



# The Flexitarian Restaurant Award: A guide for eateries

## What's a flexitarian?

For us, being a flexitarian means choosing to eat less but better meat, fish and dairy; it means moving towards a diet that positively impacts your health, the health of the planet and the welfare of animals.

## What's the Flexitarian Restaurant Award?

Our aim is to focus on celebrating good food, promote choice and recognise eateries that are leading the way in modern sustainable eating.

The Flexitarian Restaurant Award (FRA) is awarded to restaurants who are taking steps to increase the proportion of plant based meals on their menu, source higher welfare meat, fish and dairy products and to encourage their customers to choose plant based meals when they dine with them.

We ask eateries that hold a Flexitarian Restaurant Award to look at their menus and their practices in order to see if they are in line with our Bronze, Silver, Gold or Green standards and, if necessary, make changes in order to meet those standards. Our standards cover three areas:

1. **Animal welfare and sustainability:** through our core welfare and sustainability standards, plus the opportunity to score higher points in this field at Silver and Gold.
2. **More meat free and fish free mains:** on a sliding scale, from Bronze through to Gold.
3. **Price incentives on plant based dishes:** on a sliding scale, from Bronze through to Gold.

The FRA team is part of Flexitarian Bristol, a passionate group of Bristolian citizens working with Friends of the Earth and Eating Better to ensure our city leads the way in adopting and promoting a sustainable way of eating, with a focus on moving towards a more plant based diet.

Overleaf, you'll find an overview of the different levels of award – Bronze, Silver, Gold and Green. More detailed information about what is required to achieve the award can be found in our Restaurant Standards document.

## Why should I consider going for the Flexitarian Restaurant Award?

Here are some of the key benefits of achieving an award:

- **It's free!** The FRA is a great free way of showing your eatery's commitment to improving the environment and to making healthy eating easier for your customer.
- **It's a really positive way of promoting your restaurant to locals.** We'll be working with you to make sure that the local media knows about our award scheme and the eateries who are part of it – take a look at the Marketing and Events section for more information.
- **It may encourage customers to choose the more cost-effective, plant based meals** on your menus. This could help save costs across your business.
- **Opportunities to participate in FRA and Flexitarian Bristol events:** to help promote the awards and our awarded eateries, we'll be running some exciting events – take a look at the Marketing and Events section for more information.

## How can I enter my eatery for an award?

Simply complete the application form, available to print off at XXXXX and return it to: [award@flexibristol.org](mailto:award@flexibristol.org). We will be in touch with you to discuss the next steps.

# The Flexitarian Restaurant Award: Standards Overview



## Core welfare and sustainability standards:

We ask all our award holders who serve animal products to meet the following standards on animal welfare and sustainability as a **minimum**:

All **meat** certified to UK minimum welfare standards\*

All **eggs** from free range hens

All **milk** organic or higher welfare assurance schemes\*

All **wild fish** MSC certified\*

\*So as not to exclude small-scale, local farming and fishing, meat, fish and dairy bought through local supply chains that uphold the same principles of welfare and sustainability as the recognised accreditation schemes are accepted under the award, subject to the discretion of the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team.

## Level-specific standards for Bronze, Silver, Gold and Green Awards

### Bronze

#### More meat free and fish free mains

At least **25% of mains** contain no meat or fish. **One** or more of these contains no animal products.

#### Price incentives on plant based dishes

Meat- and fish free mains are **cheaper on average**.

#### Welfare

Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards.

### Silver

#### More meat free and fish free mains

At least **40% of mains** contain no meat or fish. **Two** or more of these contains no animal products.

#### Price incentives on plant based dishes

Meat- and fish free mains are **10% cheaper** on average.

#### Welfare

Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards, plus a score of at least **36 out of 52** available points on the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's higher welfare products reward table.

### Gold

#### More meat free and fish free mains

At least **60% of mains** contain no meat or fish. At least **half** of these contains no animal products.

#### Price incentives on plant based dishes

Meat- and fish free mains are **15% cheaper** on average.

#### Welfare

Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards, plus a score of at least **44 out of 52** available points on the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's higher welfare products reward table.

## Green

This award recognises the positive impacts that eateries serving **completely vegetarian or vegan** food can have on health and the environment, and the important role they play in making a more plant based diet both commonplace and more readily available.

## Welfare

If serving eggs and milk, restaurants must meet the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards for relevant products, plus score at least **8 out of 11** available points for dairy on the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's higher welfare products reward table.

## Marketing and Events

We want to make sure that Bristolians here all about the Flexitarian Restaurant Award, and the best way to do that is to make sure that they hear all about you and your amazing restaurant! As we launch and develop the scheme, plans are afoot to exactly that. Here are some of the things we have in store:

- Your restaurant, details and award level listed on our webpage
- Linking in with local media to promote the award and the restaurants involved
- A mobile app to allow customers to locate restaurants participating in the award
- Events, such as a Flexitarian Food Trail featuring awarded restaurants and planned for later this year
- Social media to promote your restaurant and the flexitarian menu

## Progressing your award

So you've achieved your Bronze or Silver Flexitarian Award? Well done! But don't stop there; our three level award format is designed to lead eateries towards providing the best flexitarian choice they possibly can.

Working towards the next level of award is not only good for people and planet, but a great way of engaging your customers. Shouting about the progress you're making will generate positive attention and encourage customers to help you in your mission to make your eatery more flexitarian.

Equally, setting timelines for upgrading your award can be a way of giving your staff goals with really positive outcomes, and getting the whole team behind a rewarding project.

If you'd like any advice on getting to the next level, don't hesitate to get in touch with the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team at [award@flexibristol.org](mailto:award@flexibristol.org).

## Not quite there?

If you're hoping to apply for a Bronze Flexitarian Restaurant Award but are concerned that about meeting the standards, don't despair. Please contact us and we'll do what we can to assist you on your way to achieving the award. You can contact us at: [award@flexibristol.org](mailto:award@flexibristol.org).

# A little flexitarian inspiration

Meeting the standards of the Flexitarian Award is a fantastic achievement at any level. Outside our objective standards, there are masses of things you can do to make achieving the standards that little bit easier, go that extra mile or even give other local eateries a nudge in the right direction. Here's some inspiration for you...

## Ask your customers what they think

Asking your customers what they think about eating less and better quality meat, fish and dairy either before or after you've achieved your award, is a great way of gauging demand for certain types of dishes, hearing about their dining experiences elsewhere and letting them know about the changes that you're making in your own eatery. Customer surveys are useful for keeping track of feedback, but even just asking your customers for their thoughts face to face is a good way of letting them know about the positive changes going on.

## Get creative!

As more plant based diets become more common, we're fast leaving the world of greasy vegetable lasagne and cheese sandwiches behind us. Modern plant based eating is about creativity and inventiveness. Embrace the seasons, make the most of the fabulous array of vegetables, pulses and soy products available nowadays and seek inspiration anywhere you can. Here's some of our favourite sources of plant based cookery inspiration:

River Cottage: <https://www.rivercottage.net/recipes-in/veg>

Deliciously Ella: <http://deliciouslyella.com/>

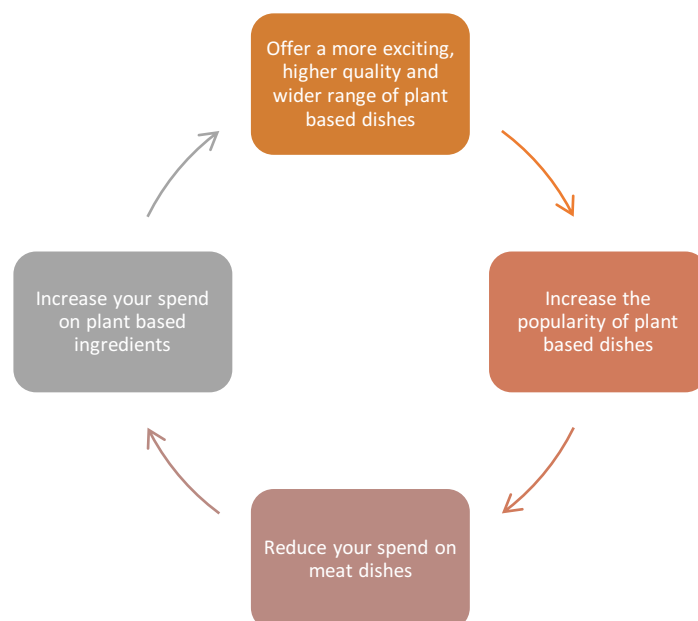
Anna Jones: <http://annajones.co.uk/>

Yotam Ottolenghi: <http://www.ottolenghi.co.uk/recipes/vegetarian>

Jamie Oliver: <http://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/category/special-diets/vegetarian>

## A happy flexitarian cycle!

Shifting the focus of your menu to more plant based dishes can help reduce costs and increase the popularity of the plant based offer.





## Opt-out cost experiments

Concerned about passing the cost of better quality animal produce on to your customers? Why not try experimenting with opt-out pricing? For instance, when you make the change to free range eggs, be transparent and state that an additional eg. 40p has been added to the cost of their bill to cover the cost of using free range instead of caged. You may be surprised how many will voluntarily pay the extra cost and this will also serve to highlight the improved welfare standards of your ingredients.

## Recipe shares

We know that many of your recipes will be hotly guarded secrets, but we'd like to ask you to share with us just one of your tastiest plant-based recipes. By compiling and sharing some of the most creative recipes that Bristol has to offer, we hope to inspire more people to experiment with the rich variety fruit, vegetables and pulses available today and maybe even courage a bit of (friendly!) rivalry between our city's chefs when they see what the competition is offering! Email your recipes to [award@flexibristol.org](mailto:award@flexibristol.org), with a photo of the dish if possible.

## There are other fish in the sea

Sourcing your fish in the way that we've described in our standards is a massive step towards ensuring that Bristol's restaurants are contributing to a sustainable future for global fish stocks. In the UK, however, we're still far too dependent on traditional favourites such as cod, salmon, haddock, tuna and plaice.

Varying the species of fish we regularly eat would go a long way to reducing the pressure on certain fish stocks.

Restaurants can play a lead role in familiarising their customers with more unusual species and giving people the confidence to try eating, buying and cooking something different. The Marine Conservation Society's [Good Fish Guide](#) has suggestions for readily available substitutes to some of these, many of which are often cheaper to buy (check that you're buying sustainably caught stock):

- Instead of cod, try **pollock**, **coley**, **whiting** or **pouting**.
- Instead of tuna, try **herring**, **mackerel** or **sardines**.
- Instead of plaice, try **dab**.
- For a meatier fish, **hake**.

## Further reading

We think these are some really good sources of information if you'd like to know more about the wider impacts of eating too much meat:

[Plant-based diets could save millions of lives and dramatically cut greenhouse gas emissions](#), Oxford Martin School, March 2016.

[Tackling Climate Change Through Livestock: A Global Assessment of Emissions and Mitigation Opportunities](#), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2013.

[Changing Climate, Changing Diets: Pathways to Lower Meat Consumption](#), Chatham House report, 2015.

[Healthy Planet Eating](#), Friends of the Earth, 2010.

[Why Eating Better?](#) Eating Better

[Would eating less meat really combat climate change?](#) Mike Berners-Lee, The Independent, November 2015

[Eating less meat isn't just good for you, it could save the planet](#) Adam Briggs, The Guardian, November 2015

[There's a population crisis all right. But probably not the one you think](#) George Monbiot, The Guardian, November 2015