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New research says the future is flexitarian - now more supermarkets and restaurants must step up to the plate.

New YouGov survey for Eating Better finds 44% of British people willing or already committed to cutting down on meat or cutting it out from their diet.

Eating Better showcases over 20 food companies helping people shift to less and better meat/more plant-based eating.

In National Vegetarian Week Eating Better calls on more restaurants, fast food chains, supermarkets, food producers and food service providers to step up to the plate.

New YouGov research for Eating Better (1) published today 18 May, (2) finds that 44% of the British public are willing or already committed to cutting down on meat or cutting it out from their diet (3). And while a new Eating Better review (4) of company activities on this agenda finds some companies taking a lead, people want many more restaurants, fast food chains, supermarkets, food producers and food service providers to serve better this fast growing market.

Young people in particular are driving the flexitarian trend towards eating less meat, making this a generational shift. Younger people are more willing than older people to cut back on meat, and they have a much higher awareness and acceptance of the environmental impacts of meat eating. Over twice as many (46%) young people (aged 18-24) agree that *“producing and consuming meat/livestock products has a significant negative impact on the environment”* compared with older people (20%) (aged 65+).

“As more people are eating less meat, we welcome the steps that an increasing number of food businesses are taking to respond, and we encourage them to go further,” says Sue Dibb of the Eating Better alliance. *“But many food companies are missing out on the business opportunities offered by the huge rise in flexitarian eating – we encourage them to get involved. Many organisations within the Eating Better alliance are working directly with companies to help them on this path.”*

To encourage companies to go further and inspire more food companies to better serve this market, Eating Better is showcasing over 20 supermarkets, high street food chains and food service companies that are finding ways to support their customers to eat less and better meat and more plant based food.

Examples include:

- **Pret A Manger's** *Not Just For Veggies* campaign that has trialled over 60 new vegetarian and plant-based products in the last year, rolling out monthly chef specials, opening two exclusively veggie stores in London and expanding the veggie product choice at all Pret stores.
- Contract caterer **Sodexo's** *Green & Lean* healthy and sustainable school meals
- **Asda's** flexitarian *Green and bean* lean beef mince with 40% haricot beans.
- New plant-based menus at high street restaurant chains **Zizzi's**, **Las Iguanas** and **Weatherspoons**
- **Marks & Spencer**, **Co-op** and **Tesco** expanding their range of meat-free & plant-based choices.
- **Sainsbury's** working with Oxford University to trial ways of encouraging customers to eat less meat and more veg.
- **Waitrose & McDonald's** commitments to better meat and dairy.

When asked by YouGov what would most help people reduce their meat consumption, the British public said their top priorities are for restaurants and fast food chains to provide better choice of meat-free dishes or meals with less meat; for more price promotions for meat-free choices, more help with cooking vegetable-based dishes, more meat-free choices on school lunch menus and for supermarkets to provide more meat-free or lower meat ready meal choices.

Notes for Editors:

- (1) Eating Better: for a fair, green, healthy future (www.eating-better.org) is a broad alliance, to help people move towards eating less meat and more food that's better for people and the planet, as part of the vital task of creating sustainable food and farming systems. The alliance brings together over 50 national supporting organisations and partner networks, from health, environment, international development, animal welfare, research, responsible producer and professional interests (see full list: <http://www.eating-better.org/about.html>).
- (2) All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,715 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 21 - 23 April 2017. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). The research was funded by the Vegetarian Society for Eating Better. The research findings can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/EYouGov2017>
- (3) In response to the question "How willing or unwilling are you to consider eating less meat and fewer meat products in the future" 34% say they are willing, 3% say they have already cut down and 7% say they already don't eat any meat or meat products.
- (4) *The Future of Eating is Flexitarian: Companies Leading the Way* by Eating Better can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/flexitarianfuture>