

Gordon Neighborhood House – Vegan Meal Planning Project Proposal

Group 8 – Audrey Valerio, Natalie Goh, Demi Wu, Melanie Newman and Yifei Zhu

Introduction:

The purpose of this project is to create healthy vegan recipes for Gordon Neighborhood House's (GNH) Meatless Monday community lunch, and learn how to scale recipes up to suit a large group of 35-40 people. The recipes must align with GNH's Food Philosophy, kitchen space, budget, food availability and community needs.

GNH is located at the West End of Vancouver. Most of the people that live in the West End neighbourhood are between the ages of 20-39. In addition, the West End neighbourhood is the fourth densest in Vancouver, along with having the fourth highest density of children in Vancouver (West End: Exploring the Community, 2012). The majority of individuals rent a mid-rise or high-rise apartment (West End: Exploring the Community, 2012). There are many people that have a low income in the West End and utilize some sort of social assistance (K. Ling, personal communication, January 22, 2018). For many of the vulnerable people in the community, GNH provides a welcoming environment and accessible services. One of the services is pay-what-you-can lunches on Mondays and Wednesdays, which provides both low-cost nutritious food and a sense of connection between diners and volunteers alike. Our group will focus on the Meatless Monday recipes for this lunch program, scaling up, reworking and creating new vegan meals to serve at GNH.

Significance:

Vegan meals encompass accessibility, inclusivity, and food literacy, which all align with GNH's food philosophy. By having vegan meals, everyone in the community including those who have dietary preferences due to religiously or environmentally driven reasons can enjoy low-cost lunches with their community. In addition, providing vegan meals encourages GNH's visitors to eat healthier and learn to prepare new foods for themselves, thus increasing their food literacy.

Evidence has shown that vegan diets can contain more nutrients, such as dietary fiber, folic acid and vitamins C, while having lower calories and saturated fat (Craig, 2009). These nutrients help to improve overall health and lower the risk of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes (Craig, 2009). However, B-vitamins and calcium deficiencies are more common for people consuming a vegan diet. Therefore, well-planned, nutrient balanced vegan recipes are important. Having low-cost access to healthy vegan meals is an important opportunity for community members in need to expand their diets and learn to nourish themselves.

Gaps in knowledge:

- Addressing vegan options in a community setting in the West End of Vancouver.
- Community opinions of vegan options, at GNH.
- Vegan options that cost \$25-35 per meal and can be served to a large number of people.

Objectives:

Objective 1: Develop 3-5 vegan recipes, that cost \$25-35 per meal, to be served weekly at GNH, on their meatless Mondays, and also scale up Indian recipes that were provided by GNH.

Objective 2: Test out the developed recipes and ensure that the recipes are within the budget at the proposed scale (35-40 people).

Methods:

First, we will visit GNH to help with lunch preparation to gain insight into the community lunches that are served and how they operate on a daily basis. We will discuss what food they normally receive from local farms, markets and through donations, with the chef and staff at GNH. Additionally, we will review the nutritional assessment report of LFS 350 students from last term, to determine which nutrients are lacking in the people that consume the meals served at GNH. From this, we will create healthy and low-cost vegan recipes for the meatless Monday community lunch. We will also scale up existing recipes to serve 35 people.

For the development of the healthy and low-cost vegan recipes, we will refer to Pulse Canada. Pulse Canada has released tested vegan recipes, using scaled-up batch sizes. Each of their large-scale vegan recipes includes nutrition facts, step instructions as well as a list of ingredients with their respective measurements based on different serving sizes. We will also refer to The Vegan Society for affordable, quick and easy vegan recipes.

We can use Skillet's online recipe calculator to help us scale up the existing recipes. This calculator converts the list of ingredients from existing recipes into the required weights and measures for the scaled-up recipes. Depending on the serving sizes of the existing recipes, we can multiply the recipe accordingly such that it can serve 35 people. Furthermore, we should use the original cooking temperature as a reference point and adjust accordingly due to larger serving size, as well as taste the food when seasoning, not just scale up by the same factor as that could result in over or under seasoning.

To ensure the affordability of the recipes at the proposed scale, we will use the online Recipe Cost Calculator to help us establish a recipe cost overview for each of the recipes we are developing. This tool allows us to calculate the cost of the recipe for 35 servings and ensure it is within the budget. In the case that the recipe is over GNH's budget, we will search for alternatives in ingredients, that may be able to bring the cost of the recipe down. We could also look into decreasing the amount of an expensive ingredient, and increasing the amount of a cheaper ingredient, as long as it suits the recipe and produces a satisfying end product. We could incorporate the vegetables grown by the other LFS 350 group to lower the costs.

Once we have found recipes, we will test them, to ensure that they taste good and that they are visually appealing. If needed, we can make adjustments to the recipes before submitting them to GNH.

Outcome(s):

The final product to be produced includes the reworked and scaled up vegan recipes, as well as any new recipes created. Additionally, at the end of this term, we hope to have learned about healthy meal planning, community engagement and development as well as appreciate the importance of community members having a safe and welcoming place to enjoy a meal that is healthy, affordable and delicious.

Budget:

We will spend a maximum of \$50 on ingredients needed to test the vegan meals, that we have developed. By spending money on the recipes and testing them, we can ensure that the recipes are of good quality and will be utilized by GNH.

References

- Calculate Recipe Costs. Fast. (n.d.). Retrieved February 04, 2018, from <https://recipecostcalculator.net/>
- Craig, W. (2009). Health effects of vegan diets. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 89(5), S1627-S1633. 10.3945/ajcn.2009.26736N
- On a budget. (n.d.). Retrieved February 04, 2018, from <https://www.vegansociety.com/resources/recipes/budget>
- Scale-Up Recipes. (n.d.). Retrieved February 04, 2018, from <http://www.pulsecanada.com/food-industry/foodservice/scale-up-recipes/>
- The Pulse Potential - Pulse Canada. (n.d.). Retrieved February 4, 2018, from <http://www.pulsecanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/00-Large-Scale-Recipe-Manual.pdf>
- Vegan on a budget. (2016, May 27). Retrieved February 04, 2018, from <https://www.vegansociety.com/whats-new/blog/vegan-budget>
- West End: Exploring the Community. (2012). Retrieved February 2, 2018, from <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/profile-west-end-2012.pdf>