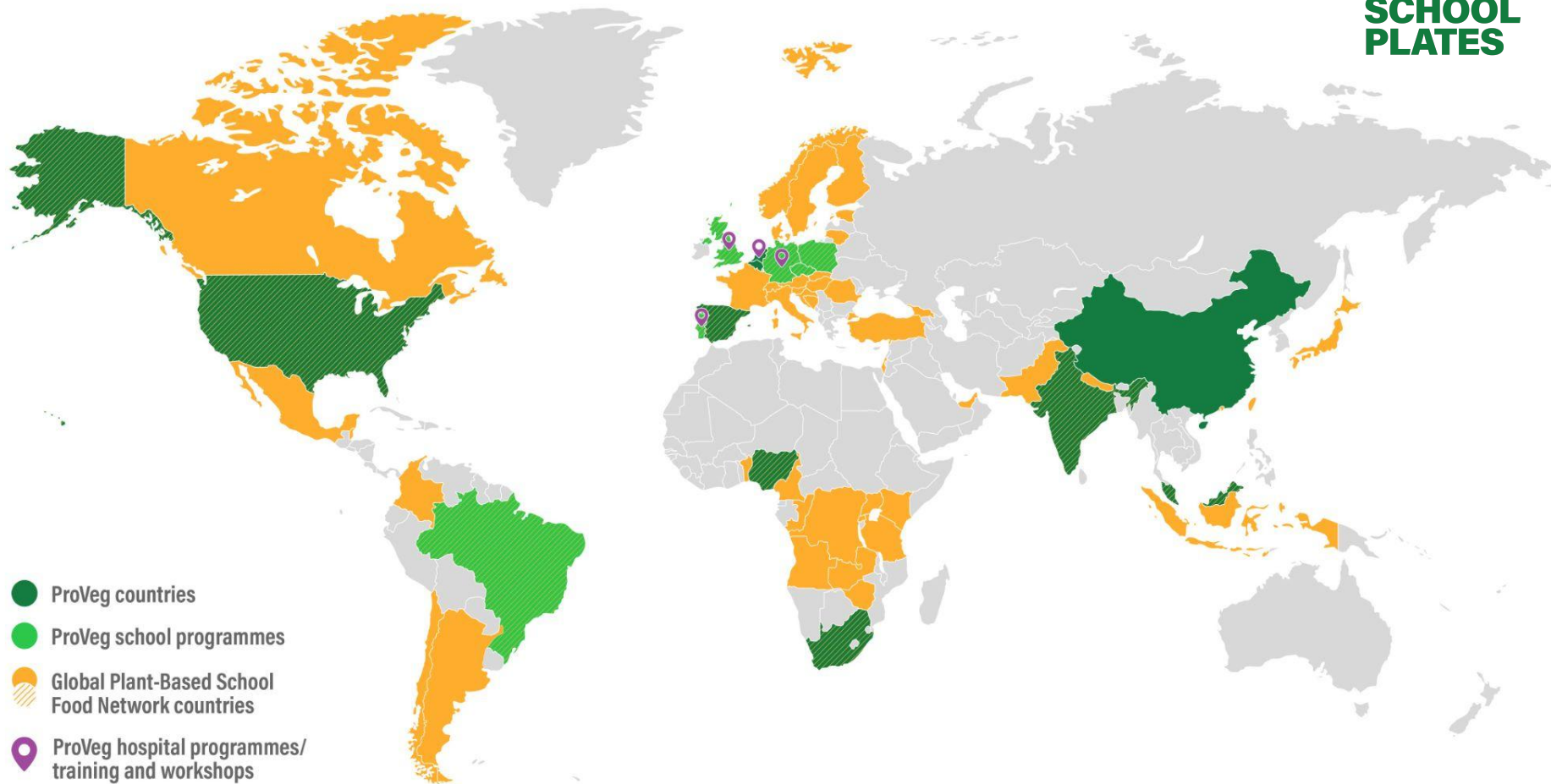


Small Changes, **BIG IMPACT**
APSE Education Catering Network
& ProVeg UK

Healthy and Sustainable School Food



UK
today



120 major catering partners

We are currently working with or have worked with nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of all UK local authorities

Around 12,800 schools

Are benefiting from healthier & more sustainable menus

Over 2.3 million children

Eat from these menus every day

79 million

Meals swapped

Evidence-based



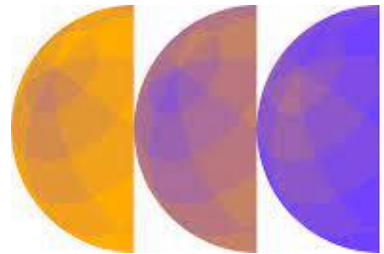
WORLD
RESOURCES
INSTITUTE



World Health
Organization



**National
Food
Strategy**



Climate
Change
Committee



*“...offer a fully plant-based option every day
...ensure staff are trained in vegan & vegetarian cooking...”*

Climate Change Committee



WE AIM TO MAKE SCHOOL FOOD:

- healthier
- more sustainable
 - more inclusive
 - save money



proveg
**SCHOOL
PLATES**



MENU CONSULTATION



RECIPE DEVELOPMENT



TRAINING FOR CATERERS



SCHOOL PLATES AWARDS



PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT



TEACHING MATERIALS

SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE

Made with 50g beef mince per portion.
Served with 55g wholewheat spaghetti.

Cost: 72p

Saturated fat: 4g

Fibre: 7.3g

Protein: 19.3g

CO2 emissions: 2.25kg



VERY HIGH
carbon rating

VS.

SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE (VE)

Made with 30g lentils and 20g dried soya mince per portion.
Served with 55g wholewheat spaghetti.

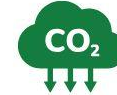
Cost: 41p

Saturated fat: 0.5g

Fibre: 9.5g

Protein: 22g

CO2 emissions: 0.45kg



VERY LOW
carbon rating



43% cheaper



87% lower in
saturated fat



30% more fibre
and 14% more
protein



80% less CO2

Updating the School Food Standards

Respond by
12th June
2026

NEW

- More than 90% of children are consuming insufficient fibre
- More fibre, more veg, more fruit, more wholegrains and more pulses!

Plant Proteins (Legumes and Pulses)

Updated standards emphasise pulses (lentils, chickpeas, etc., excluding baked beans/green beans) as healthy, high-fibre, low-saturated-fat protein sources.

- **Protein Flexibility:** Schools now meet the 3+ days/week protein requirement by serving meat, poultry, or pulses, allowing more plant-based options.
- **Weekly Pulses Requirement:** At least one portion of pulses must be included in menu options one day a week (e.g., in Bolognese). Secondary schools phase this in: bi-weekly from Sept 2027, weekly from Sept 2028.
- **Vegetarian Meals:** Vegetarian options must use pulses as the main protein source on at least three days a week.

How we can help

ProVeg School Plates Awards-beans, lentils, fibre? It's already in our awards scoresheet: Actions 10-17:

- Health and plant-diversity are promoted by blending any chosen plants into a minimum of 1 sauce a week to use in dishes e.g. tomato or creamy sauce.
- ALL dishes made with beef or lamb (mince or diced meat) have a minimum of 25% - 50% blended plant protein. Beef/lamb burgers blended at least 70:30
- "Different beans and lentils have been added to both meat and V/VE dishes/sauces with a minimum of two dishes per week across the menu."
- Low carbon rated, whole food plant based dishes on the menu
- The rainbow plants checklist

Make full use of free resources for your schools from ProVeg UK and other plant-forward initiatives such as Beans is How, Bang in some Beans, Peas Please, the Coolfood Pledge, Soil Association FFL Standard 1.3, Eat Them to Defeat Them

Canteen to Classroom

What?

An educational programme to teach children about the food they eat: where it comes from, how it is made, and **its impact on our health and the planet.**

- Developed specifically for schools
- Custom-designed lessons and activities with curriculum links
- Every session is 'ready to go' meaning it comes provided with **all the teaching materials and resources required** – saving teachers and education providers **precious time and effort**
- **Free** to download from Canteen to Classroom



Teachers: Is your timetable too packed
to think about food & sustainability?

INTRODUCING

Quick Bites

Bite-sized lessons for busy classrooms: exploring school food, healthy eating, climate action, and sustainability.

Download from [Canteen to Classroom](#) for FREE



Your Path to Excellence: The Awards Journey

Rebalancing menus

Subtle Nudges

Promoting plants



Training Caterers

Planet connection

More plant-based options



Engaging the community

Promoting education

Plant-rich menus



School Plates Awards 2026

All of the above, now also for **secondary schools**



UK
today



154 awards have been attained since the scheme was launched **in 2023**.

We are currently working with or have worked with **nearly 1/3 of all UK local authorities**

Around 12,800 schools

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Eat from these menus every day

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Meals swapped





Impact



- **10% improvement** in the average **menu score** for caterers with two years' data
- **33% increase** in achieving the 'Meat-free' 'Meatless' wording is coming off the menus, normalising plant-rich dishes, with **70%** of meat-free dishes on menus we reviewed are not labelled as 'meatless' or 'meat-free'
- **31% increase** from the previous year of **plant-rich days** each week
- **42%** improvement with the percentage of the menu which avoids category names like "main" and "vegetarian" rows
- **123% increase year on year**, in the number of plant-based dishes/days identified as being climate/ planet-friendly, or similar positive language: giving children the knowledge to make more climate conscious choices
- **26% increase** in making more obvious links between sustainability and plant-based food on their websites
- **100 % increase** in website links to information about the health and sustainability of plant-based food

Ranking Methodology

Three key values we considered when developing our ranking for caterers:

Promotion of
plant-based
food

Quantity of
plant-based
food

Transparency &
Communication

Ranking Methodology

Three key values we considered when developing our ranking for caterers:



**Transparency &
Communication**

Communication: Wider Engagement

- On their website or through provided Social Media activity, does the caterer claim to deliver **sustainability**?
- Are these claims linked on the website to **plant-based food**?
- Were the caterer **transparent**, communicative and cooperative with the project?
- Is further information regarding the health and sustainability of the menu **available to the public on the website**?

A high-ranking website- we are looking for **any three** of these:

Transparency and Goals

- The current ratio of plant to animal-based foods or dishes is shown
- A link to the EAT: Lancet Commission [Planetary Health Diet](#)

Education and Impact

- Sustainability and carbon reduction impact of plant-rich food *
- A Health Benefits Statement about plant-rich food *
- A link to an environmental organisation (e.g. [ProVeg Intl Food System Data](#), [WWF](#)) about the benefits of plant-rich food *
- A simple explanation of the plant-rich day

Promotion and Engagement

- At least 50% of food images are vegetables, fruit or plant-rich dishes
- Your work with ProVeg UK is showcased *
- Your plant-rich projects or tasting sessions are highlighted

* Using a reference or website link

Your Climate Leads and You

Following the **ProVeg UK recommendations** for a council caterer's website could:

- Help to save the council **money** by increasing plants on plates
- Improve **availability of fibre** for children's gut health
- Save their **time** spent data hunting for annual reviews
- Improve **inclusiveness** on school menus
- Meet the **2004 EIR** by sharing information clearly, e.g. ratio of plant:animal based foods
- Show the council's progress towards **carbon reduction milestones**
- Lay the groundwork for a **higher CEUK Climate Scorecard score**
- Enable a **higher ProVeg UK School Caterer Ranking score** for their council caterer

Source:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/eir-and-access-to-information/guide-to-the-environmental-information-regulations/what-are-the-eir/#:~:text=The%20Environmental%20Information%20Regulations%202004,informati%20held%20by%20public%20authorities.>

Easy Wins, Big Impact

- Get ready for the **ranking** and **apply for your award!**
- Add **clear links** to current evidence of plant-based climate and health benefits to the catering page on your website
- Share free **Canteen to Classroom** & **Quick Bites** education resources to teachers and schools
- Share the **plant-based training options with all education settings**

Tomorrow, 1pm: Send your climate leads...

Webinar for Climate Leads on Earth Day

22nd April 2026 - 1pm-1:45pm

Exploring food for planetary health and joining the dots with your climate action agenda.



Thank you!

Together, we can have a
BIG IMPACT with even
Healthier and More
Sustainable School Food

we're here to support your
incredible work

alex.jemison@proveg.org



[ProVeg UK resources and School Plates programme](#)

[CE UK Council Scorecards](#)

[HWA Forward Food](#)

[Beans Is How](#)

[Bite Back](#)

[Eco Schools](#)

[Let's Go Zero](#)

[Ministry of Eco Education](#)

[Plant Based Health Professionals UK](#)

[TastEd](#)

[The Food Foundation](#)

[UK Health Alliance on Climate Change](#)

[UK Schools Sustainability Network Operations Group](#)

[World Resources Institute Sustainable Food Playbook](#)

[WWF UK](#)