. *BE PROFESSIONAL
Chefs are challenged to **BE CREATIVE & to PROMOTE!**

- **NEW, original** vegan menu items
- **COMPETITION** = Taste, Creativity & Presentation
- Dishes should **WOW omnis** and vegans alike!
- **Provide FULL dining experience:** ie appetizer, entree, dessert
  - Not just appeasing vegan diners with a garden salad, hummus & veggie plate, or pre-fab frozen veggie burger
- **OK to ‘change it up’/ add new items** weekly or mid-Challenge

**Tips:**

1. Share photos of Vegan Chef Challenge dishes & menus when recruiting chefs
2. Provide Vegan Substitution guide and/ or **list of vegan ingredient brands**
3) Pre-Challenge: PROMOTION & PUBLICITY

We’ll help you:

- Have a WEBPAGE up & running!
- Send out PRESS RELEASE (sample) to local media.
- Utilize free online event CALENDARS to publish your event
- Send short personal emails to targeted food/event writers, Veg bloggers, VegNews, etc. (include press release)
- YELP! & ‘in-kind’ partnerships with local magazines/publications
- Set up a Facebook page, Instagram & Twitter accounts

Tips:

1. Suggest studio or on-location chef cooking demos of VCC dishes, or suggest a ‘cook-off’ between two chefs!
2. Get veg community on-board for outreach
Next steps:

Please Fill out an Organizer Interest Form with your Name, City & Contact Info!
Thank You For Your Interest in Organizing A Vegan Chef Challenge!

Once we receive your form, we will contact you with more details.

veganchefchallenge.org