



MEATLESS MONDAY, TEXAS-STYLE

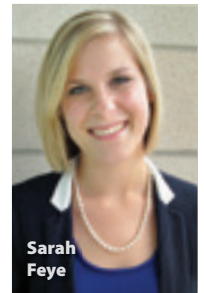
// BY RUTHANNE JOHNSON

IF YOU THINK Texas cuisine revolves around mesquite-smoked hamburgers and inch-thick steaks, think again. With mouth-watering dishes and innovative promotions, the University of Houston’s dining services department has made meat-free the new Monday staple.

The change came in 2012 after the university took note of students’ shifting dietary preferences. With advice and sample recipes from The HSUS, dining services began offering up to seven meat-free options every Monday in one of its busiest dining halls, which serves more than 2,500 meals a day. Colorful signs highlight vegetarian and vegan offerings, while “Make It Meatless” instructions help diners transform meat dishes to healthier fare, such as by swapping chicken for grilled tofu and veggies in fajitas. Employees blog and tweet about the program, host educational tables and hand out “I Chose Veggies” stickers to students who have opted for a meat-free offering. Trivia contests and other games also encourage participation.

At first, while many students embraced the new menu, others didn’t understand how they could still have a balanced diet without meat, says university dietitian Sarah Feye. “The information from [The HSUS] allowed us to educate students about some of the issues they have been interested to learn more about.”

Some of the most popular entrees, Feye says, are Caribbean plantains with black beans and rice sofrito, rosemary polenta with mushroom and broccoli rabe, and tofu chili garlic noodles (pictured at top left). “Student response has been so positive to this program that we will continue to run [it] long term.”



Sarah Feye



TOFU CHILI GARLIC NOODLE BOWL

(SERVES 8)

MARINATED TOFU INGREDIENTS

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|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 pound extra firm tofu, cubed | 1 teaspoon sesame oil |
| 1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped | ½ teaspoon black pepper |
| 3½ tablespoons low sodium soy sauce | ½ tablespoon maple or agave syrup |
| 3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar | 1 tablespoon molasses |
| | 1 tablespoon green onion, chopped |

VEGETABLE MIX INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 4 cups cooked spaghetti or rice noodles | ½ cup mushrooms, sliced |
| 1 cup broccoli florets, chopped | 1 cup cabbage, chopped |
| ½ cup carrots, grated | 4 cups vegetable broth |
| ½ cup canned water chestnuts, chopped | 1 cup chili garlic sauce |
| ½ cup onion, chopped | ½ cup green onion, chopped |

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine marinade ingredients with tofu in a zip-top plastic bag or glass dish. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or overnight, turning once.
2. Cook noodles according to the package directions.
3. Steam vegetables (broccoli through cabbage) for 5-12 minutes, depending on desired firmness.
4. While the vegetables are steaming, pour the vegetable broth into a saucepan and bring to a simmer.
5. Drain the tofu and discard the marinade.
6. To serve, place half a cup of noodles in a bowl. Top with 2 ounces of tofu, half a cup of vegetable mix, half a cup of broth, and 2 tablespoons of chili garlic sauce. Garnish with chopped green onion.

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