



Script for audio production "Communicating Development"

International Year of Pulses

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Title of the production: **Vegetarianism: trend or a need?**

Topic: In the contemporary western world more and more people are becoming vegetarians and trying to live healthy life. It is becoming a trend, a lifestyle. On the other hand, the rest of the world (mainly third world and developing countries) is living in hunger and trying to survive with what they can produce in their unhealthy and poor conditions. Those people are forced to be vegetarians. This is a discussion on vegetarianism, veganism and the importance of pulses for protein intake. How to properly balance the nutrients in a vegetarian diet? What are the consequences from this lifestyle to the people and to the environment? With this reportage we will try to answer some of these hot topics.

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Script:

In the modern Western world more and more people become vegetarians and try to live a healthy life. It is becoming a trend, a way of life. On the other hand, the rest of the world (mainly the third world and developing countries) live in hunger and try to survive on what they can produce in their unhealthy and bad conditions. These people are forced to be vegetarians.

This is a discussion on vegetarianism, veganism, balanced diet and the importance of pulses for protein intake. How to properly balance the nutrients in a vegetarian diet? What are the consequences of this way of life for humans and the environment? With this report we will try to answer some of these hot topics.

More people around the world accept vegetarian diet, which is based on foods of plant origin (cereals, fruits, vegetables, legumes and nuts and seeds). Thus, we should ask: Is a vegetarian diet healthy?

The beneficial effect of a vegetarian diet has been proven in numerous scientific studies. This diet is medically acceptable and can provide all the necessary nutrients, but only if properly planned. When looking at vegetarians in general, it can be concluded that they rarely suffer from certain diseases, such as from heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and obesity.

Because of the reduced presence of foods of animal origin, a vegetarian diet is low in saturated fat, cholesterol and animal protein. The increased consumption of cereals, fruits, vegetables, legumes and nuts provides increased intake of vegetation fiber, vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals. Despite numerous health and economic benefits of such a diet, there is ever present concern that is tied to any form of vegetarianism. The question that often arises is whether this diet provides sufficient amounts of necessary nutrients needed.

Combining of the protein food

Combining of the protein food is crucial for achieving adequate protein intake in the diet of the vegetarians. In fact, it is about combination of plant foods that contains different amounts of essential amino acids. Intake of essential amino acids is very important, because the organism cannot synthesize them, and amino acids are the building blocks of proteins. For example, legumes (beans, lentils, soy) contain very few amino acids containing sulfur, but that is why they are rich in amino acid lysine. Cereal had a completely opposite composition. When you combine legumes and grains you achieve harmony of amino acid composition.

Some typical examples of foods that are combined in some countries: Beans and tortillas (in Central America), beans and rice (South America), rice and tofu (China and Japan), rice and lentils (in India), peanut butter and bread (in the US). Although it is not required to pay attention to the complementarity of protein in every meal, the total daily protein intake must meet all the necessary amounts of essential amino acids.

How to properly balance the nutrients in a vegetarian diet?

Persons that throw out all animal products from their diet (vegans) may have difficulty in fulfilling their daily needs for protein, zinc and iron. Meat and dairy products are "practical" source of these nutrients and diets that exclude these foods requires more planning. Generally, the more restrictive the diet, the greater the probability that there will be a shortage of some nutrients. That is why there is big importance of right planning of the diet, especially the vegan diet. Vegan or pure vegetarians are those who eat only plant foods and do not eat meat, milk, eggs or any other food of animal origin. However, even these people, if properly balance their diet, can provide all the necessary nutrients. In order to facilitate the plan of a vegetarian diet, there are pyramids of proper diet for vegetarians and vegans.

For vegetarians the lack of protein is less common, rather than the lack of certain vitamins and minerals. Good source of protein is soy, which provides large amounts of high-quality vegetable protein. In healthy food stores tofu, soy milk, soy cakes can be purchased. Peas, lentils, seeds and certain kinds of vegetables are also a rich source of protein. It is important to consume enough leguminous vegetables and green leafy vegetables and to consume juices and foods rich in vitamin C, which enhances the absorption of iron in the body.

What are the pulses?

Pulses include beans, lentils and peas. They're cheap, low-fat source of protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals, and they are among the recommended five daily meals with fruits and vegetables. Pulses are edible seeds that grow in a pod. Pulses includes all types of beans, peas and lentils, such as baked beans, red, green, yellow and brown lentils, chickpeas (chana or garbanzo), garden peas and all kinds of beans.

Why eat pulses?

They are an excellent source of protein. This means they may be particularly important for people who do not receive protein by eating meat, fish or dairy products. However, pulses can also be a healthy choice for those who eat meat. They can be added to soups and meat dishes, which mean that you can use less meat, which makes the dish less fat and more cheaply. Pulses are a good source of iron. Also they contain starch and add fiber to the meal. Eating a diet high in fiber is associated with a lower risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

2016 will be their year: the International Year of pulses. In the past, this modest source of protein is spread widely in Europe, and nowadays pulses are the primary food source and an important element of food security among broad layers of the population in Latin America, Africa and Asia. They are an important part of the human diet for centuries although their nutritional value is not fully understood and is often underestimated. The same can be said for their use in today's kitchen. While legumes are rarely included in modern recipes, today's desire for healthy and sustainable food quickly change this state of affairs.

What exactly define pulses and how this term differs from other categories to be used for legumes and beans?

They are legumes. Legumes category is broad and includes soybeans and peanuts. Category of pulses is actually the definition of United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization. There are 11 species, but in most countries the main pulse crops are considered dry beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas. They are in their dry form, not fresh.

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