

Over 85 percent of schools offer vegetarian meals: MOE
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Taipei, Nov. 7 (CNA) Around 86 percent of elementary, junior and senior high schools in Taiwan have provided vegetarian lunches to students to promote healthy lifestyles and help reduce global warming, according to the results of a survey released by the Ministry of Education (MOE) on Sunday.

The survey, conducted in mid-October, shows that 2,328 out of 3,517 public schools around the country have offered vegetarian meals, with 676 schools

providing a vegetarian diet at least once every two weeks or once every month.

Forty-six schools have offered vegetarian menus twice per week, and three schools polled have followed the vegetarian diet more than three days in a week, the survey revealed.

The latest figures show that promotion of vegetarian meals has been well accepted in comparison with an earlier survey conducted in February, when only 1,201 schools, or 34 percent of the total, offered vegetarian diets.

Deputy Minister of Education Lin Tsong-ming said that global warming is threatening human survival, and over-consumption of meat has also caused significant health problems for many people.

Contrary to public perception, vegetables provide more nutrition for the human body than animal products, Lin said.

For example, he said, dried bean curd contains more protein than shrimps, the iron content of the seaweed is nine times more than that of liver, and black sesame seeds contain 10 times the calcium quantity of goat milk.

Yunlin County has the largest number of schools providing vegetarian dishes as the county started to promote a healthy diet in 2009. It has received a warm response and strong support from students' parents.