

Covid-19: “80% of what I see on social media influences what I eat.”

Has Coronavirus, along with social media, turned meat-eaters vegan?

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London, United Kingdom, November 27, 2020



Photo by Anna Pelzer on Unsplash



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Queen’s Brian May, as well as other **media outlets** have spoken out to encourage veganism amid the pandemic, saying **eating animals is not good for our health**. In a time where social media is so influential recent trends show young people adopting a meat-free diet.

Research shows there has been a remarkable increase in people opting for more plant-based foods. The interest soars even more throughout the pandemic, with around **1.1M vegans** and great expectations for it to increase very soon.

According to **Plantbasednews.org**, more than 1-in-10 Brits say a vegan diet is more appealing since Covid-19. The figure increases more between those aged 21-30, to 25%, since the start of the pandemic.



Credit to Tracy Le Blanc

How social media is influencing diets

With people having so much time on their hands, this essentially means more time to indulge in social media. Instagram influencers, such as **@veg_md** play a huge part in the rise of veganism.

Throughout Covid-19, there has been a significant emphasis on increasing vitamin C, cutting out animal products and including more fruit and veg , **from media outlets** . Many high-profile Instagram pages, such as **@drsebiapproved** and **@holisticguidebook**, have used their platforms, to

share their holistic way of living and plant-based diet to encourage and share knowledge of what they believe to be the healthiest lifestyle.

Dreia Miranda, 19-year-old university student from Leeds, says “Corona Virus influenced me to become vegan. Before, I would eat lots of dairy, chocolate and sometimes have the odd bit of salmon. Now I don’t eat anything with milk and eat more iron foods and consciously include loads of turmeric, ginger, lemon and black pepper.”

She goes on to share, “Instagram has quite a lot of impact on deciding what I choose to eat, because I follow quite a lot of nutritionist and they comment on what’s good for your body and what’s not and I take their suggestions on board.”



Photo courtesy of Dreia Miranda of her.

According to **DataReportal** analysis, 3.96 billion people use social media, which is approximately 51% of the population. This has positively impacted some small businesses throughout lockdown, who market and sell their products via social media, in turn influencing consumers to consider veganism with their delicious recipe recommendations.



An Independent business in Bristol, ‘Little Roar’, sells plant-based cakes. Owner Zowie, uses **Facebook**, and **Instagram**, to target customers.

Before Covid-19, she says, it was “quite challenging” to make money but she is now busier than she was before Coronavirus. When she first started, “it would be people who followed a vegan diet and were passionate about organic foods who were interested but now it feels like its creeping into the mainstream.”

“My Instagram following has definitely increased. I posted something about my business on a Facebook group and I got around 1.8 thousand interactions with people just looking at pictures of my stuff, which is incredible as its just come from a group,” Zowie adds.

Reported by **‘Foodmanufacture’**, two in five Brits say the Covid-19 outbreak has prompted them to add more nutrients to their diet. This coincides with 24-year-old, mother of two, Rema Berry, who says before the pandemic she would eat anything, including animal products because of her busy life. “I mainly ate junk and never really included fruit and veg in my diet.”

However, since the lockdown she states, “I had more time to research what I am eating and decided to cut out meat and junk food and eat lots of fruit and veg. I follow holistic health pages on Instagram, and I’d say 80% of what I see on social media influences what I eat.”

She adds, “If the virus didn’t come about, I wouldn’t have changed my diet.” While some took the opportunity to **binge on Netflix series** or discover their love for baking sweet treats, others had a health wakeup call and improved their diet.

Corona not going anywhere anytime soon, will that mean there will be continuing steps towards animal free foods?