

King's College London



"I think no meat one day a week is a good idea. We don't have to eat meat every day. Sometimes I choose to be vegetarian 2-3 times a week for health. I've also heard it's good for sustainability."

Jiyoun, undergraduate student, Public Policy and Management

University background

King's College London (KCL), the fourth oldest university in England, has an outstanding reputation for providing world-class teaching and cutting-edge research. KCL's 35,000 students and 8,000 staff study and work across five central London campuses – The Strand, London Bridge, Waterloo, Denmark Hill and St Thomas's Hospital.

Catering provision

KCL's catering is provided by King's Food, an in-house team of 130 food service professionals who operate 20 retail outlets across all five campuses and provide hospitality catering for internal and external events, from light refreshments and working lunches to receptions and formal dinners. King's Food works with a health and nutrition advisor to nutritionally-analyse menus and ensure that dishes are balanced and healthy as well as tasty.

"I think it's good because on the other days of the week you can choose meat and just one day you choose vegetarian. To have only vegetarian is a way to have a mixed diet. The lack of meat in food helps the climate as the production of meat creates CO2."

José, postgraduate student, History



Food sustainability

King's Food and KCL's Sustainability Team have a Sustainable Food Policy which sets out key commitments including prioritising locally sourced and seasonal products, avoiding palm oil in food produced in-house and not serving beef at any KCL restaurants or outlets. A range of plant-based milks are offered without a surcharge, vegan/vegetarian sandwiches are served as the default option at meetings and hospitality events and the carbon footprint of dishes is specified so diners can make informed choices. In April 2024 the King's Food team scooped up four awards at the Public Sector Catering Awards, including the Sustainability Award for their dedication to greener food and making a positive impact.

"For me, as a vegetarian, Beyond Meat Monday works wonders as there's more choice. It's a big measure they've taken helping animals and climate. Non vegetarians can also switch – we should definitely be doing this."

Rishika, postgraduate student, Banking and Finance



“This initiative has enabled us to return our Monday footfall to the levels we had before the removal of meat – circa 1,100 covers. And has so far saved an incredible 15.6 tonnes CO2e compared to reintroducing a meat dish.”

Lisa Connellan, Retail Manager, King’s Food

Meat Free Monday and beyond

King’s Food started Meat Free Monday in 2019. Initially suffering a 16% drop in hot food sales on Mondays, the team tried a different approach post-Covid, partnering with Beyond Meat in 2022 to create ‘Beyond Meat Mondays’. The hot food served in all outlets on Mondays was either vegetable based or featured a Beyond Meat product, and a Beyond Meat burger van sold vegan fast-food options outdoors in the warmer months. Food sales on Mondays grew and reached the same level as other days of the week. Currently there is no brand partnership, but hot food served on Mondays remains meat free.

King’s Food has also increased its vegetarian choices on other days, and offers at least one daily vegan meal option and a wide range of plant-based pastries and cakes. The university has a permanent full vegan café – Roots – situated on the 8th floor of Bush House at the Strand Campus. It is one of the first university-owned plant-based cafés in the UK, serving hot food, salads, snacks and hot drinks.

King’s Food regularly revises its menus and remains on the lookout for exciting new plant-based products to incorporate.



“Sustainability is incredibly important to everyone at King’s; therefore we aim to put sustainability at the heart of our food development process.”

Graeme Collie, Executive Chef, King’s Food and Culinary Lead, TUCO Ltd

“Sustainability is not just a choice but a necessity, the idea of going on the plant-based direction in our menus is not just about diets but about the future we want to see. As a business is our chance to re-educate our customers on that idea”

Ana Arias Gallego, Marketing and Content Co-ordinator, King’s Food



University contact details

King’s College London, Strand, London WC2R 2LS

Telephone 020 7836 5454

Website kcl.ac.uk

Facebook King’s Food

Twitter @KingsFoodNews

Instagram @KCLfood

LinkedIn King’s College London

MEAT
Monday
FREE