

COOL FOOD*

How to sell more climate-friendly food.

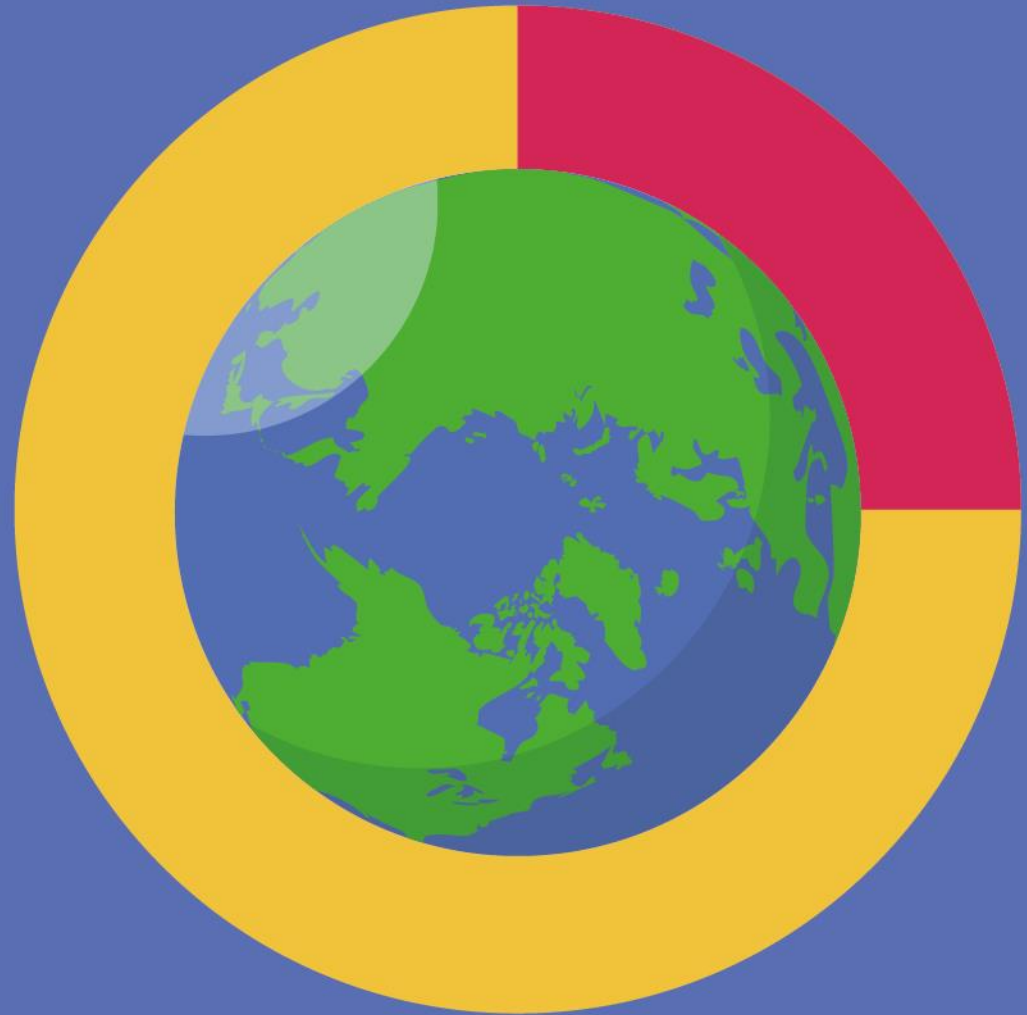
A research-based strategy to double your customers' uptake of climate-friendly menu items.



Climate change and customer menu choices.

A quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions come from food production. By nudging customers to choose more plant-rich menu options, we can make a big difference to our climate. But how can we encourage customers to do this?

WRI's research paper ***Environmental Messages Promote Plant-Based Food Choices*** looked at various descriptive messages designed to nudge consumers into making more environmentally friendly menu choices.



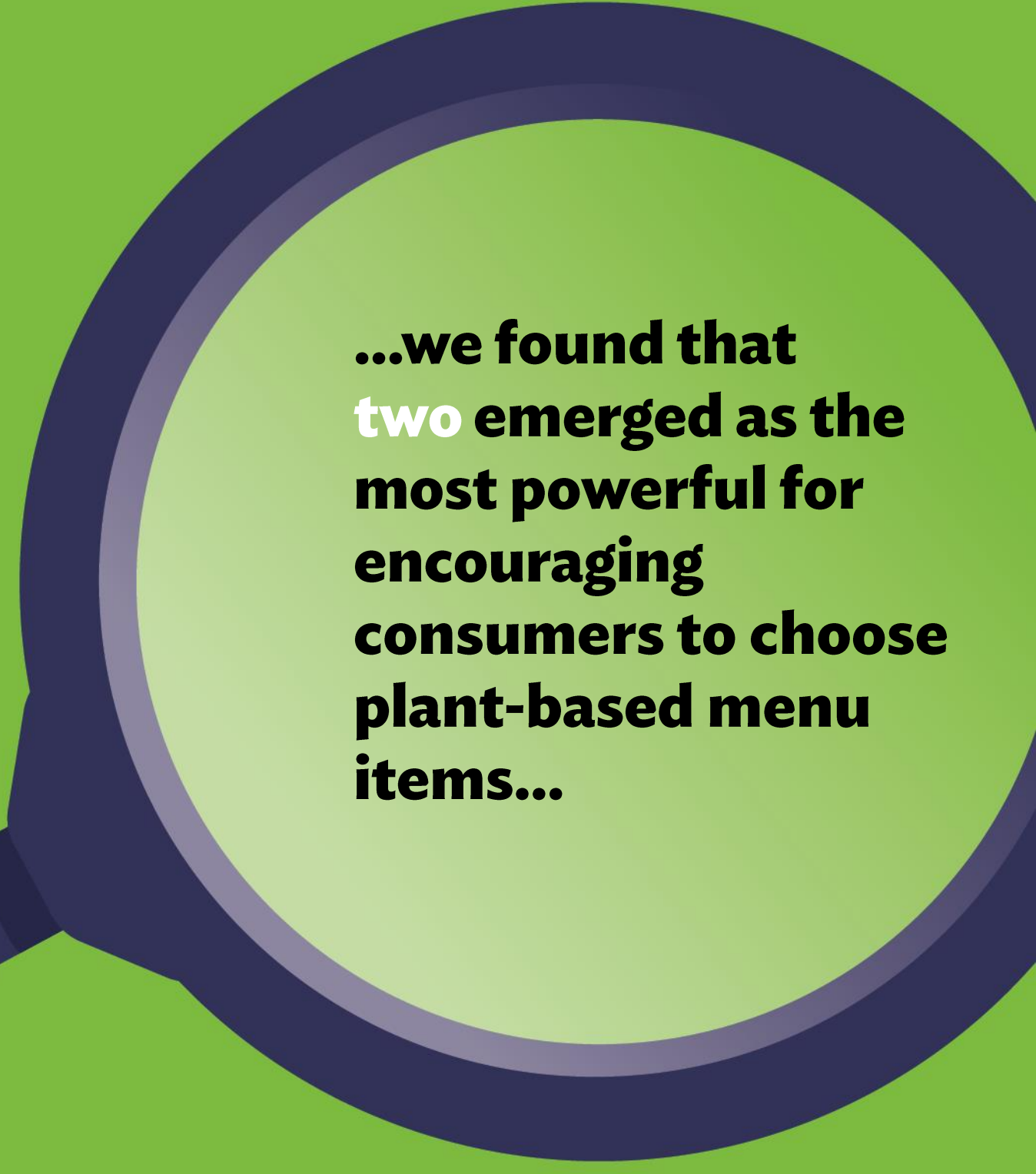
The awesome power of a nudge

**A nudge is a great way to
guide people into making the
right decision when faced
with a range of options,
without restricting choice.**



Which descriptive messages work best?

To find out, WRI researched different descriptive messages that sat under 10 themes and measured which ones had the biggest influence over customer buying choices.



**...we found that
two emerged as the
most powerful for
encouraging
consumers to choose
plant-based menu
items...**

1 Small change, big difference

Surprising customers with the fact that they can make a meaningful positive impact on the environment without a significant sacrifice was a very effective nudging tool.



This statement
more than **doubled**
the amount of
plant-based choices
made by customers.

“Each of us can make a positive difference to the planet. Swapping just one meat dish for a plant-based one saves greenhouse gas emissions that are equivalent to the energy used to charge your phone for 2 years. Your small change can make a big difference.”



Breaking down the nudge...

**The key to making this theme work is to make a simple equivalent between an easily achievable action and an easily understandable outcome.
The messages can be broken down into three parts.**

**Personal empowerment
statement**

**“Each of us can make a
positive difference to
the planet”**

Easily achievable action

**“Swapping just one
meat dish for a
plant-based one”**

**Easily understood
personal outcome**

**“Saves the
emissions equivalent
to the energy used
to charge your
phone for 2 years”**

Making it work for you...

Personal empowerment statement

"Everybody can make a big difference"

"It's easy for you to have a positive impact on climate change"

"You can make a bigger difference than you think"

Easily achievable action

"Making your breakfast fry-up plant-based for a month"

"Eating one plant-based dinner a week for a year"

"Swapping just one meat dish for a plant based one"

Easily understood personal outcome

"Saves four months' worth of showers"

"Saves emissions equal to a flight from New York to Shanghai"

"Saves the emissions equivalent to the energy used to charge your phone for 2 years"



Joining a movement

Demonstrating that the choice they are making is one that many more people are making too was a very effective nudging tool.



This statement nearly doubled the amount of plant-based choices made by customers.

“90% of Americans are making the change to eat less meat. Join this growing movement and choose plant-based dishes that have less impact on the climate and are kinder to the planet.”



Breaking down the nudge...

The key to making this theme work is to describe the size and personal relevance of the group they are joining and the behavior you would like the individual to adopt.

**Size and personal
relevance of group**

“90% of Americans”

Group’s behavior

**“making the change
to eat less meat”**

Call to action

**“choose plant-based
dishes that have less
impact”**

Making it work for you...

Size and relevance of group

"A% of our customers"

"B% of our diners"

*"C% of university
students"*

Group's behavior

*"chose this plant-
rich dish last year"*

"order this menu option"

*"are eating one
plant-rich meal
every day"*

Call to action

*"join them in making a
huge impact on climate
change"*

*"choose this delicious meal
and help reduce the effects
of climate change"*

*"join them and save the
planet"*

In summary

By using descriptive messages that communicate the benefits of plant-based food choices, we can empower people to change their behavior and choose lower carbon dishes.

Customers are already looking for companies to help them make good environmental choices.

Customers are happy to be shown sustainability information about a product.

For food service companies, nudging is an easy, low-cost and scalable intervention to implement.

**How did WRI land
on these findings?**

**Here's a deeper look
at the research.**



WRI research

The research comprised of two phases. The first to delineate 10 nudge themes and their associated descriptive messages and the second to test them in two controlled trials.

Phase 1

Descriptive message development

In phase one, WRI generated a series of 10 differently framed descriptive environmental messages.

Phase 2

(Trial A) Descriptive message selection*

Subjected the 10 generated messages to a prioritization process using a large-scale online survey.

5 most effective messages

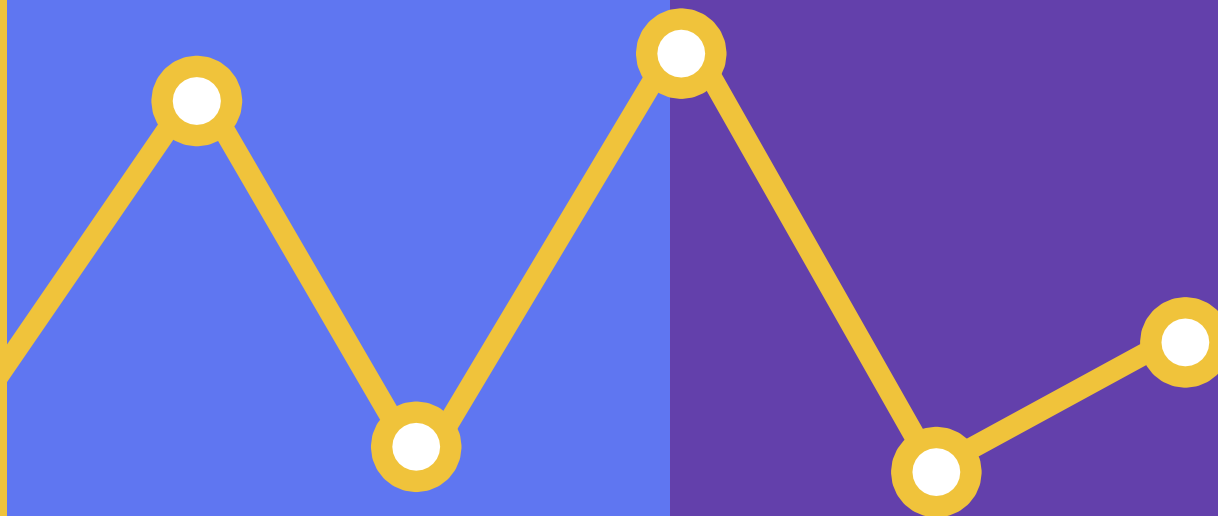
*Using paired menu item selection

Phase 2

(Trial B) Descriptive message selection**

The top performing 5 descriptive messages were subjected to a randomized controlled trial to determine which ones resulted in the largest increase in plant-based food selections from two online menus.

**Using menu layouts



Phase one... 10 themes

First, WRI identified 10 potential themes that could nudge consumers toward making more environmentally friendly menu choices.

*Health &
environment*

*The altruistic
choice*

*Joining a
movement*

*Aspirational
choice*

*A sustainable
future*

*Performance
benefits*

Taste benefits

*Small changes,
big impact*

*Connecting with
nature*

Planet, health, taste

10 messages

After WRI identified the themes, researchers, went through a process of refinement, amalgamation and elimination that reduced 27 possible messages to the 10 most succinct messages, as shown below:

"You will be surprised how much positive impact plant-based food can have on both the planet and your health. Choose plant-based dishes to lower your carbon footprint and improve nutrition. It's about goodness for you and the planet."

Theme: Health & environment

"Plant-based dishes are a win-win for you and the planet. They help you feel alive and full of energy. And they are kinder to the planet, with less impact on the climate. Plant-based dishes: do good and feel great."

Theme: The altruistic choice

"90% of Americans are making the change to eat less meat. Join this growing movement and choose plant-based dishes that have less impact on the climate and are kinder to the planet."

Theme: Joining a movement

"Movie stars and fashion icons around the world are waking up to the urgent challenge of climate change. Cutting down on meat and choosing more plant-based food is one of the ways they are reducing their impact. Join the in-crowd to make a change for a cooler planet."

Theme: Aspirational choice

"Choosing plant-based food is the best way to feed a growing population while protecting our planet's climate for generations to come. A greener future for our children starts on your plate."

Theme: A sustainable future

"Plant-based dishes take their energy from vegetables grown with the power of the sun and soil. They are a source of vibrant goodness for your body that also helps the planet's climate stay cool. Power your body with green energy."

Theme: Performance benefits

"Plant-based dishes are stacked with fresh vegetables and flavorful herbs and spices. Making them a delicious meal that is also kinder to the climate than meat-based dishes. Savor food that saves the planet."

Theme: Taste benefits

"Each of us can make a positive difference to the planet. Swapping just one meat dish for a plant-based one saves greenhouse gas emissions that are equivalent to the energy used to charge your phone for 2 years. Your small change can make a big difference."

Theme: Small changes, big impact

"Plant-based dishes are made with natural field-grown vegetables that are freshly harvested at their peak. Wholesome plant-based food that is not only kinder to the climate but also full of natural good taste."

Theme: Connecting with nature

"Plant-based dishes are made with delicious ingredients that are better for your health and the climate than meat. Plant-based dishes are free from compromise: great taste, good for your health, and help the planet."

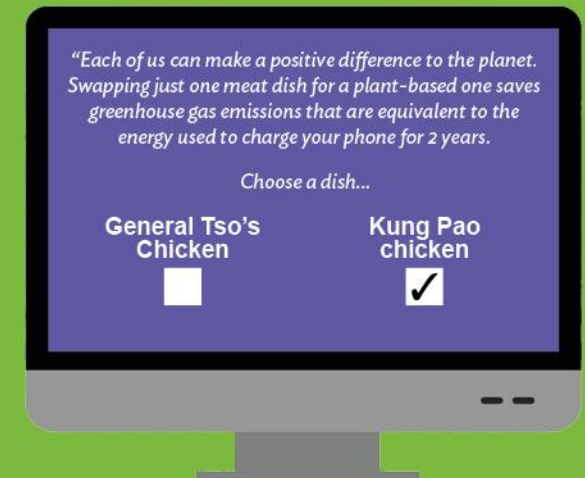
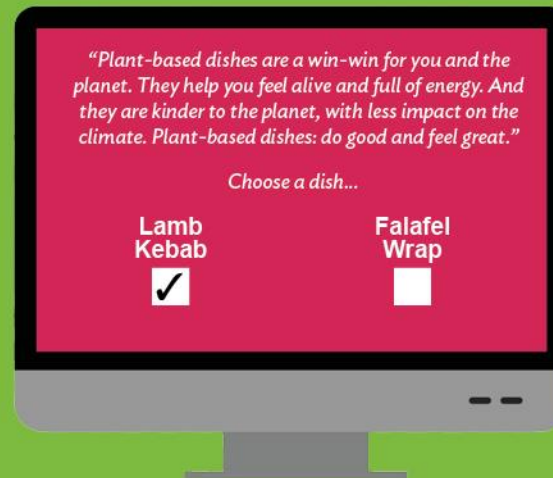
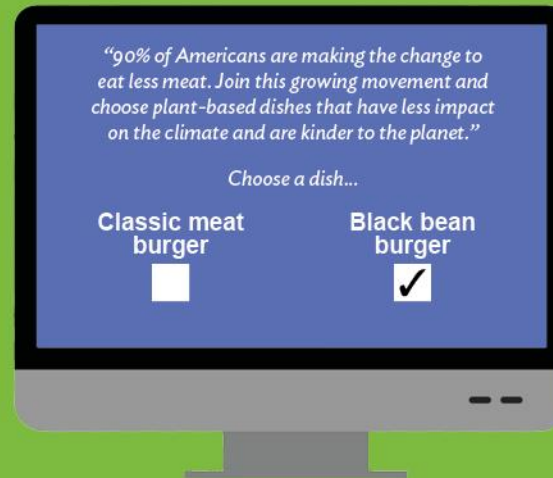
Theme: Planet, health, taste

Testing the 10 messages

WRI then tested the messages with 6,374 people by showing each of them one of the 10 chosen messages and then asking them to choose between a meat-based and plant-based menu option.

To make it relevant, researchers made sure the menu options people were given were ones typically found in restaurants across the U.S.

Then WRI looked at the differences between their choices and those made by a control group.



Phase 2 ...

Assessing Message Performance

Of the original 10 messages, the following 5 performed best in trial A and were carried forward to trial B:

"90% of Americans are making the change to eat less meat. Join this growing movement and choose plant-based dishes that have less impact on the climate and are kinder to the planet."

Theme: Joining a movement

"Each of us can make a positive difference to the planet. Swapping just one meat dish for a plant-based one saves greenhouse gas emissions that are equivalent to the energy used to charge your phone for 2 years. Your small change can make a big difference."

Theme: Small changes, big impact

"You will be surprised how much positive impact plant-based food can have on both the planet and your health. Choose plant-based dishes to lower your carbon footprint and improve nutrition. It's about goodness for you and the planet."

Theme: Health & environment

"Plant-based dishes are stacked with fresh vegetables and flavorful herbs and spices. Making them a delicious meal, that is also kinder to the climate than meat-based dishes. Savor food that saves the planet."

Theme: Taste benefits

"Choosing plant-based food is the best way to feed a growing population while protecting our planet's climate for generations to come. A greener future for our children starts on your plate."

Theme: A sustainable future

Testing the 5 most successful messages

- Study involved 2,900 participants
- Randomly allocated to see either a dinner menu or lunch menu
- Each menu had 6 meat and 2 veg options
- Tested whether any of the 5 messages was having an impact on the choice of meal



Phase two (trial b)...the results

Of the messages tested, two stood out!

More than doubled plant-based choices as compared to the control group

Small changes, big impact

“Each of us can make a positive difference to the planet. Swapping just one meat dish for a plant-based one saves greenhouse gas emissions that are equivalent to the energy used to charge your phone for 2 years. Your small change can make a big difference.”



Nearly doubled plant-based choices as compared to the control group

Joining a movement

“90% of Americans are making the change to eat less meat. Join this growing movement and choose plant-based dishes that have less impact on the climate and are kinder to the planet.”



**Learn more about how
to lower the greenhouse
gas emissions of the food
you serve by visiting
CoolFood.org**