

PLANT BASED MN



PlantPure Communities joined the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) last year and is now known as Building Healthy Communities (BHC). We are one of the many action networks of PCRM.

Building Healthy Communities is an all-volunteer, grassroots group dedicated to informing the general public about the benefits of a whole food, plant-based (WFPB) diet and providing support to individuals working to change their diet.

Plant Based MN is a coalition of BHC groups in Minnesota. All are welcome, no matter where they are on their journey to better health.

Plant-Based Travel: First Installment

By BHC Leader, Craig Pettigrew

A Nourishing Stop in Coralville, IA 🌱



I'm excited to share the first installment of my Plant-Based Travel series! On a recent trip, we stopped at three wonderful restaurants in three different cities and discovered an array of delicious plant-based meals. Each spot impressed me with creative dishes and vibrant flavors. I couldn't wait to pass along these finds to friends and fellow plant-based food lovers.

Using HappyCow, Sue and I discovered a restaurant in Coralville, Iowa, with vegan-friendly options—**Haveli Indian Cuisine**. It turned out to be more than just a meal; it was a meaningful exchange of ideas and flavors. We ordered a vibrant spread: Vegetarian appetizer platter, Aloo Gobi, Chana Masala, Tofu Curry, Roti and Chapati, served with Basmati rice. Each dish was rich in flavor and beautifully spiced. The food was delicious, but the real highlight was our conversation with the owner.

She shared that many of her regulars—especially staff from the nearby hospital—often request vegan meals. Curious, she asked why we were choosing to avoid animal products. We explained that eliminating meat and dairy has helped me manage my multiple sclerosis. I gave her a **Plant Based MN** business card and shared some of the health benefits of a whole-food, plant-based lifestyle.

She opened up about her own health journey, mentioning that she'd undergone bypass surgery and struggles with IBS. She asked if a plant-based diet might have prevented those issues. We said yes—and emphasized that it's not just about avoiding animal products. It's also important to reduce and monitor **salt, oil, and sugar**, and to eliminate **processed foods**. She was genuinely interested in what we had to say. It felt like we planted a seed—one that might grow into a new chapter in her own health journey.

You can't out-exercise a bad diet.

Building Healthy Communities (BHC) leader Theresa Ditter participated in [RAGBRAI](#), an annual bicycle trip across Iowa. A friend of hers on the ride came upon a heart attack victim where people were actively administering CPR. Fortunately, he will make a full recovery, as reported in the [Des Moines Register](#).

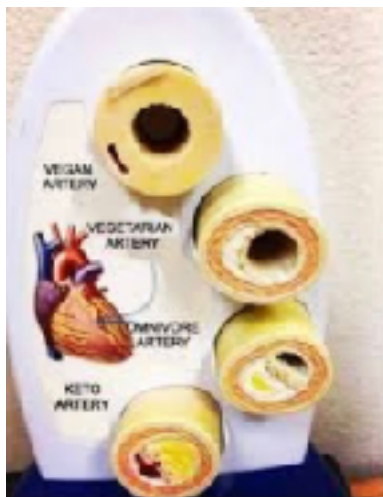
This incident brings to mind the experience of Dr. Steven Lome, cardiologist, who administered CPR to two heart attack victims in the same marathon in Monterey Bay, CA two years ago. At that time there was a lot of national press coverage of Dr. Lome's heroism.

Cardiologist Dr. Lome, Treats Two Fellow Racers for Cardiac Arrest



Here's one report that appeared on NBC's Today Show.

Hear from Dr. Lome about his experience and "How Not to Die When Exercising"



Which Artery Would You Choose?

Plant-based diets, including vegan and vegetarian diets, are naturally lower in cholesterol and saturated fat, which are major contributors to atherosclerosis. Saturated fats, often found in red meat, can raise LDL ("bad") cholesterol levels, increasing the risk of plaque buildup in arteries.

In a study with 22 pairs of identical twins, Stanford Medicine researchers and their colleagues have found that a vegan diet improves cardiovascular health in as little as eight weeks.

August Event Calendar

August 4-6 Three champions of plant-forward thinking will be presenting at the 68th annual Minnesota School Nutrition Association conference this year! On 8/4, Meiping Liu of the Lotus Health Foundation will present *Healing Harvest: From Farm to Table - Cooking Demo and Nutrition Tips*. On 8/5, Jodi Miller Gruhn will talk on *Budget-Friendly Plant-Based Proteins for School Meals*. And on 8/6, Dr. Jengyu Lai, Medical Director of the Rochester Clinic, will present *Nourishing the Future: The Power of Plant-Based, Vegetable-Rich Nutrition for Kids*. As of 4 years ago, there was no representation of plant-forward thinking at this conference. However, over the past 2 years, three distinct talks have promoted a plant-predominant perspective. For more information about this conference and organization, [click here](#).



August 8 Plant-Based Presentation at the Mayo Holistic Health & Well-Being Conference

Celeste Knoff, BHC leader, will be presenting, “Plant-Based Lifestyle: A Path to Wellness for People and the Planet” at the Holistic Health & Well-Being Conference on Aug 8. The conference runs from Aug 6-8 at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, but this presentation will be on the last day of the conference, Aug 8. Attendees can purchase daily tickets so you need not attend the entire conference. For more information, check out this [link](#).



August 14 Plant-Based Nutrition Workshop

Learn about the science behind Whole Food Plant Based (WFPB) diets and their ability to arrest and reverse conditions such as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, and obesity. WFPB diets have also been shown to reduce cancer risk, Alzheimer's disease risk and many auto-immune disorders. Learn how to take charge of your own health by eating a diet that is also better for the environment and kinder to the animals. [RSVP HERE](#).



August Events, Cont.

August 14 - House of Curry Vegan Buffet - 5:30-7:30 - 3420 150th St, #119, Rosemount

🔥 Spice things up with East Side Evolution (Plant Based MN) and indulge in an irresistible vegan Sri Lankan buffet hosted by House of Curry in Rosemount!

🍲 From the tantalizing heat of island spices to the comforting creaminess of coconut milk—a true hero of Sri Lankan cuisine—this culinary experience is your passport to bold flavors and vibrant traditions, all plant-powered and packed with personality.

🌿 Out of 18 buffet items, you'll find 6–8 clearly marked oil-free options—perfect for those looking to keep it light while tasting it all.

🏆 House of Curry serves up award-winning dishes inspired by the island's rich heritage and crafted with fresh, flavorful ingredients. It's a celebration of authenticity with a modern twist—and a meal that'll leave your taste buds dancing. A table will be reserved under Plant Based MN—just follow the sign, bring your appetite, and join the community for an evening of delicious bites and lively conversation. Let's make it a night to remember. You in? 😊 [RSVP HERE](#).

August 20 - Indian Masala - 6:00-8:00 - 27 Century Ave N, Maplewood



Join us at Indian Masala in Maplewood for a Vegan Buffet dinner. Indian Masala holds a fully vegan buffet on Wednesdays and Thursdays on the first and third weeks of every month. We have at least one oil-free option available. We plan to meet on the **third Wednesday of every month** through 2025 to provide more consistency. We will reserve a table and hope to see many of you there for a fun evening of delicious food and interesting conversation. Bring a friend or come to meet new ones. All are welcome. [RSVP HERE](#).

August 24 - Namaste Café - 3:00-4:30 pm - 2512 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis

Plant Based MN is joining Compassionate Action for Animals to co-host dinner out at one of the annual [Twin Cities Vegan Chef Challenge](#) entrants. We've chosen Namaste Café and their entry into the competition, the **Masala Fire Taco** with **Watermelon/Cucumber/Mint Salad**. Please use this [Ticketbud link](#) to make your reservation.



The Twin Cities Vegan Chef Challenge happens annually each August. Local restaurants showcase innovative and delicious vegan dishes for diners to sample and rate. Diners rate their meals and post about them on social media to enter gift card drawings.

Highlights from July



FreedomWorks **June 14-August 16**

Plant Based MN was asked by Lotus Health Foundation and the Rochester Clinic to assist them with a 10-week nutrition education program being conducted for the benefit of a group of individuals enrolled in a summer FreedomWorks program. Every Saturday, we are preparing and serving a healthy lunch along with a short presentation on various aspects of a healthy lifestyle. Dr Jengyu Lai conducts biometric readings each week so the participants can witness improvements in blood pressure, blood sugar, and weight. Meiping Liu keeps everyone entertained with nutrition facts while filling them up on healthy green smoothies.

July 8th. 🌱 Plant Based MN gathers at House of Curry for a mouthwatering buffet! 🍛

Our second vegan buffet at House of Curry in Rosemount on Tuesday, July 8, was a hit! Fifteen Plant Based MN members turned out—three newcomers joined the fun for the first time (welcome! 🌟), and the energy was contagious. 🎉 What got everyone buzzing besides the outstanding flavor? Nine glorious oil-free dishes—a delicious step up from last time and a dream come true for Whole Food Plant Based enthusiasts.

🗣️ The conversations were just as flavorful as the food. Topics danced across the table, from how different faiths embrace plant-based living, to navigating travel without straying from your WFPB path, and swapping secrets for cooking sans oil (spoiler: air fryers got some love!).

Drumroll please... 🥁 Over 30 guests showed up, hitting the target attendance and securing another vegan buffet for next month! Mark your calendars: Thursday, August 14 (yes, a Thursday this time!). 🍽️

📢 RSVP now through the Meetup post and don't miss your chance to feast, connect, and explore all things plant-powered!

July 16 As usual, we met at Indian Masala ([27 Century Ave N, Maplewood, MN](#)) on the third Wed of the month, July 16. We had a nice group of about a dozen people who showed up. We welcomed three new attendees!! We talked and talked until past 8 pm. The food was exceptional and there were FOUR oil-free options. It was a lovely evening. We encourage anyone to attend and welcome all. Hope to see you in August (20th).

Save the Dates

The annual TC VegFest is coming up soon. Mark your calendars for **September 21**, 2025 for another awesome experience of food, arts and crafts, cooking demonstrations, and educational presentations.



Bronze Sponsors

Building Healthy Communities	 Building Healthy Communities
Lotus Health Foundation	 Lotus Health Foundation



LET'S BEAT BREAST CANCER RALLY

While you are at Veg Fest, join us at noon for one of the most uplifting events of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This rally is a powerful hour of music, education, and community connection.

What makes it special:

- Local percussionists will "beat the drum" for breast cancer prevention and hope
- Experts will share four evidence-based strategies that can dramatically reduce breast cancer risk
- You'll gain tools for a healthier lifestyle in a welcoming and supportive environment

Learn the four key prevention strategies:

- Embrace a plant-powered lifestyle
- Make movement fun and sustainable
- Limit harmful substances
- Maintain a healthy weight that works for your body

Let us know you're coming:

[RSVP on Facebook](#)

Want to make an even bigger impact? Volunteer at the rally!

We're looking for support in several key roles:

- Band Coordinator
- General Volunteer
- Kid Activity Coordinator
- Speaker Coordinator
- Cooking Demo Assistant
- Giveaway Assistant
- Student Lunch Coordinator

Sign up to volunteer (scroll down to find rally opportunities):

[Volunteer Here](#)

If you have questions or want to explore more ways to get involved, reach out to jodi.gruhn@exploreveg.org

🌱 Save the Dates 🌱, cont.

EXPERT LECTURE SERIES

Help Bring Plant-Based School Meals to Minnesota

Join us to hear Jodi Miller Gruhn explain how we can help our children obtain healthier meal choices at school.



Date: October 26

Time: 1-3 PM

Location: Ridgedale Public Library, Robert H. Rohlf Room

Every child in Minnesota deserves access to nutritious, inclusive, and climate-friendly school meals. Join us for an afternoon of inspiration, connection, and action as we work to ensure every Minnesota student has access to plant-based options at school.

Here's what to expect:

- Learn how to advocate effectively for plant-based school meals
- Explore simple ways to engage decision-makers in your community
- Sample a delicious tasting menu featuring healthy, student-approved plant-based options
- Connect with others who care about kids' health and the future of our planet

Take action now:

Sign our endorsement letter and show your support for plant-based school meals:

[Sign Here](#)

[RSVP HERE](#)

HELPFUL RESOURCES

HEALTHY CONVENIENCE FOODS:

Whole Food Plant Based

There's a growing number of sellers of health-promoting convenience foods. Take a look at these options to see what might appeal to you.

wellyourworld.com plantstrong.com firstseedfood.com plantpurenation.com

RECOMMENDED FILMS:



The Game Changers documentary can be watched on various platforms. It's available for purchase or rental on Amazon Video, Apple TV, Netflix and Fandango At Home.

RECIPES:

Pineapple Unfried Rice

Ingredients

- 1 large sweet onion, chopped
- 6 peeled garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 thumb-sized knob of fresh ginger, finely chopped or shredded
- 1 thumb-sized knob of fresh turmeric, finely chopped or shredded
- 4 ounces of shredded carrots (approx. 2 cups)
- 4 ounces of shredded purple cabbage (approx. 2.5 cups)
- 1 20-ounce can of pineapple chunks packed in juice, drained and liquid reserved
- 6 cups of cooked brown rice
- 1/2 cup of terriyaki vinegar, or another Asian-flavored vinegar of your choice (not rice vinegar or similar unflavored high-acid vinegars)
- fresh cilantro (optional)

Instructions:

Dry sauté the onion until nicely browned, adding water or the unsweetened pineapple juice if needed.
Add the garlic, ginger, and turmeric and sauté for another minute or two.
Add the cabbage and carrots and cook until soft.



If you can't make it to one of our meetings but have questions or thoughts about your whole food plant-based journey, please reply to this email and include how you'd like to be contacted. We're here to help!

It is not all or nothing, the more closely you follow the guidelines, the faster you see results.

If you no longer wish to be on this mailing list, please reply "unsubscribe" to this email.