What Diet Makes A Man?

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PROBLEM / QUESTION

Society often portrays healthy, plant-based food as being “feminine”, and meat-filled diets as “manly”. Men may become hesitant to adopt plant-based diets to avoid emasculation. How can advertisements, food packaging, and societal constructs at ASU be altered to encourage men to eat plant-based foods?

BACKGROUND

The way food is packaged can dissuade consumers purchase; many plant-based food items may be seen as having “feminine” packaging. (Zhu).

Vegetarian men may face discrimination because vegetarianism challenges their gender identity and masculinity (Timeo).

The biggest killer for men over 50 is heart disease, in which diet is a major risk factor” (Lockwood).

More men view healthy options as monotonous and unsatisfying (Aranini).

"79 percent of U.S. vegans are women" (McManus).

In the UK, 63 percent who identified as vegan were female" (Lockwood).

RESEARCH

Men eat red meat to preempt negative emotional states caused by threats to masculinity (Pohlmann).

Meat-eating is connected to power; it is "a symbol of male dominance" (Gomes).

SOLUTIONS

Expand plant-based food advertising in dining halls and on-campus eateries to appeal to all genders:

- Advertise diverse clients eating plant based options
- Offer multi-cultural plant based meal options for different tastes
- Normalize plant based meals throughout all dining halls
- Offer plant based items that taste “meaty”

Target male audiences by showcasing facts about plant-based proteins, working out, and health.

CONCLUSION

Society has associated meat-eating with manliness, which influences the way men view plant-based diets. Inclusiveness in advertisements is essential to shifting societal views on food and encouraging everyone, regardless of gender identity, to eat more plant-based foods.

REFERENCES


