



Join Healthcare Food Service Leaders from Around the Country and Support National Nutrition Month and Balanced Menus

[Balanced Menus](#) is a systematic approach to reduce the amount of meat protein in hospital food and a strategic pathway to serving the healthiest, most sustainably produced meat available. Through *Balanced Menus* hospitals can mitigate climate change, reduce costs and promote nutritional health.

Follow some of these ideas and help promote **Balanced Menus** during National Nutrition Month: March 2010.

1) Take the Balanced Menus Challenge – Join the many hospitals around the country that have taken the [Balanced Menus Challenge](#) and try to reduce your meat purchasing by 20% over one year. The Challenge can be implemented either in your cafeteria, on patient menus, or in both venues.

2) Here are just a few ways your hospital can showcase Balanced Menus Recipes during National Nutrition Month:

- Choose one day per week to showcase Balanced Menus meals throughout the month OR
- Choose one week during March to showcase Balanced Menus meals OR
- Create a facility-wide Balanced Menus Day in March OR
- Use National Nutrition Month as inspiration to redesign your menus on a broader scale.

Showcase Ideas

- Meatless Day of the Week – Eliminate meat one day per week in your cafeteria.
- Substitute sustainably-produced meat for one day, or in one recipe, and promote this change.
- Reduce your burger size and serve sustainably raised beef, bison or lamb.
- Offer reduced prices on a particular day for meat-free or reduced-meat items.
- Introduce a new meat-free recipe.
- Redesign recipes to increase vegetable and grain portions and reduce meat/poultry.
- Offer meals where meat is a compliment to a variety of grains and vegetables, not the center of the plate.

How do I Promote *Balanced Menus* in my Hospital?:

- **Internal Newsletters**
Many reputable researchers, organizations and governmental agencies that acknowledge the importance of reducing meat consumption for positive health benefit and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. Utilize these statements and articles to support your transition proposal to hospital staff and administrators.
- **Point of Sale/Patient Tray Marketing**
 - Utilize the *Balanced Menus* marketing materials throughout your facility (available before March 1st, through the Balanced Menus link at www.healthyfoodincare.org) Provide positive publicity to your staff and local media. Marketing materials such as table tents, tray bookmarks and posters will be available for download, prior to March 1st, on the Balanced Menus website. Add your hospital's logo, print and publicize your commitment to healthier menus throughout your facility! Let your local newspapers know how health care is leading sustainable food efforts.
- **Recipes**
Try recipes found in Health Care Without Harm's [Balanced Menus Recipe Collection](#) in cafeteria or patient meals. Provide copies for staff and visitors. Or, develop your own *Balanced Menus* recipes and share with others in the Health Care Without Harm network.

How do I include my Hospital in the Balanced Menus National Nutrition Month Calendar of Events?

Technical assistance and regional leadership groups, offering a more local peer resource network, may be available in your area. [Contact us](#) for more information.