

**How important is meat in  
your diet?**

● How important is meat in your diet? Could you happily live without ever eating any meat? In the UK vegetarianism is becoming more and more popular.

● Vegetarianism is increasing in the UK as more and more British people are deciding not to eat meat and animal products. According to the Vegetarian Society, 2000 people are giving up meat and 'going veggie' in Britain every week. There's even a 'National Vegetarian Week' organised every year to encourage people to try a meat-free lifestyle.

### ● **Vegetarians and vegans**

● In 1989 a poll indicated that 3% of the UK's population was vegetarian. A more recent poll estimated that 5.7% of the population were vegetarian. In numbers this means there are over 3 million vegetarians in the UK today and vegetarians (people who don't eat meat), and vegans (people who don't eat or use any animal products) are becoming increasingly common in UK culture. Visit a British supermarket and you will see a wide range of vegetarian ingredients and prepared meals on the shelves including vegetarian sausages, vegan cheese (it doesn't contain milk!) and meat-free burgers.

### ● **A healthy diet**

● So why are Brits cutting out meat from their diets? Many vegetarians and vegans choose not to eat meat or animal products for ethical reasons. They are unhappy about the bad treatment of the animals and the effects of meat and fish production on the environment. Worries about food safety (for example BSE or 'mad cow disease' as it is commonly known) cause many people to stop eating meat. Others choose to change their diet in this way to improve their general health. According to the UK organisation, the Vegetarian Society, a meat-free diet could help reduce the risk of certain cancers and the possibility of heart disease, as well as other health problems such as obesity and high blood pressure.

### ● **Organic farming**

● Another rising trend in the UK's food culture is related to how our food is produced. Many people are rejecting GM (genetically modified) food and intensive farming procedures. They want their food to be organically farmed. What exactly does 'organic' mean? Organic food is produced in a more 'natural' way. Organic farmers use no, or very few, chemicals, pesticides or fertilisers. Organic farming isn't only concerned with plant crops, animals can also be farmed organically. Organic meat is produced without the use of drugs and antibiotics. Organically farmed animals also have better living conditions, for example more space and more nutritious food.

### ● **Organic food**

● According to the Soil Association, the UK's leading organisation for organic food and farming, three out of every four households in the UK now buy some types of organic food. Some people buy organic meat, fruit and vegetables from farmers' markets, where local farmers sell their products directly to the consumer. Others have a box of organic mixed fruit and vegetables delivered to their homes each week. Many people buy organic produce in their local supermarket. As with vegetarianism, people choose organic foods for health reasons or because of concern for the environment. Although it's often more expensive, fans of organic food say it tastes much better!

- Are the sentences true or false?
- Vegetarianism is becoming more popular in Britain. True\False
- 200 people stop eating meat in the UK every week. True\False
- Vegetarians and vegans don't eat or use any animal products. True\False
- A meat-free diet can increase the possibility of heart disease. True\False
- Organic farmers don't use drugs or antibiotics to produce meat. True\False
- Vegetarian and organic food is sold in many British supermarkets. True\False
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## 2. Check your vocabulary: gap fill


- Complete the gaps with a word from the box.

over                      every year                      very few  
three out of every four                      many                      more and more

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ British people are deciding not to eat meat and animal products.
- 2. There's a 'National Vegetarian Week' organised \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3. There are \_\_\_\_\_ three million vegetarians in the UK today.
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ vegetarians and vegans choose not to eat meat or animal products for ethical reasons.
- 5. Organic farmers use no, or \_\_\_\_\_, chemicals, pesticides or fertilisers.
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ households in the UK now buy some types of organic food



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- Would you think about becoming a vegetarian?
  - Would you miss meat if you became a vegetarian?
  - How much meat do you eat in your diet?
  - Are there many vegetarians in your country?
  - Do you think the world would be a better place if people ate less meat?

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- Learner Reflection What did you learn from reading about Vegetarianism.
  - What I learnt...
  - What I enjoyed...
  - What I didn't enjoy...

● . Check your understanding: true or false

● 1. True

● 2. False

● 3. False

● 4. False

● 5. True

● 6. True

● 2. Check your vocabulary: gap fill

● 1. More and more

● 2. every year

● 3. over

● 4. Many

● 5. very few

● 6. Three out of every four

● 3. Check your vocabulary: matching

● 1. a

● 2. d

● 3. b

● 4. c

● 5. e

● 6. f