

Vegetarianism in the U.S.

A Summary of Quantitative Research



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Report in Brief

This document provides an analytical overview of more than 25 quantitative research studies relating to veganism, vegetarianism, meat avoidance, and meat reduction among adults in the United States. It also includes select data from the Humane Research Council's (HRC's) recent comprehensive study of meat consumption in the U.S., details of which are located at the end of this report.

HRC Information

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Introduction and Background

Advocating for the adoption of vegan and vegetarian diets is one of the most common and important methods of working for animal protection. In the United States, a large and growing number of national and local organizations focus on advocating plant-based diets. In many ways, however, vegetarian advocacy in the U.S. remains in its infancy, without a cohesive strategy to identify, target, and convert likely groups of people. HRC seeks to support development of such a strategy in part by answering the following key questions:

- How many actual vegetarians and vegans are there in the U.S.?
- How many people currently follow a “semi-vegetarian” diet?
- How many people are actively reducing their meat consumption?

Because almost everyone in the U.S. consumes some amount of meat, vegetarian advocates might argue that their target audience is the “general public.” While this may be true in the long-term, such a broad objective is impractical because it requires too many resources and because no single message or approach will work for everyone. An important first step to strategic vegetarian advocacy, therefore, is to segment meat-eaters into smaller, more easily identified groups. For the purposes of this overview, we have segmented consumers based on eating behaviors, including current habits relating to meat consumption, reduction, and elimination.

“ Segmentation is saying something to somebody instead of saying nothing to everybody.

”

Jay Conrad Levinson
Guerrilla Marketing (1998)

Anyone interested in the widespread adoption of plant-based eating will find it useful to understand how many people are currently vegetarian or vegan. Indeed, most discussions about vegetarian advocacy revolve around the first of the three previously listed questions – how many vegetarians and vegans are there? However, it is arguably more actionable for advocates to understand how many people are eating *partially* vegetarian diets or actively *reducing* the amount of meat they consume. This segmentation approach allows vegetarian advocates to look beyond core audiences and align their efforts with current food trends for larger groups of consumers.

Vegetarian advocates know too well that people resist behavior change. All consumer advocacy must therefore permit a gradual change process. For vegetarian advocacy, this means *reduction* rather than elimination of meat (and dairy) products. HRC is not suggesting that this necessarily precludes also promoting veganism, but the more gradual approach will certainly appeal to a much larger segment of the adult population. Beyond semi-vegetarianism and meat reduction, it is also helpful to understand health-conscious eating in general. Consumer research shows that an interest in health is a common first step toward vegetarianism (and veganism) for many people.

Segmenting meat consumers into these groups also allows vegetarian advocates to target their messages to specific behaviors and motivations. A small proportion of omnivores will be open to the idea of switching to veganism or vegetarianism directly, but many more will be willing to reduce meat consumption (perhaps as a first step to full veg*ism). A segmentation-based strategy involves picking one

specific audience and tailoring one's approach to its unique interests. For instance, one might focus on encouraging meat reducers to become vegetarians or persuading health-conscious consumers to simply reduce their meat consumption by one or two days per week. Whatever the approach, vegetarian advocates must narrow their focus and employ a targeted, unique strategy for each different audience. The information in this report is intended to help.

In this analytical overview, HRC has collected a comprehensive set of quantitative data from past public opinion surveys. The analysis is also informed by HRC's recent comprehensive study of meat consumption (see the end of this report for details). Data from all of these studies and HRC's analysis are provided to help vegetarian advocates understand the current state of meat consumption in the U.S. We also hope this document serves to help vegetarian advocates identify and implement effective strategies.

Overview: Meat Consumption, Reduction, and Avoidance

Data from more than 25 quantitative studies suggest several audiences of possible interest to vegetarian advocates ranging from generally health-conscious consumers to actual vegetarians. The following table lists HRC's best estimates for the size of each segment considering data from all of the studies included in this analysis. Note that the segments are not mutually exclusive.

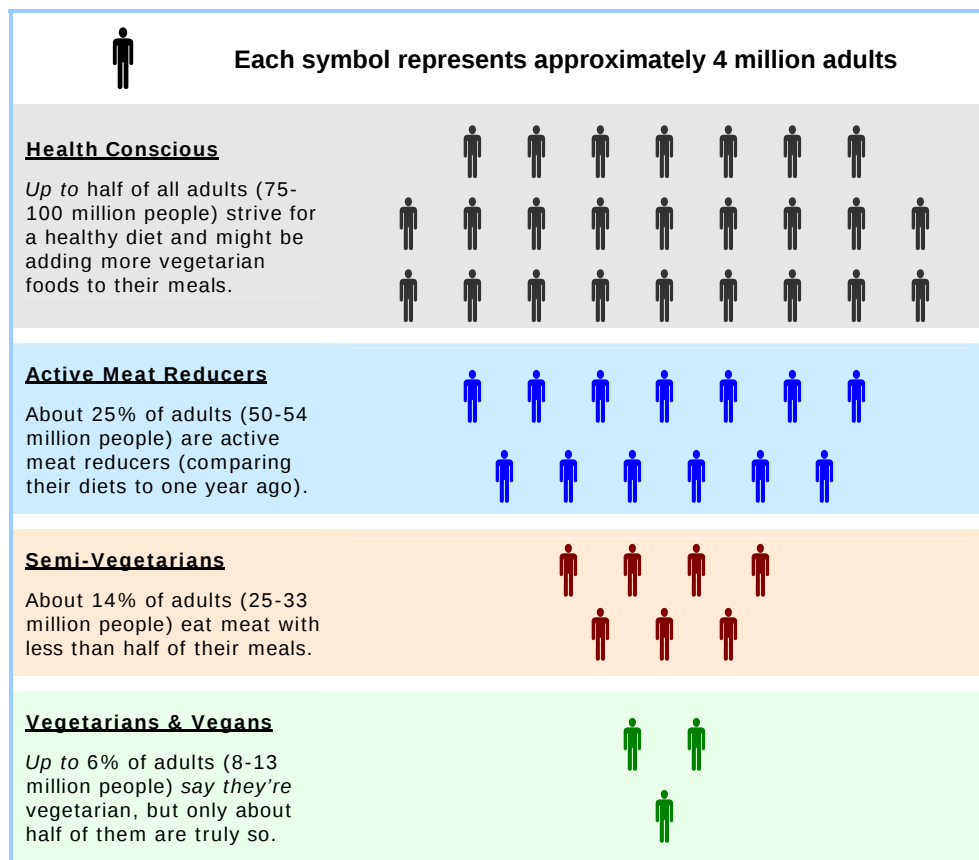
Group	U.S. Adults (%)	U.S. Adults (#)	Description
Health-Conscious Consumers	35 – 50%	73 – 105 million	Report striving for a balanced diet and/or replacing 2-3 meals per week with meat-free alternatives.
Active Meat Reducers	22 – 26%	46 – 54 million	Report eating less meat (comprehensively defined) compared to one year ago.
Semi-Vegetarians	12 – 16%	25 – 33 million	Report eating any type of meat (comprehensively defined) with less than half of weekly meals.
Self-Described Vegetarians	4 – 6%	8 – 13 million	Say "yes" when asked if they consider themselves vegetarian, typically with no definition of the term.
Actual Vegans and Vegetarians	1 – 3%	2 – 6 million	Report "never" eating any meat (comprehensively defined), as described differently in various surveys.

There are a total of 209 million adults in the U.S. according to Census Bureau data from 2000. Of the entire population, only a small proportion (less than 3%) can be considered "actual vegans or vegetarians," although about twice that number call themselves vegetarian when asked. About one in seven adults (14%) can be considered "semi-vegetarian" (eating meat with less than half of meals), while about one in four (26%) is eating less meat compared to a year ago. Including these semi-vegetarians and meat reducers, as many as half of adults can be considered "health-conscious" eaters. The other half shows little or no health consciousness and no interest in reducing meat consumption.

These consumer segments can be used as a basis for estimating a person's likelihood to reduce, and eventually eliminate, meat as a component of her or his diet. Those who seem most primed to further reduce meat consumption include people who are already eating meat at a significantly reduced level as well as those who have taken recent, concrete steps to limit meat in their diet. An important next phase in HRC's meat reduction study will be to conduct qualitative research with these groups to understand their motivations and identify effective means of encouraging further behavior change.

Note that self-described and actual vegetarians (and vegans) are represented by a very small number of adults. General population surveys, therefore, can only yield approximate ranges. Because of the margin of error on most of these studies, we can only say with confidence that the number of actual vegetarians and vegans is between 0% and about 3% (greater than zero, but less than three percent). Research data regarding the number of vegetarians and vegans is further complicated because the term "meat" is often undefined (or defined incompletely). These issues are discussed in more detail in the following pages for each category of consumers.

The following table offers a visual breakdown of the size of each group by general eating behavior. Again, the groups are not mutually exclusive and there is likely significant overlap, particularly among the larger segments.



Actual Vegetarians and Vegans

- ⇒ **Low Estimate: Roughly 1% or about 2 million U.S. adults**
- ⇒ **High Estimate: Roughly 3% or about 6 million U.S. adults**

As mentioned earlier, measuring the number of *actual* vegetarians and vegans (veg*ns) is difficult because the number of these people in the population is small which creates a high relative margin of error when surveying them. For instance, consider a survey of 1,000 people in which 3% of respondents meet the definition of an actual vegetarian. The margin of error for a sample size of one thousand people is about +/- 3%, so in this example we could only conclude that the true proportion of actual veg*ns is somewhere between 0% and 6%. For this same reason, small changes in the percent of actual veg*ns over time do not necessarily represent meaningful trends. With these limitations, it is evident that knowing the precise number of actual veg*ns in the U.S. is extremely difficult unless much larger and more expensive surveys are conducted.

Despite these concerns, it is informative to look at how many people report eating a truly veg*n diet, using an inclusive and appropriate definition of the term “meat.” Over the past 10 years, two organizations – The Vegetarian Resource Group (VRG) and HRC – have completed studies using complete definitions of “meat” in an attempt to accurately measure veg*ism in the U.S. VRG has conducted a series of adult surveys every three years (most recently in 2003), as well as several surveys of children. In these surveys, VRG asks respondents, “Which of the following foods do you NEVER eat?” The HRC study took a different approach, asking respondents to report how often they eat “any type of meat, including chicken, turkey, fish/shellfish, beef, pork, veal, or lamb.”

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON ACTUAL VEG*NS

Year	Definition	% of Adults	Est. # of Adults*	Sample Size	Error Margin	Source**
2005	Never eat “chicken, turkey, fish/shellfish, beef, pork, veal, or lamb.”	1%	3 million	3,200	+/- 1.7%	HRC
2003	Never eat “meat, poultry, or fish/seafood.”	3%	6 million	1,031	+/- 3.1%	VRG
2000	Never eat “meat, poultry, or fish.”	3%	5 million	968	+/- 3.1%	VRG
1997	Never eat “red meat, poultry, or fish.”	1%	2 million	1,960	+/- 2.2%	VRG
1994	Never eat “meat, fish or fowl.”	< 1%	< 2 million	1,978	+/- 2.2%	VRG
1992	Reported “always eating a vegetarian diet.”	< 2%	< 4 million	4,700	+/- 1.4%	NCBA

* Based on total adult population of 209 million adults according to 2000 U.S. Census figures.

** Refer to the appendix for complete citations and links to most studies.

Based on the available data shown in the previous table, we can estimate that actual veg*ns represent between 1% and 3% of the adult population in the U.S., or between 2 and 6 million persons. The largest and most recent of the studies to provide an inclusive definition of “meat” is the 2005 HRC survey. In this study, 1.3% of adults reported eating a truly vegetarian diet (“never” eat the listed types of meat, see the previous table), with a margin of error of +/-1.8%. Based on these numbers and corroborating data from VRG and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), we conclude that actual veg*ns represent between 1% and 3% of the U.S. adult population.

However, arguably the most accurate way to measure actual veg*ism is for the research subjects to maintain daily dietary records such as a food journal. This kind of record keeping avoids several pitfalls of self-reported data, including less accurate recall of foods eaten and differing definitions of “meat” that may or may not include chicken, fish, etc. The relative inaccuracy of self-reported data is illustrated in the 1992 NCBA study. About 2% of the study’s respondents reported eating no meat, but dietary records showed that only about half of those people (1% overall) truly ate a meatless diet. According to the NCBA, self-reported vegetarians actually consumed about 2.3 ounces of meat per day, on average, suggesting a gross misinterpretation of the term “meat.”

The number of actual vegetarians (including vegans) is 1.3 % of the adult U.S. population. With the error margin, the true number lies between 0 % and 3.1 %, or up to 6.5 million people.

2005 HRC study

Because actual veg*ns currently represent such a small segment of the U.S. adult population, they are almost certainly different demographically and psychologically from future vegetarians and vegans. Therefore, the motivations and tactics that have successfully influenced current veg*ns (including most advocates) may not influence the much larger audience that may be willing only to *reduce* meat consumption in the short-term. In the next section we look at “self-described” vegetarians and vegans, for whom no clear definition of the term was provided in the survey. This group, though also very small, might share more traits in common with future veg*ns and is of interest specifically because of its conscious association with veg*ism.

Self-Described Vegetarians (Includes Actual Veg*ns)

⇒ **Low Estimate: 4% or about 8 million U.S. adults**

⇒ **High Estimate: 6% or about 13 million U.S. adults**

The mainstream media and other sources often refer to a population of 12 million adult vegetarians currently living in the U.S. While not inaccurate, per se, this number is potentially misleading because it is based on “self-described” vegetarians who may or may not be using a correct and inclusive definition of the term “vegetarian.” By simply asking the question, “Do you consider yourself a vegetarian?” the results invariably include people who identify veg*ism with simply avoiding red meat, eating only chicken and/or fish products, etc. Generally, while actual veg*ns appear to represent between 1% and 3% of the population, self-described veg*ns (including actual veg*ns) represent a significantly larger 4-6%. More than a half-dozen studies over the past two decades have addressed self-described veg*ism.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON SELF-DESCRIBED VEG*NS

Year	Definition	% of Adults	Est. # of Adults*	Sample Size	Error Margin	Source**
2002	Said they "consider themselves vegetarian"	6%	13 million	10,007	+/- 1.0%	Time/CNN
2002	Said they "consider themselves vegetarian"	4%	8 million	1,003	+/- 3.1%	Time/CNN
1999	Said they "consider themselves vegetarian"	6%	13 million	1,039	+/- 3.0%	Gallup
1995	Said they "consider themselves vegetarian"	5%	11 million	1,000	+/- 3.1%	Time/CNN
1992	Said being a vegetarian "describes them completely"	3%	6 million	800	+/- 3.5%	NRA
1992	Said they "consider themselves vegetarian"	7%	15 million	1,400	+/- 2.6%	Time/CNN
1978	Described themselves as a "strict vegetarian"	1%	2 million	2,000	+/- 2.2%	Roper
1943	Said they "happen to be vegetarian"	3%	6 million	1,500	+/- 2.5%	Gallup

* Based on total adult population of 209 million adults according to 2000 U.S. Census figures.

** Refer to the appendix for complete citations and links to most studies.

The largest and most recent study was conducted by Time/CNN in 2002 and found that 6% of U.S. adults consider themselves vegetarian. Given the sample size of more than 10,000 people, this study represents the most accurate assessment of self-reported vegetarianism ever conducted in the U.S. Interestingly, the response falls at the upper end of the range of self-reported veg*ism described by previous studies spanning several decades.

This might suggest that self-described veg*ns have increased in number over time. However, earlier studies are based on smaller sample sizes with much higher error margins and it is, therefore, impossible to make any concrete conclusions about trends based on current data. Apart from the very large Time/CNN study in 2002, other studies covering self-reported veg*ism yield estimates spanning 5-6 percentage points. For instance, the 1995 study concludes that self-reported veg*ns represent somewhere between 2% and 8% of the population.

It is clear by these differences in self-reported versus actual veg*ism that any study using the former as its primary measure will overstate the number of true veg*ns in the population. However, those who describe themselves as vegetarian but continue to eat some types of animal flesh are an audience that might be of special interest to veg*n advocates. Although these "untrue" vegetarians only represent a small group of people (roughly equivalent in size to actual veg*ns), they could be predisposed toward wanting to associate themselves with vegetarianism. Exploring this desired association and its apparent disconnection with such a person continuing to eat some types of animal flesh will be the topic of future HRC research projects.

Semi-Vegetarians

- ⇒ **Low Estimate: 12% or about 25 million U.S. adults**
- ⇒ **High Estimate: 16% or about 33 million U.S. adults**

Also of interest to advocates is how many people are eating a *mostly* veg*n diet, including so-called semi-vegetarians. For purposes of this analysis, we define “semi-vegetarians” as those who consume meat with roughly less than half of their meals. Semi-vegetarians represent about 1 in 6 or 8 adults, or roughly 12-16% of the U.S. population. Note that this estimate is solely based on the 2005 HRC study, which asked respondents how often they eat any type of meat. The term was defined comprehensively in the survey, but it should be noted that such self-reported may be subject to some biases or errors. For reference, we have provided several other relevant studies in this analysis (see the following table), but these other reports do not provide a comprehensive or consistent definition of semi-veg*ism.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON SEMI-VEG*ISM

Year	Definition	% of Adults	Est. # of Adults*	Sample Size	Error Margin	Source**
2005	Currently eat meat with less than half of meals	14%	29 million	3,200	+/- 1.7%	HRC
2000	Eat four or more meatless meals per week	25%	52 million	968	+/- 3.1%	Land O' Lakes
1992	Said “almost being vegetarian” describes them completely	9%	19 million	800	+/- 3.5%	NRA
1978	Said they are “pretty much vegetarian”	3%	6 million	2,000	+/- 2.2%	Roper

* Based on total adult population of 209 million adults according to 2000 U.S. Census figures.

** Refer to the appendix for complete citations and links to most studies.

Note that with the exception of the HRC study, these numbers are mostly likely inclusive of actual vegetarians and vegans and are, therefore, overstated by 1-3%. In any case, however, semi-vegetarians represent an attractive target audience for vegetarian and vegan advocates. These people, by virtue of having eliminated meat from a substantial portion of their diet, are in theory more open to going entirely veg*n. Moreover, semi-vegetarians make up about 14% of the population. This group is small enough to target effectively, but also large enough to positively impact a substantial number of farmed animals if it further reduces the amount of meat that it consumes.

Active Meat Reducers

- ⇒ **Low Estimate: 22% or about 46 million U.S. adults**
- ⇒ **High Estimate: 26% or about 54 million U.S. adults**

Another group that might be of interest to veg*n advocates is adults who actively reduce how much meat they consume. For purposes of this analysis, we define “active meat reducers” as those who say they eat less meat compared to one year ago. Meat reducers represent about one in four U.S. adults or 22-26% of the population, equating to roughly 50 million persons. Note again that this estimate is exclusively based on the 2005 HRC study, which provided a comprehensive definition of “meat.” However, other studies provide useful reference points that might also help to understand the meat reduction trend.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON MEAT REDUCTION

Year	Definition	% of Adults	Est. # of Adults*	Sample Size	Error Margin	Source**
2005	Eating less meat compared to a year ago	25%	52 million	3,200	+/- 1.7%	HRC
2004	Reducing meat consumption	Up to 40%	84 million or fewer	N/A	N/A	Quorn
2000	Families eating less red meat compared to 2-3 years ago	49%	102 million	1,012	+/- 3.1%	Wirthlin Quorum
1997	Families eating less red meat compared to 2-3 years ago	61%	128 million	1,000	+/- 3.5%	Wirthlin Quorum

* Based on total adult population of 209 million adults according to 2000 U.S. Census figures.

** Refer to the appendix for complete citations and links to most studies.

Based on data in the previous table, there is some disagreement regarding how many adults in the U.S. are actively reducing the amount of meat they consume. For instance, the Quorn research mentioned that as many as 40% of U.S. adults are reducing meat in their diet. However, details of this study are unknown, including the definition of “meat,” the timeframe over which they reduced consumption, and the sample size. This reference is, therefore, a less confident measure of meat reduction than provided by other studies in the table.

For vegetarian and vegan advocates, meat reducers might be even more interesting than semi-vegetarians (although the two groups overlap significantly). Meat reducers are a likely target because they have recently changed their behaviors regarding animal-based foods. For reasons discussed earlier, it is easier to persuade someone to continue with an existing behavior (or trend) than to convince them to adopt a new one. For meat reducing consumers, veg*n advocates can take advantage of the recent switch to more plant-based foods and utilize complementary arguments to promote further reduction.

Health-Conscious Eaters

- ⇒ **Low Estimate: 35% or 73 million U.S. adults**
- ⇒ **High Estimate: 50% or 105 million U.S. adults**

As mentioned previously, up to half of the U.S. adult population can be considered “health-conscious” eaters, meaning that they report striving for a balanced diet. This segment of consumers overlaps with semi-vegetarians and active meat reducers, and includes many other individuals who might be replacing meat with veg*n alternatives. A large number of studies conducted in the past fifteen years address the number of people concerned with eating healthily, a selection from which is provided in the following table. In this case, the most meaningful seems to be a 1996 study by *Prevention Magazine* showing that half of adults have made “major changes” to their diet in the past three years (although the changes were not defined).

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON HEALTH-CONSCIOUS EATING

Year	Definition	% of Adults	Est. # of Adults*	Sample Size	Error Margin	Source**
2005	Agree that they “would like to eat a healthier diet than they do now”	77%	161 million	3,200	+/- 1.7%	HRC
1996	Made “major changes” to diet in past 3 years due to health concerns	51%	107 million	1,000	+/- 3.1%	Prevention / FMI
1996	Say the “try their best” to eat healthy foods	83%	173 million	1,033	+/- 3.0%	Wirthlin Quorum
1992	Agree they can have a healthier diet by not eating (red) meat	33%	69 million	4,700	+/- 1.4%	NCBA
1991	Say they are “very concerned” about eating a healthy diet each day	45%	94 million	1,000	+/- 3.1%	Maritz

* Based on total adult population of 209 million adults according to 2000 U.S. Census figures.

** Refer to the appendix for complete citations and links to most studies.

Health-conscious adults, although somewhat ill-defined from the studies listed in the previous table, are potentially attractive to vegan and vegetarian advocates. The segment could be particularly suitable for those basing their efforts on the health benefits of veg*ism. The recent HRC study indicated that current veg*ns cite personal health and animal suffering as roughly equivalent motivators. However, health is the clear driver for semi-vegetarians and meat reducers. A strategy encouraging reduction (rather than elimination) of meat from a health perspective might be particularly effective for health-conscious adults. This consumer segment represents up to half of the U.S. population (more than 100 million people) and might need to be further segmented for advocates to target it effectively.

Per Capita Consumption Data

Finally, for those wanting in-depth data on the types and amounts of foods consumed in the U.S., several sources of information are provided by various federal agencies. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conduct regular surveys of the population to measure eating behaviors. Although the methods differ by agency and project, none of the government surveys provides accurate data on the prevalence of veg*ism in the U.S. However, because of both size and consistency, these surveys can be especially useful for analyzing trends in consumption patterns over time, including specific types of animal-based foods.

The National Health and Examination Survey (NHANES) is one such study conducted by the CDC, most recently in 2001/2002 and 1999/2000. NHANES asks respondents how often they consume certain types of foods, although in the most recent version of the survey all meat products were dropped. The survey tracks all U.S. residents, including children (with data provided by the parents). The following table lists a selection of data from the 1999/2000 NHANES.

Definition	% of Adults	Est. # of Adults*	Sample Size	Error Margin
Say "no" when asked if they ever eat poultry	2%	4 million	9,965	+/- 1.0%
Say "no" when asked if they ever eat "beef, pork, veal, or lamb"	3%	6 million	9,965	+/- 1.0%
Say "no" when asked if they consumed any milk in the past 30 days	8%	17 million	9,965	+/- 1.0%

* Source: CDC / NHANES site, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/nhanes/frequency/dbq.htm>

The NHANES study might be useful for certain analyses of specific food types, but it does not provide a clear picture of overall meat consumption trends. For this information we can gain some insight by looking at USDA studies on food availability and "disappearance" rates. The USDA's Economic Research Service has been conducting such surveys since the early 1940s. Food availability data is calculated based on records of annual food product flows from production to end use, eliminating exports and "farm inputs." The result is the implied total consumption of a certain type of food, which can then be divided by the population to estimate per capita consumption.

The data show some clear trends over time, including significantly increased consumption of fish/shellfish and chicken products, and decreased consumption of "red meat" products. Looking at the last five years of available data, per capita consumption of fish/shellfish has increased by 10%, while consumption of chicken has increased by 7%. These are the only two major types of animal flesh to see increased consumption in the five years up to and including 2003. By comparison, per capita consumption of lamb and turkey flesh has remained essentially constant, while consumption of pork has declined slightly, by about 2%. The largest declines have been in beef and veal products, which have seen a 4% and 16% drop in per capita consumption, respectively.

FIVE-YEAR PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION DATA (MEAT PRODUCTS)

<i>(Pounds per person)</i>	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	5-yr growth
Fish & Shellfish	14.8	15.2	14.7	15.6	16.3	10.1%
Chicken	53.6	54.2	54.0	56.8	57.5	7.3%
Lamb	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.0%
Turkey	13.8	13.7	13.8	14.0	13.7	-0.7%
Pork	49.3	47.8	46.9	48.2	48.5	-1.6%
Beef (not veal)	64.3	64.5	63.1	64.5	62.0	-3.6%
Veal	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	-16.7%
TOTAL MEAT	197.2	196.7	193.8	200.5	199.3	1.1%

* Source: USDA / ERS site, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/foodconsumption/>

The USDA also calculates disappearance data for dairy and egg products using the same methodology. U.S. adults consume an average of nearly 300 pounds of dairy products per person each year, a large majority (70% or more) of it in the form of fluid milk and cream. However, overall dairy consumption has declined by nearly 3% total over the five years up to 2003, with the biggest drop in “frozen dairy” products. Although cheese consumption continued to grow modestly (5% over the five-year period), every other major dairy product segment declined by at least 3%. Egg consumption (chickens only) remained fairly flat but growing slightly, with consumption increasing by 1.6% over the same period.

FIVE-YEAR PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION DATA (DAIRY AND EGG PRODUCTS)

<i>(Pounds per person)</i>	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	5-yr growth
Cheese	31.6	32.4	32.6	33.1	33.3	5.4%
Fluid Milk & Cream	213.1	210.1	207.6	206.7	206.0	-3.3%
Butter	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	-4.3%
Other Dairy *	9.8	8.9	9.0	9.4	9.3	-5.1%
Frozen Dairy	28.6	28.0	27.0	26.6	26.7	-6.6%
TOTAL DAIRY	287.8	283.9	280.7	280.3	279.8	-2.8%
Eggs	32.2	32.4	32.5	32.8	32.7	1.6%

* Source: USDA / ERS site, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/foodconsumption/>

Sources and Reference Studies (Reverse Chronological Order)

1. 2005 (February): HRC study conducted by the Humane Research Council; N=3,200 US adults; Available from HRC at info@humanereseearch.org or by calling 206-852-4848.
2. 2004 (April): Quorn Food's US Director, David Wilson, as quoted in the April 2004 edition of *Food Product Design*. For the full article, see <http://www.foodproductdesign.com/archive/2004/0404DE.html>.
3. 2003 (April): VRG article, "The Market for Vegetarian Foods," by Caryn Ginsberg and Alissa Ostrowski. For the full article, see <http://www.vrg.org/nutshell/market.htm>.
4. 2003 (February): VRG poll conducted by Harris Interactive; N=1,031 US adults; Available online from VRG: www.vrg.org/journal/vj2003issue3/vj2003issue3poll.htm.
5. 2002 (May): PETA survey conducted by Zogby; N=931 US adults split evenly among Whites, Hispanics, and African Americans; Available online: <http://www.goveg.com/feat/vegpoll.html>
6. 2002 (April): Time/CNN poll conducted by Harris Interactive; N=10,007 US adults; Available online: <http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101020715/poll/>.
7. 2002 (April): Time/CNN poll conducted by Yankelovich Partners; N=1,003 US adults; Summary data is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
8. 2000 (late): VRG youth poll conducted by the Roper Organization; N=1,240 US youths age 6-17; Available online from VRG: <http://vrg.org/journal/vj2001jan/2001janteen.htm>.
9. 2000 (July): Wirthlin Quorum poll conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide; N=1,012 US adults; Summary data is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
10. 2000 (January): VRG poll conducted by Zogby; N=968 US adults; Available online from VRG: www.vrg.org/nutshell/poll2000.htm.
11. 1999 (September): Gallup poll conducted by the Gallup Organization; N=1,039 US adults; Summary data is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
12. 1999 (January): Restaurants USA survey conducted by unknown group; N=unknown; Summary article available online: <http://www.restaurant.org/business/magarticle.cfm?ArticleID=324>
13. 1997 (September): VRG poll conducted by the Roper Organization; N=1,960 US adults; Available online from VRG: www.vrg.org/journal/vj97sep/979poll.htm.
14. 1997 (April): Wirthlin Quorum poll conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide; N= 1,000 US adults; Summary data is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
15. 1996: Prevention Magazine survey conducted by the Food Marketing Institute; N= 1,000 US adults; Summary data is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
16. 1996 (December): Wirthlin Quorum poll conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide; N= 1,033 US adults; Summary data is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
17. 1995 (November): VRG youth poll conducted by the Roper Organization; N=1,023 US youths age 8-17; Available online from VRG: <http://vrg.org/journal/95nov.htm#kids>.
18. 1995 (July): Time/CNN poll conducted by Yankelovich Partners; N=1,000; Summary data, including demographics, is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
19. 1994 (July): VRG poll conducted by the Roper Organization; N=1,978 US adults; Available online from VRG: www.vrg.org/nutshell/poll.htm.
20. 1992: National Cattlemen's Beef Association survey conducted by MRCA Information Services; 4,700 US adult panelists from 2,000 households; Reference article available from HRC.
21. 1992 (September): National Restaurant Association Health and Nutrition Study conducted by Marketing and Research Counselors; N=800 US adults; Summary data is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
22. 1992 (September): Vegetarian Times survey conducted by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman; N=601 subscribers, including 300 self-described vegetarians; Reference article available from HRC.
23. 1992 (March): Time/CNN poll conducted by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman; N=1,400 US adults; Summary data, including demographics, is available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
24. 1991 (February): Maritz Ameripoll conducted by Maritz Marketing Research; N=1,000 US adults; Summary is data available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.
25. 1943 (September): Gallup poll conducted by the Gallup Organization; N=1,500 US adults; Summary is data available online (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>) or from HRC.

HRC Meat Consumption Study (2005)

In February 2005, HRC conducted a survey of more than 3,000 adults in the U.S. to gauge current, past, and future (intended) levels of meat consumption. The survey represents the first phase of a comprehensive three-phase study designed to understand semi-vegetarianism, with an emphasis on what motivates people to reduce, rather than eliminate, meat from their diet. The overall study will also identify the primary barriers that keep semi-vegetarians from choosing a completely plant-based diet. Phases two and three will explore these issues in significantly more depth using qualitative research methods and a targeted survey of semi-vegetarians.

Results from the study will enable vegetarian advocates to make more informed decisions about targeting specific groups of people to encourage wider adoption of plant-based diets. Results from the phase one survey can help vegetarian and vegan advocates understand the overall trends relating to meat consumption in the U.S. Also, the phase one data provides a deep analysis of the prevalence of semi-vegetarianism (and meat reduction) among specific demographic groups, such as women or young adults age 18-24.

Phases one and two of the HRC meat consumption study have been funded with the generous support of the following groups and individuals: Animal Place, the Animal Welfare Trust, The Humane Society of the United States, FARM, Farm Sanctuary, and Steve Kaufman, MD. HRC continues to seek support for the final phase three of the study that will quantitatively validate the insights and questions uncovered during phase two.

HRC is in the process of completing our analysis of all phase one data and scheduling phase two of the study. Following all three phases, HRC will write a final report that will be made available for a small fee to qualified vegetarian and vegan advocacy groups. This full report will be available in the first quarter of 2006. For more about the study or to order an advance copy of the final report, please contact HRC at info@humaneresearch.org or (206) 852-4848.