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**Council Member Helen Rosenthal and Advocates
Rally to Support Meatless Mondays Resolution**

Council Members Helen Rosenthal and various public health, environmental, and animal rights advocates rallied on Thursday, January 22nd at 10am on the steps of City Hall in support of Meatless Mondays, a resolution the Council Members will introduce at the stated Council meeting Thursday afternoon.

Meatless Monday is a national and international campaign that encourages people to enjoy meat-free meals on Mondays to improve their personal and public health, animal welfare, wildlife protection, and environmental and agricultural sustainability. The resolution would bring awareness to the efforts already underway in restaurants, schools, and cafeterias across the city to provide meat-free meals on Mondays, and it would call on an expansion of those efforts city-wide.

Approximately 40 schools in New York City already participate in Meatless Monday, including public, private, and charter schools at all grade levels. New York City colleges and universities have also participated in Meatless Monday, including Barnard College, Brooklyn Law School, Columbia University, Fordham University, LaGuardia Community College, and Manhattan College.

Restaurant owners in New York City such as Bill Telepan, Mario Batali, John Fraser, and Marisa May currently participate in Meatless Mondays by offering vegetarian options to their customers.

“In the spirit of the New Year, we hope this Resolution to encourage a more healthful lifestyle will pass through the City Council and be signed into law by the Mayor as quickly as possible. ‘Meatless Mondays’ are good for public health, the environment, and our animals,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal (D-Manhattan)**.

“We’re issuing a call to all New Yorkers: Let’s go meatless on Mondays. By doing so, we’re not only helping the planet, but ourselves,” said **Council Member Corey Johnson, Chair of the Council’s Health Committee**. “Studies have shown that red meat in particular has a carbon footprint similar to that of automobiles. And if New Yorkers cut out meat just one day of the week, we could potentially make a dent in rates of obesity, cancer, and diabetes. Many institutions, including forty schools, universities such as Columbia and reputable restaurants have already championed the Meatless Monday campaign. Adding the voice of the City Council will only ensure that even more New Yorkers will personally start their weeks off right while simultaneously catalyzing collective positive change.”

"Every time we choose a vegetarian meal, we’re choosing to help protect our health, the health of our planet, and animals,” says **Compassion Over Killing’s Executive Director Erica Meier**. “By introducing this Meatless Monday resolution, the New York City Council is sending a powerful message about the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables, and of course, eating fewer animals.”

“It’s wonderful that New York City plans to join Los Angeles, Philadelphia and other major cities in the U.S. and 36 countries by introducing the Meatless Monday resolution,” said **Sid Lerner, founder of the Meatless Monday Movement, chairman of The Monday Campaigns**. “What perfect timing to introduce Meatless Monday with the new year, when many people are thinking of improving their diets. Meatless Monday can help New Yorkers cut out meat once a week for their health the health of our planet. We’re honored that chefs and restaurateurs like Mario Batali, Bill Telepan, John Fraser, Jason Weiner and Marisa May have promoted Meatless Monday in their restaurants. This resolution will inspire more chefs and restaurants to follow their lead, as well as schools, hospital and work-place cafeterias, in offering innovative meatless meals each Monday.”

“The public health and environmental impacts associated with increased meat consumption are clear. Excess meat consumption has been linked to increased rates of chronic disease such as obesity, heart disease and cancer. In addition, meat production consumes more resources and generates more greenhouse gases than fruit and vegetable production,” said **Robert Lawrence, MD, Director of the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future**. “Recognizing Meatless Monday is a positive step towards improving the health of residents and environment in New York.”

"Americans have among the highest per capita meat consumption in the world," said **Krystil Smith, Food Policy Manager at The Humane Society of the United States**.

"Taking a once-a-week holiday from meat and enjoying more plant-based meals improves public health. It also raises consciousness about how individual food choices connect to important social questions about health, the environment and the treatment of animals."

"Meatless Monday is a timely initiative for New York City and the rest of the country," said **Chef Bill Telepan of Telepan**. "Through my career as a chef, and especially my work with Wellness in the Schools, I've seen the impact of how encouraging the consumption of real foods, stripped of processed ingredients, can help combat the epidemic of obesity and improve long-term health outcomes. We need to revive the old ad age mantra "You are what you eat" and educate others to understand how small changes can have a tremendous impact."

"Meatless Monday is an easy win, always has been," said **Chef Mario Batali**. "It's been nothing but a positive experience since we introduced it in our restaurants five years ago and I'm thrilled to hear that New York City is introducing this citywide Meatless Monday resolution promoting health for people and planet."

"It's encouraging to see the Council amplify the exposure of Meatless Mondays in one of the top restaurant cities in the world," said **Chef John Fraser of Dovetail and Narcissa**. "Many New Yorkers are learning that taking one day off of meat can have lasting health and worldly effects. Meatless Mondays encourage diners to explore these options. We are able to build business while help expand healthful possibilities - everyone wins"

"Meatless Monday has been a great fit at SD26, allowing us to bring attention to the many delicious meatless dishes in our authentic Italian cuisine," said **Chef Marisa May of SD26**. "Now that New York City is introducing this resolution, I hope that other restaurateurs will take the opportunity to highlight the meatless options found in their respective cuisines, both as a culinary exploration and for the health of New Yorkers!"

"Meatless Mondays helps to make New York a healthier place," said **Dr. Lisa Metsch, Acting Director, Lerner Center for Health Promotion, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health**. "By reducing dietary consumption of meat, we simultaneously lower risk of heart disease, obesity, and hypertension; production of greenhouse gasses; and cultivate more inventive, healthier diets for the entire population. As advocates for healthy New Yorkers, we salute Meatless Mondays and the Council's efforts."

"Great to hear that New York City officials are considering introducing Meatless Monday! It's such an easy and enjoyable way to reduce our carbon footprint and improve our health. If the resolution passes, we look forward to seeing what delicious and creative meat free options chefs come up with on Mondays in this amazing city!" said **Paul, Mary and Stella McCartney**.

"Meatless Monday is a great way for New Yorkers to bring compassionate, conscientious eating into their lifestyle," said **Allie Feldman, Executive Director of NYCLASS**. "We hope more and more New Yorkers will make every day meatless."

“Making meat-free options more widely available and encouraging New Yorkers to skip meat on Mondays is a huge step forward in sustainable leadership for the city,” said **Stephanie Feldstein, Population and Sustainability Director for the Center for Biological Diversity**. “Reducing meat consumption is a critical part of fighting climate change and protecting endangered species.”

“We are pleased that the Health Committee has proposed this important resolution. It indicates a strong investment in the overall health of the residents of New York City,” said **Robert Ostfeld, M.D., MSc., director of the Cardiac Wellness Program at Montefiore Medical Center**. “As a cardiologist who sees numerous patients suffering with heart disease, diabetes and hypertension, I have witnessed first-hand the dramatic health improvements that can be achieved with a whole-food, plant-based diet.”

“Meatless Monday has gained traction at Syracuse University and in the Syracuse community,” said **Tom Dennison, Faculty Director for the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion, The Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs Syracuse University**. “Students learn new ways of thinking about how the food choices they make impact their personal health and the health of the environment. Meatless Monday has also been adopted by all the local Syracuse hospitals, which demonstrates their commitment to caring for the health of the communities they serve, beyond medical treatment.”

“Kudos to Council Members Helen Rosenthal and Corey Johnson for recognizing and raising awareness about the catastrophic impact of modern-day meat production on wildlife and the environment, and for realizing the urgent need to encourage a reduction in meat consumption,” said **David Karopkin, Founder and Director of GooseWatch NYC**. “Improving public health, environmental protection, and animal welfare are all crucial goals promoted and advanced by the Meatless Mondays initiative.”

“It is great to see New York, the most global of cities, joining the growing national and international movement for more sustainable, humane food systems and ways of eating. This is an important step forward for the global and local environment, other animals, and the city’s public health,” said **Mia MacDonald, executive director of Brighter Green, a New York-based action tank**.

“HEART believes that reducing the consumption of animal products would contribute to a healthier, more just and more sustainable New York. We are proud to support the resolution to recognize Meatless Monday in New York City,” said **Brad Goldberg, Board Chair of HEART**.

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