

## **Just 1% of UK population meets all nutrition recommendations**

**3rd October 2012** - published online today, a new report calls for the nation to re-address the balance of foods they are consuming to meet guidelines for a diet based on two-thirds plant-based foods and just one-third from animal sources.

***“Achieving Eatwell plate recommendations: is this a route to improving both sustainability and healthy eating?”*** employs data from the 2009/10 National Diet and Nutrition Survey, to provide insight into how the UK is doing at achieving ‘Eatwell plate’ recommendations and eating sustainably.

### ***Key findings***

- Only **1% of the UK meets all healthy eating guidelines** for total fat, saturated fat, fibre, protein, fruit and vegetables and oil-rich fish.
- **12% of the UK is managing to achieve healthy eating targets** set for **total fat, saturated fat** and **5-a-day**, by choosing more lean meats, lower fat dairy and more fruit and veg.
  - **This 12% (dubbed “achievers”)** did not necessarily eat in the most sustainable fashion with regard to GHGe as they tended to achieve lower fat intake with more skimmed milk, poultry and white fish dishes, rather than introducing more plant foods like pulses, nuts and seeds.
- **Cost should not be accepted as a barrier to improving health** - achieving the ‘Eatwell plate’ recommendations was not correlated to household income. In fact, including more everyday plant food to achieve the recommendations is likely to ease the food cost burden.

The lead author, Janice Harland, registered nutritionist, sums up the findings; *“Our analysis shows that few people are able to meet current dietary guidelines and those that do are not necessarily eating sustainable diets. Future advice needs to help consumers to embrace plant foods, to a much greater extent than has been achieved to date.”*

### ***The publication clearly indicates that:***

- With just 1% UK achieving all dietary guidelines, a re-think is needed on how to educate the public on the ‘Eatwell plate’.
- The UK needs to be directed to affordable everyday plant based foods including beans, pulses, whole grain starchy foods as well as fruit and vegetables to help achieve the ‘Eatwell plate’s’ two-thirds plant food, one-third animal food rule.
- The future generation needs to take on the plant-based approach now if we are to support the planet and improve health for the future.

**Evidence from this paper is being presented to leading professionals in London tomorrow, 4th October by the lead author Dr. Janice Harland. Sue Baic, dietitian and lecturer, will present her practical take home messages from the findings.**

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**Editor's notes:**

**Alpro:** This publication and the presentation to key health professionals on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October were kindly funded by an education grant from Alpro UK Ltd. Alpro have been pioneers of plant-based eating for over 30 years and have a range of delicious and healthy plant-based products, including milk, yogurt and cream alternatives as well as drinks and desserts, made from either soya beans, rice, almonds or hazelnuts.

Alpro's wide range of soya products are made from ethically sourced, non-GM soya beans, and the company has a total traceability system. Alpro has long-standing relationships with its farmers and doesn't buy commodity soya beans. It means the company can be 100% sure its soya beans are grown sustainably.

**Eatwell plate:** Developed to help the nation reduce intakes of total and saturated fat and incidence of obesity. The '*plate*' is made up of 5 different food groups to help consumers understand the relative proportions of different kinds of food in a healthy diet: high proportion of vegetables, fruit and cereals, moderate quantities of meat, fish and alternatives (including pulses), lower fat varieties of milk and dairy foods and/or calcium and vit. B12 fortified plant alternatives and limited intakes of fatty and sugary foods.

**Eatwell plate nutritional targets set by this publication:** As the '*Eatwell plate*' does not specify quantities of foods to be consumed – except for fruit and vegetables and oil-rich fish – six quantifiable measures were chosen, to correspond to recommendations implicit in the *Eatwell plate* and/or national dietary guidelines: **total fat** ≤35% food energy, **saturated fat** ≤11% food energy, **5 fruit and vegetable** servings daily, **fibre** ≥18g non-starch polysaccharides/day, **protein** 0.66g-1.32g/kg body weight, **oil-rich fish** ≥140g per week.

**Sustainability:** The general consensus is that a sustainable diet should encompass three important areas: environmental (e.g. global warming potential), economic (e.g. employment, trade) and social (e.g. health and welfare). Due to the complexity of measuring these wide ranging factors, the main focus to date for food supply has been greenhouse gas emissions and their impact on global warming.