

# Making the case for vegetarian diets

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Vegetarian diets are  
**OLDWAYS** of eating.

The roots of vegetarian diets  
can be traced back to the  
beginnings of recorded history.

# The book of Genesis

Pronounces that the seeds of plants and the fruits of trees are the nourishment of human kind.



# Gautama Buddha

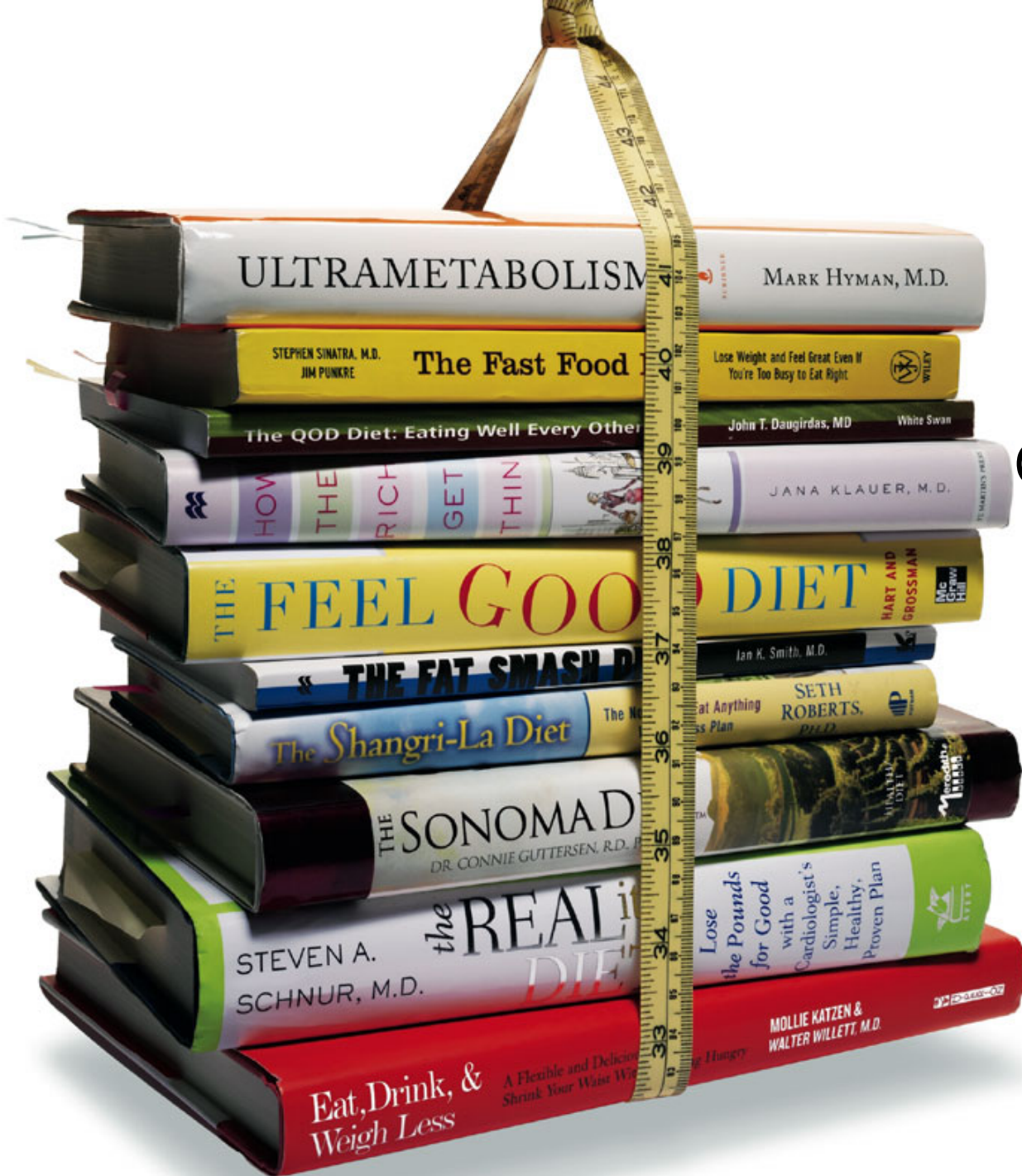
“The eating of meat  
extinguishes the seed  
of great compassion.”



# Plato

The Republic asserted that the ideal city was a vegetarian city because it was more rational to choose a diet less harmful to the environment and to the spirit.





Vegetarian diets are not a modern invention or fad from a recent book.

A vegetarian diet is defined by the **exclusion** of flesh foods.



# How are the dietary patterns defined?

**Meat**

**Poultry/Fish**

**Dairy/Eggs**

***Non-vegetarian***



***Pesco***



***Lacto-ovo***



***Vegan***



Most studies of vegetarians  
come from either the:

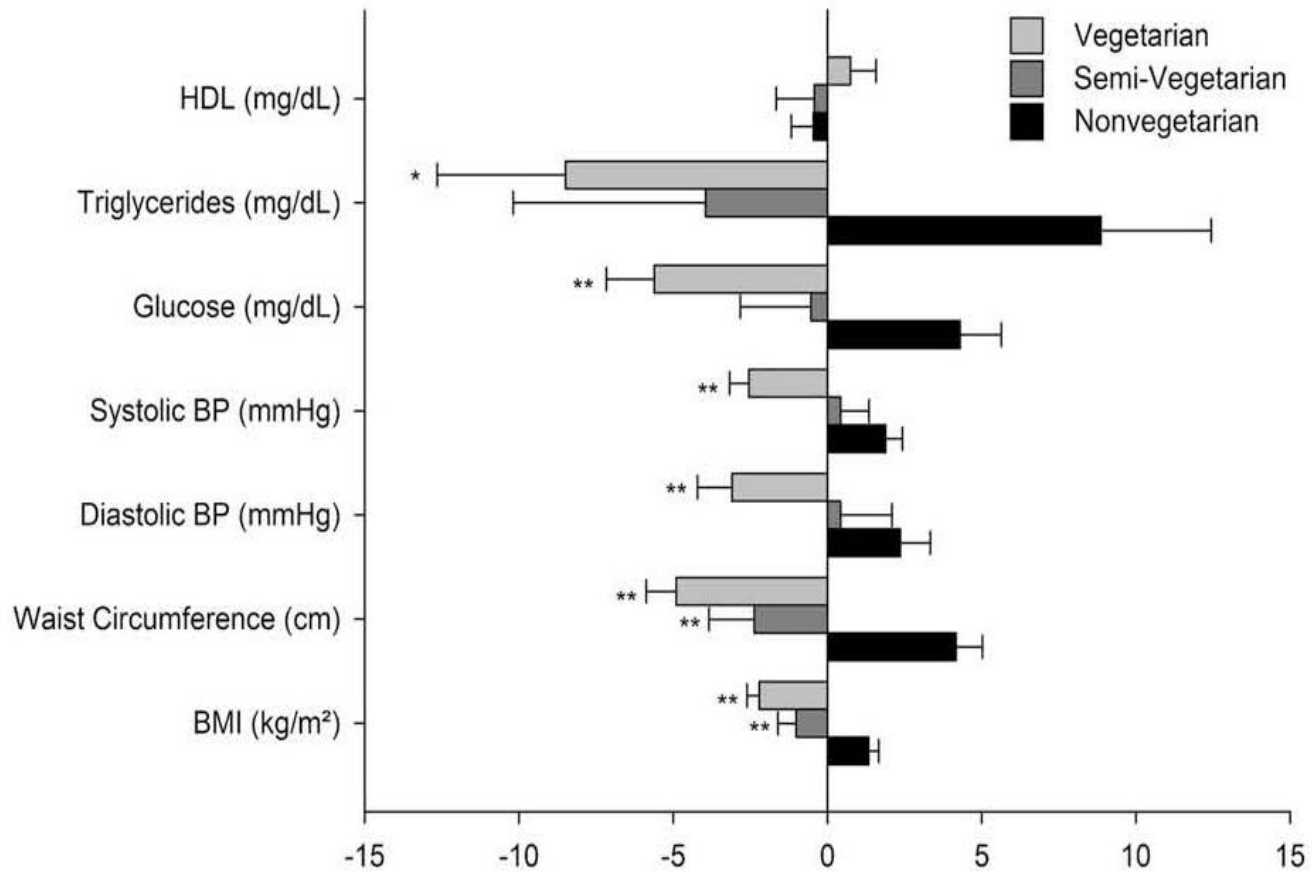
**North-American Seventh-day  
Adventists Cohorts (AHS-1 & 2)**

or

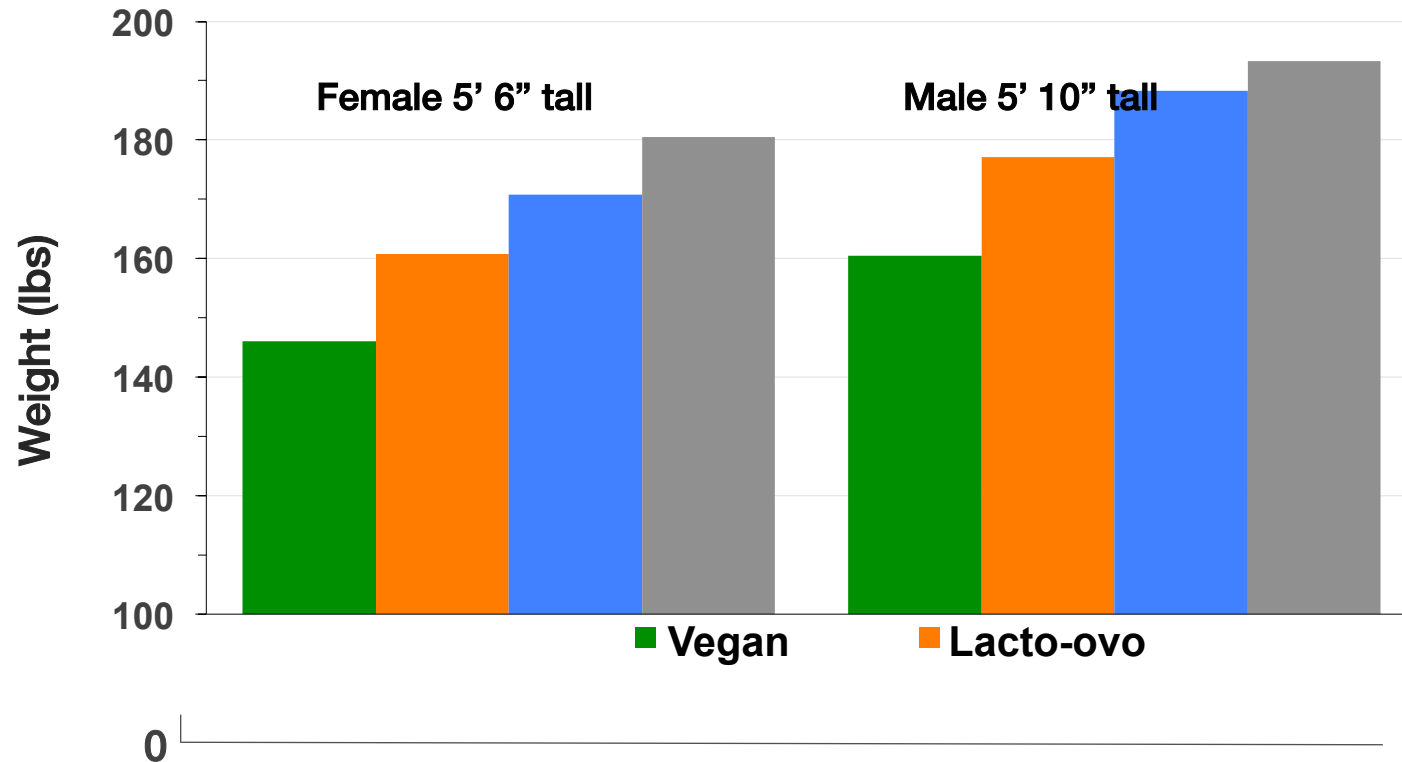
**the EPIC-Oxford study in the UK.**

# **Health effects of vegetarian diets**

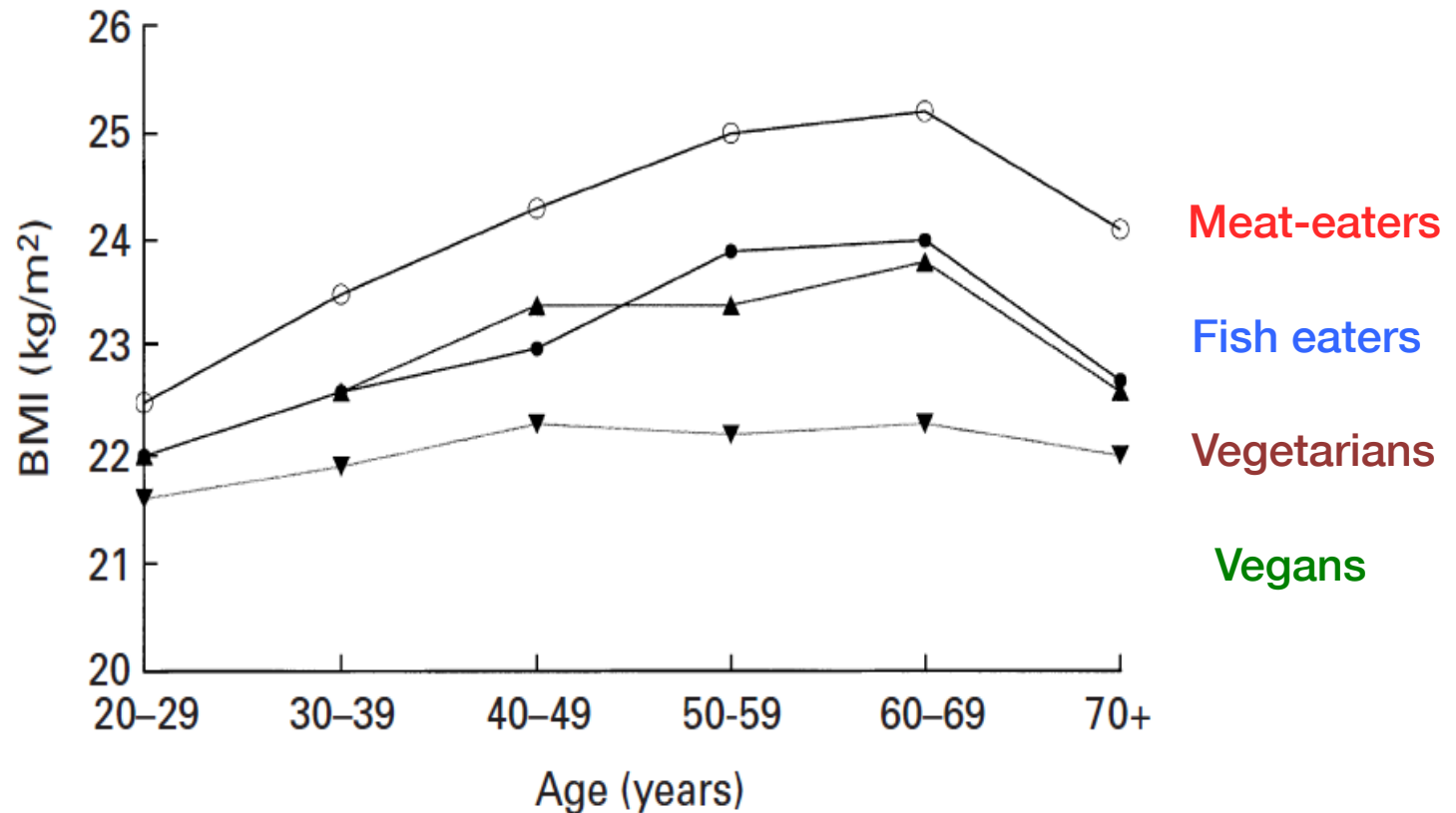
# CVD risk factors



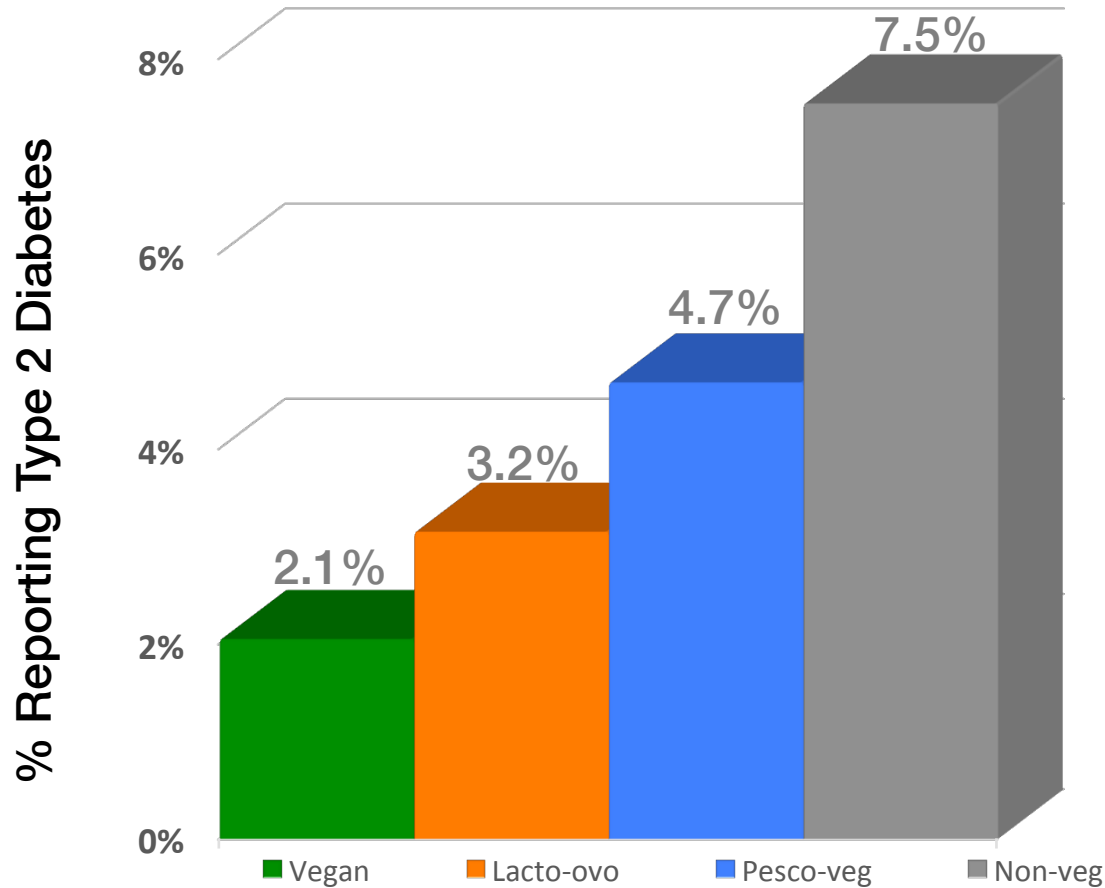
# Vegetarians weigh less



# Vegetarians have lower BMI



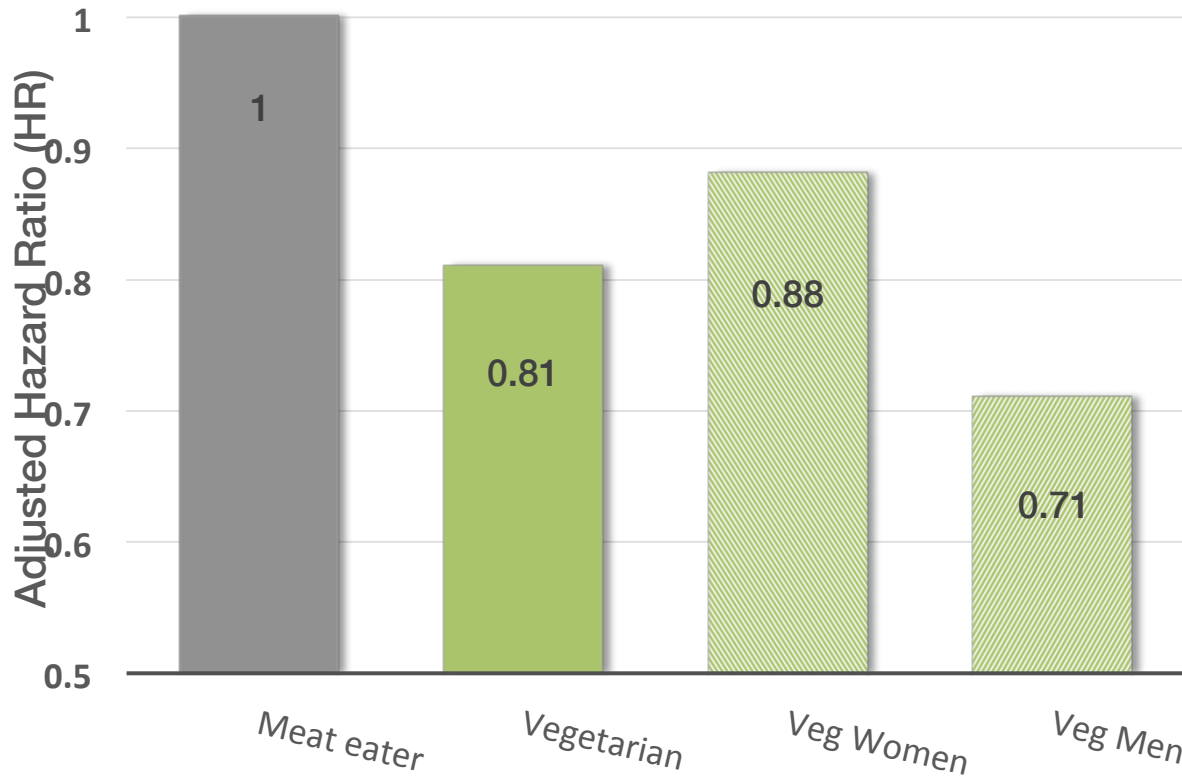
# Vegetarians have lower risk of diabetes



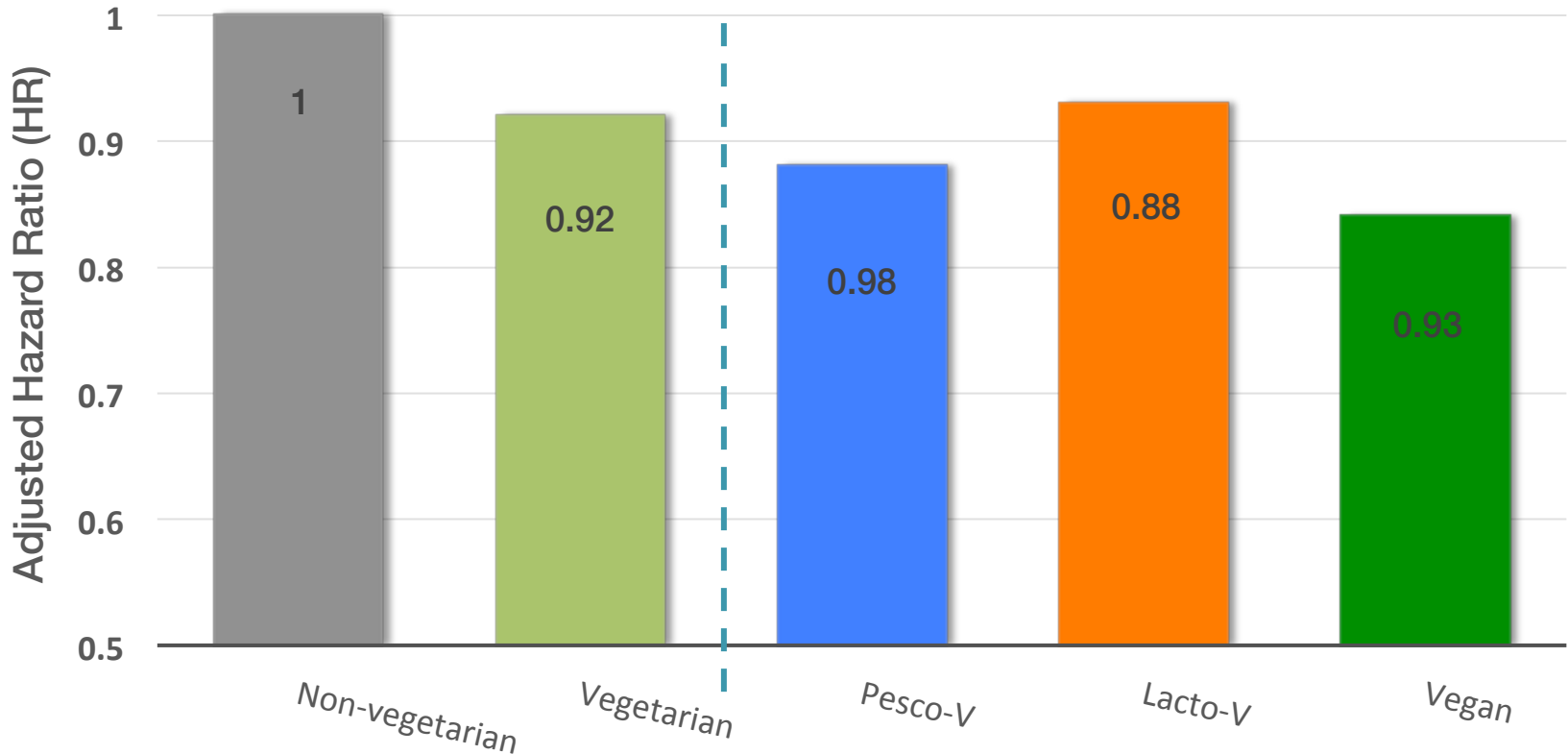
# **Vegetarians compared to non-vegetarians have:**

- 2–5 points lower BMI
- 25% - 50% lower risk of hypertension
- 25% to 50% lower risk of diabetes
- 50% lower risk of metabolic syndrome

# IHD mortality of vegetarians

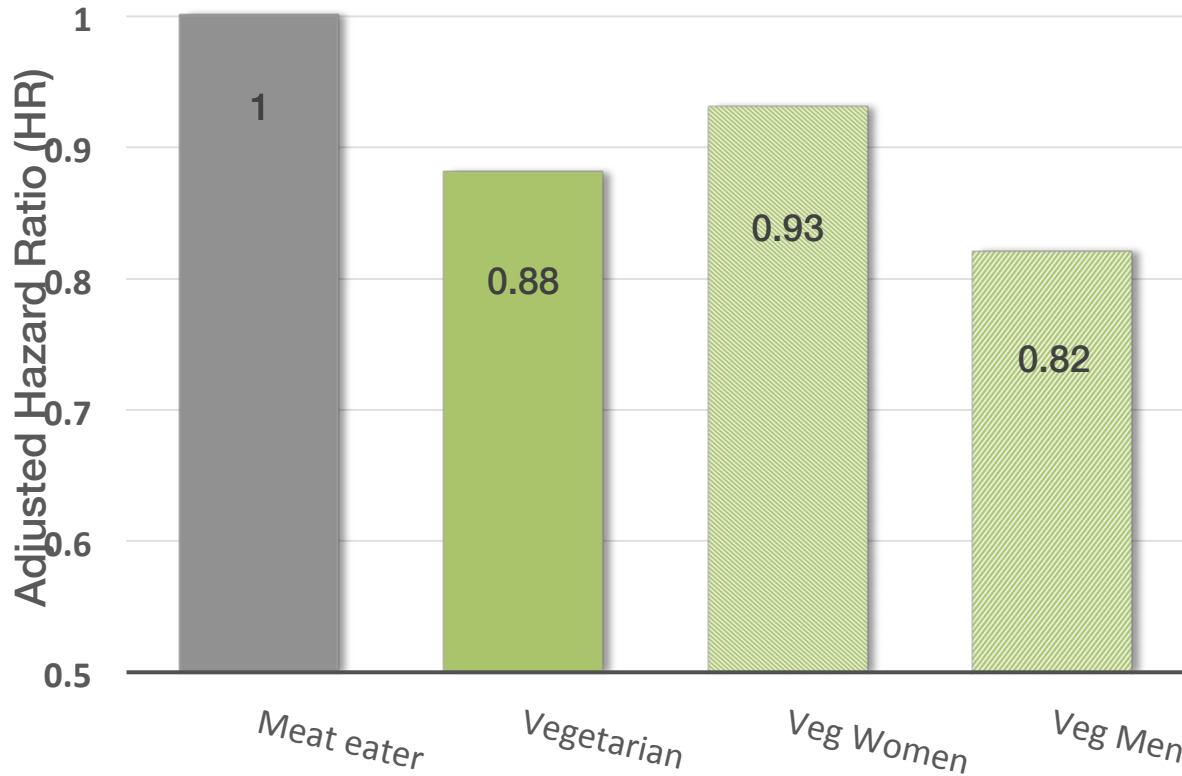


# Vegetarians have a slightly lower risk of overall-cancers



A Vegetarian diet seems to reduce the risk of some cancer sites (colorectal, prostate, GI tract) while it has no effect on other cancers.

# All-Cause mortality for vegetarians

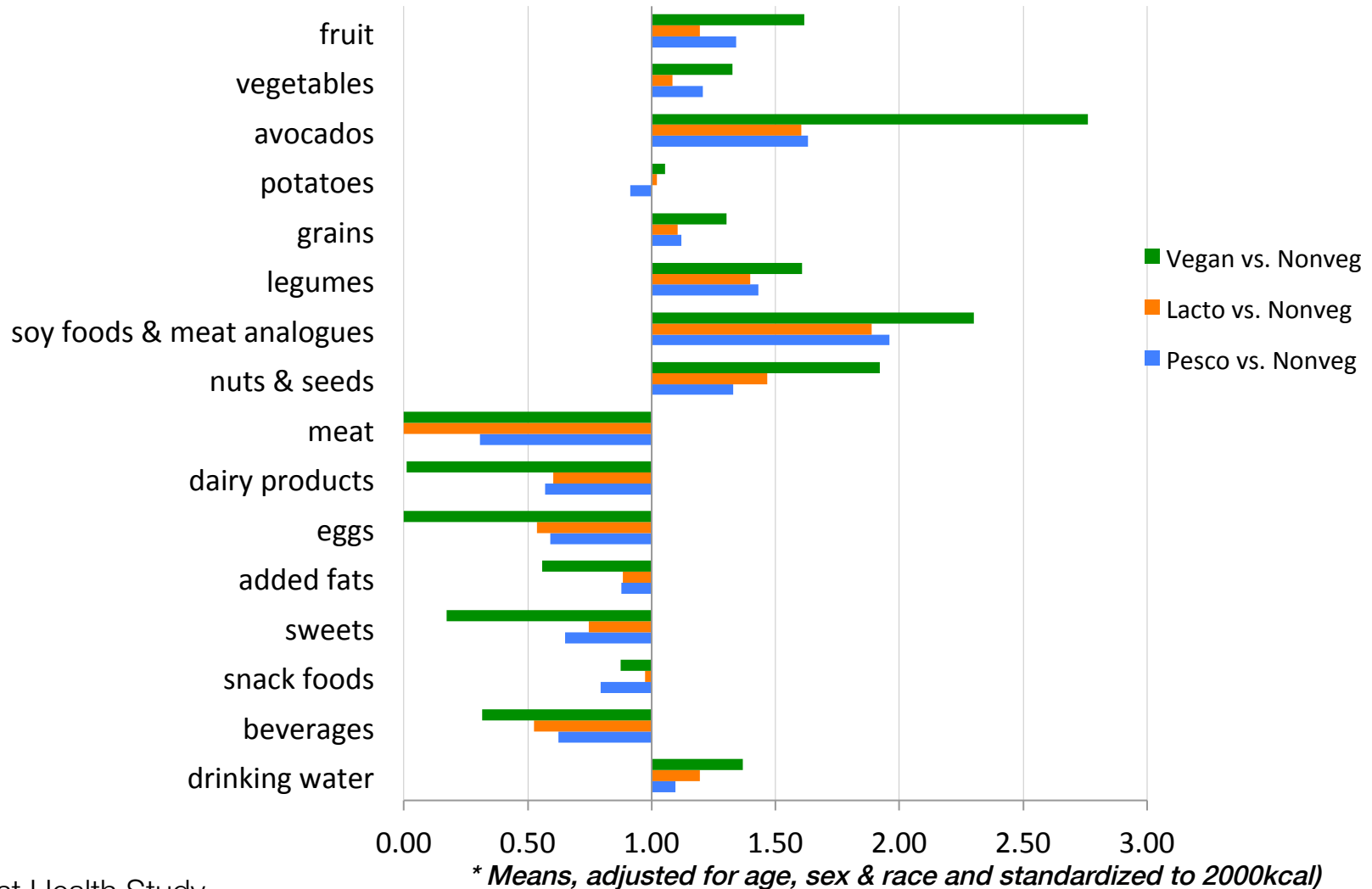


## **Longevity**

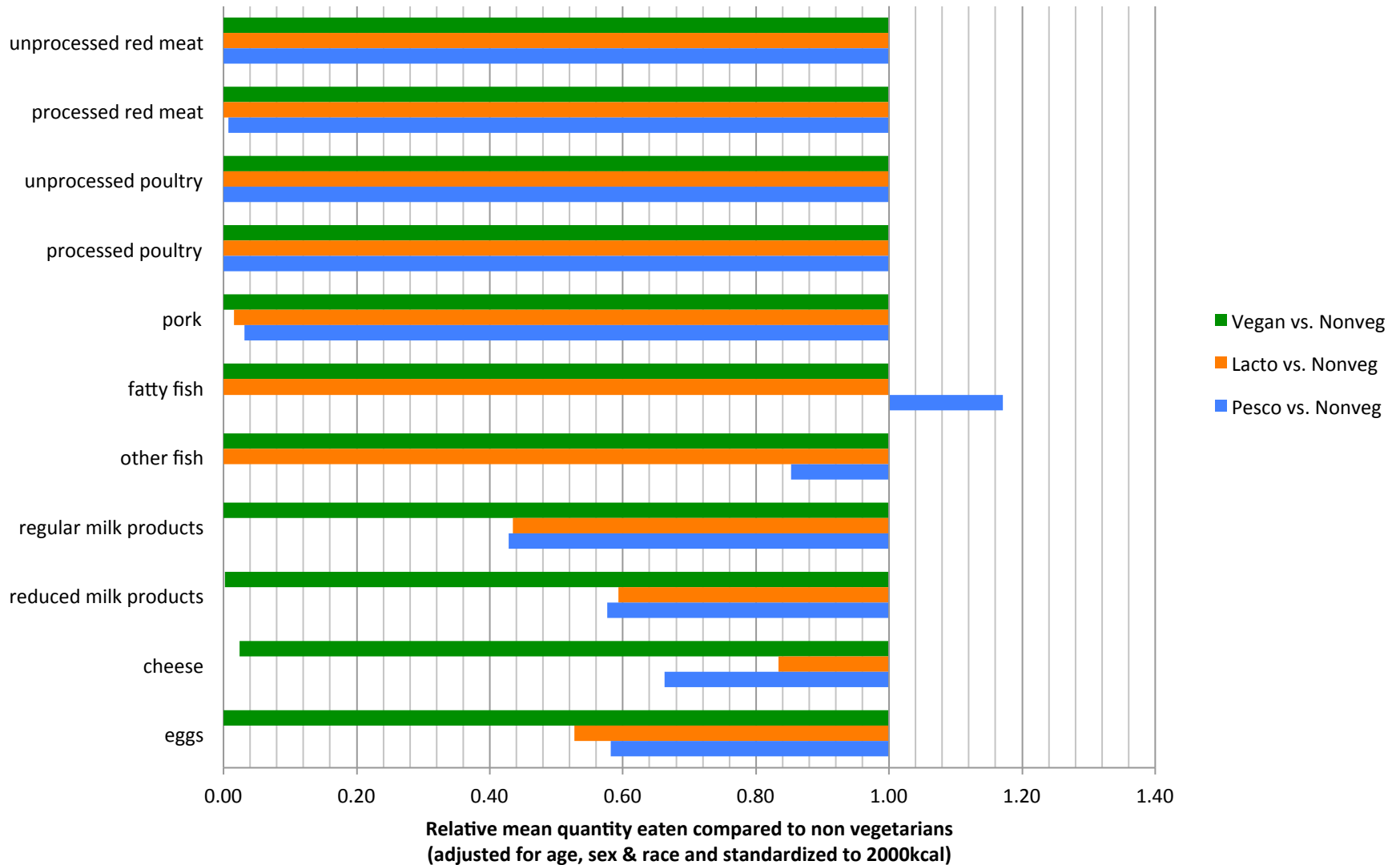
In general, vegetarians live 2 – 3 years longer than non-vegetarians.

**What do vegetarians eat?**

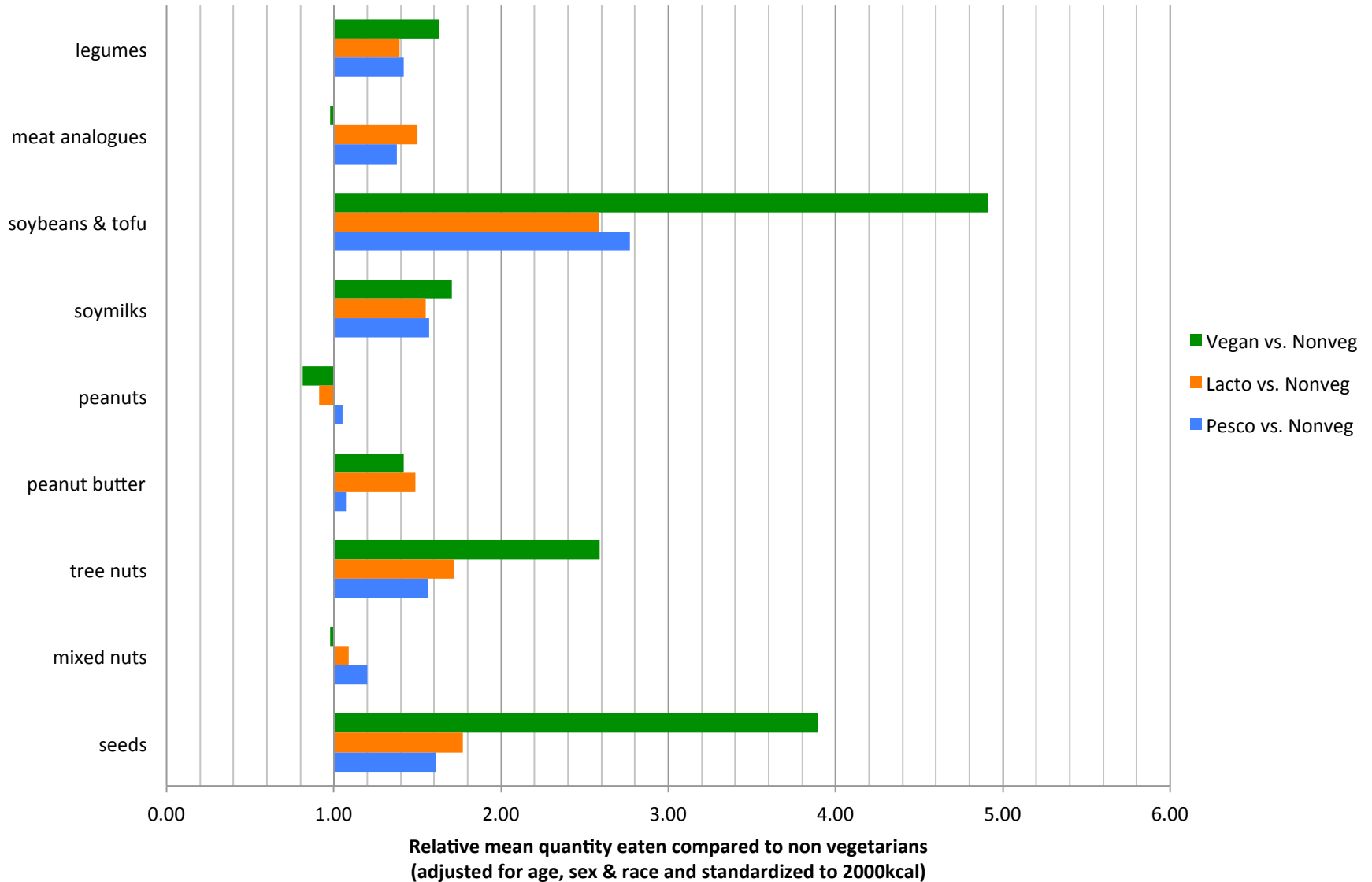
# Relative food intake of vegetarians compared to non-vegetarians



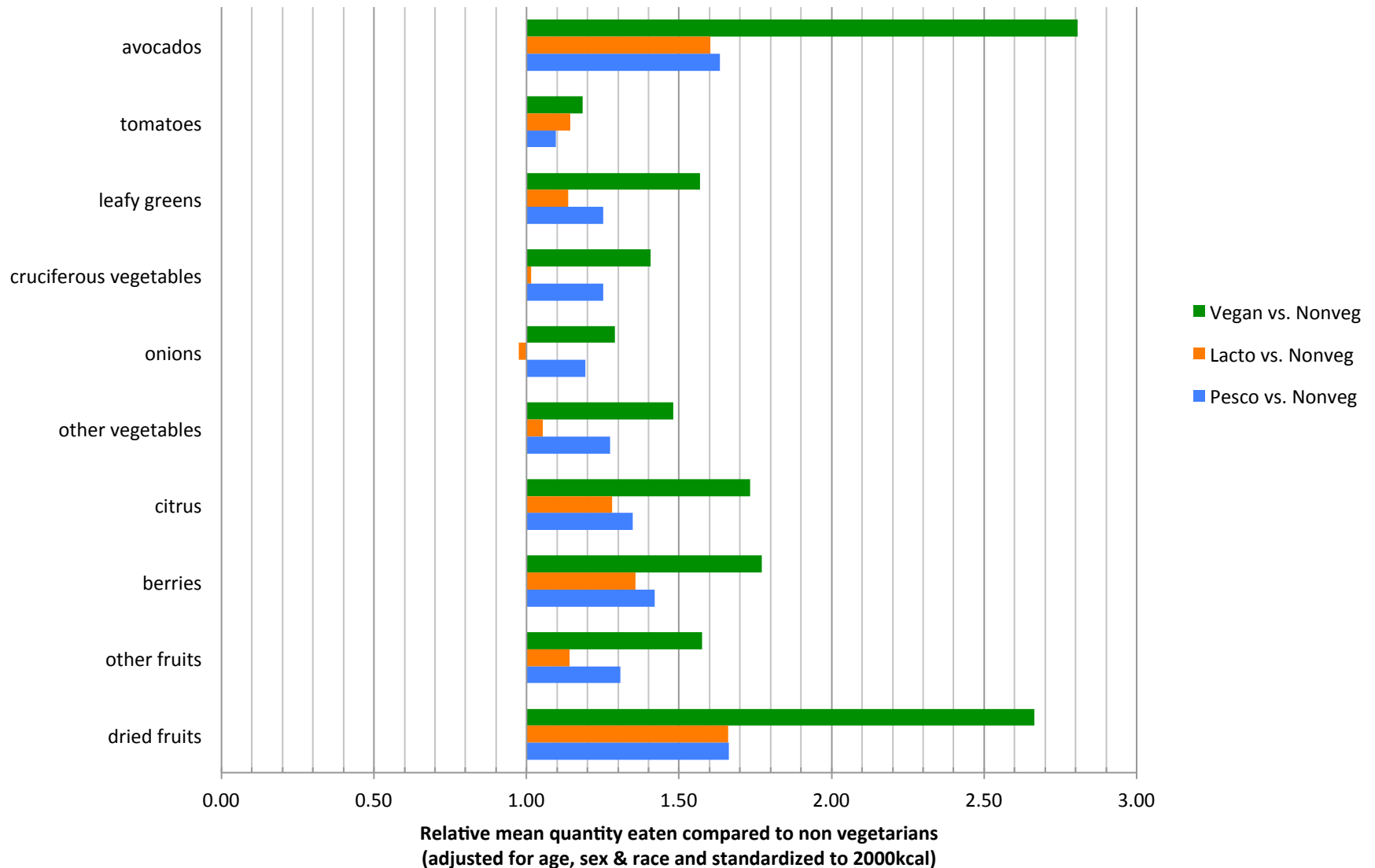
# Animal protein foods



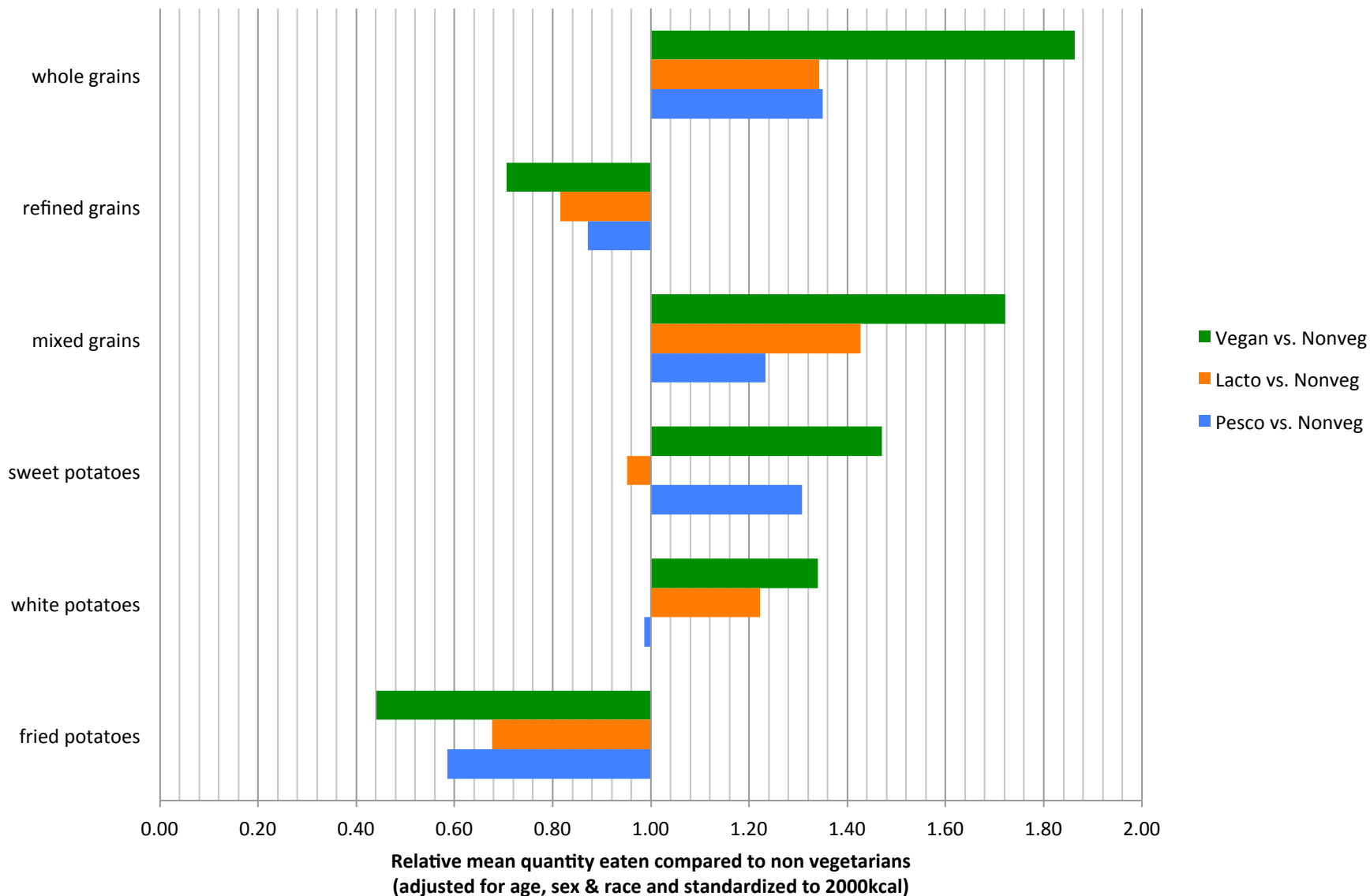
# Plant protein foods



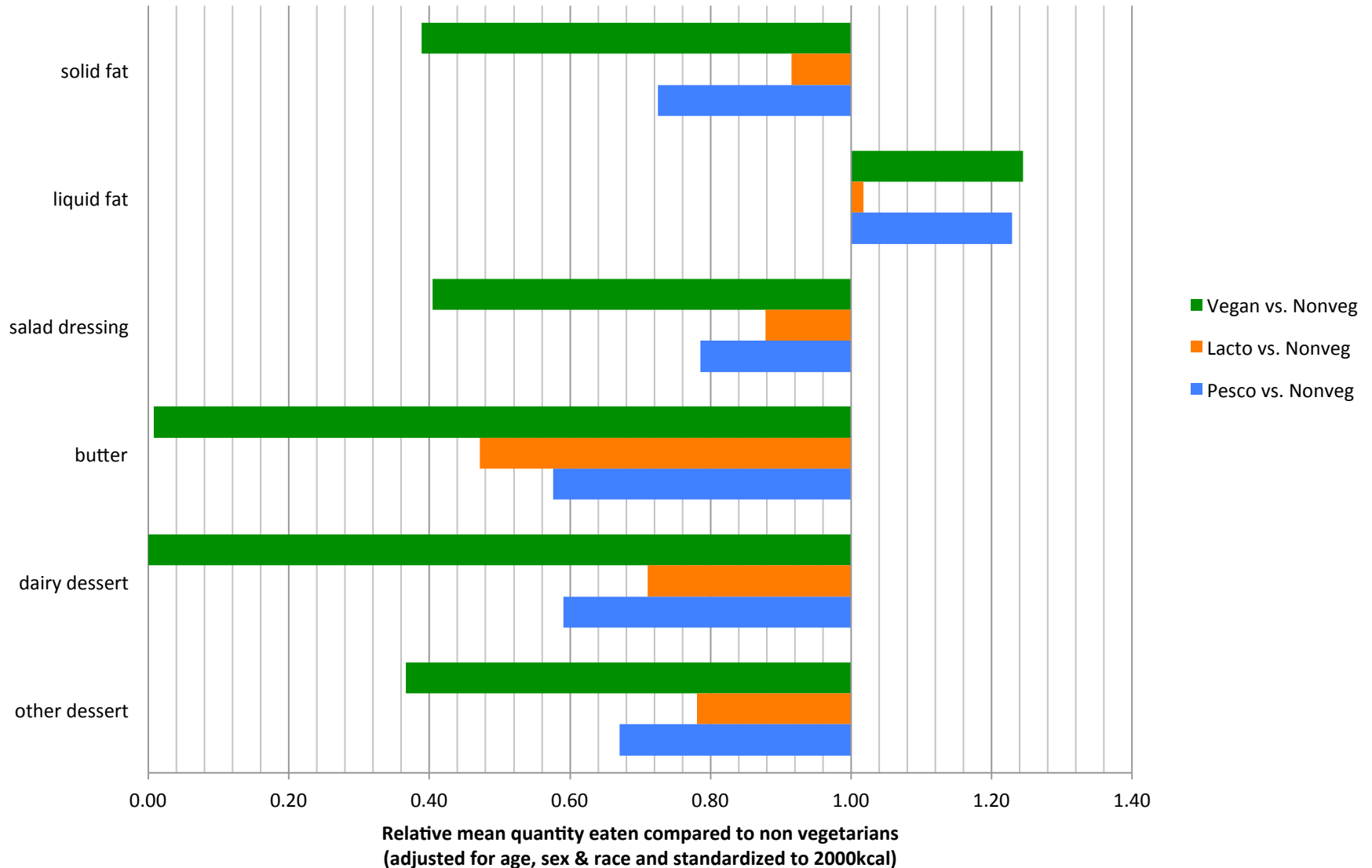
# Fruits and vegetables



# Starchy foods



# Fats, Sweets & Snacks



# A healthy vegetarian diet includes:

- More plant foods
- Less dairy and eggs
- Less refined foods
- Less beverages
- And more water

# **Sustainability of Vegetarian diets**

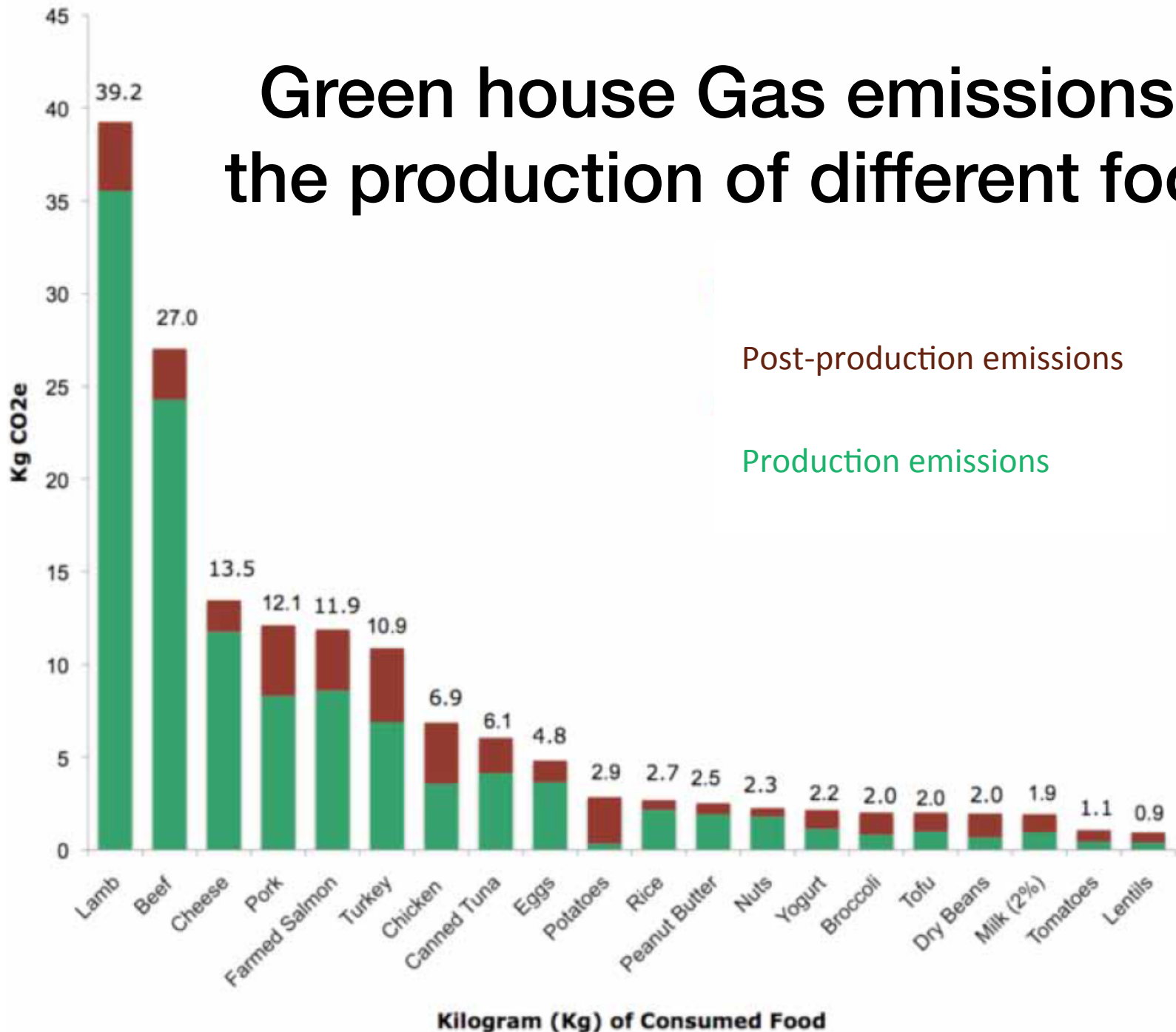
# **Not all foods are produced equally**

The production of Plant foods  
is more sustainable because:

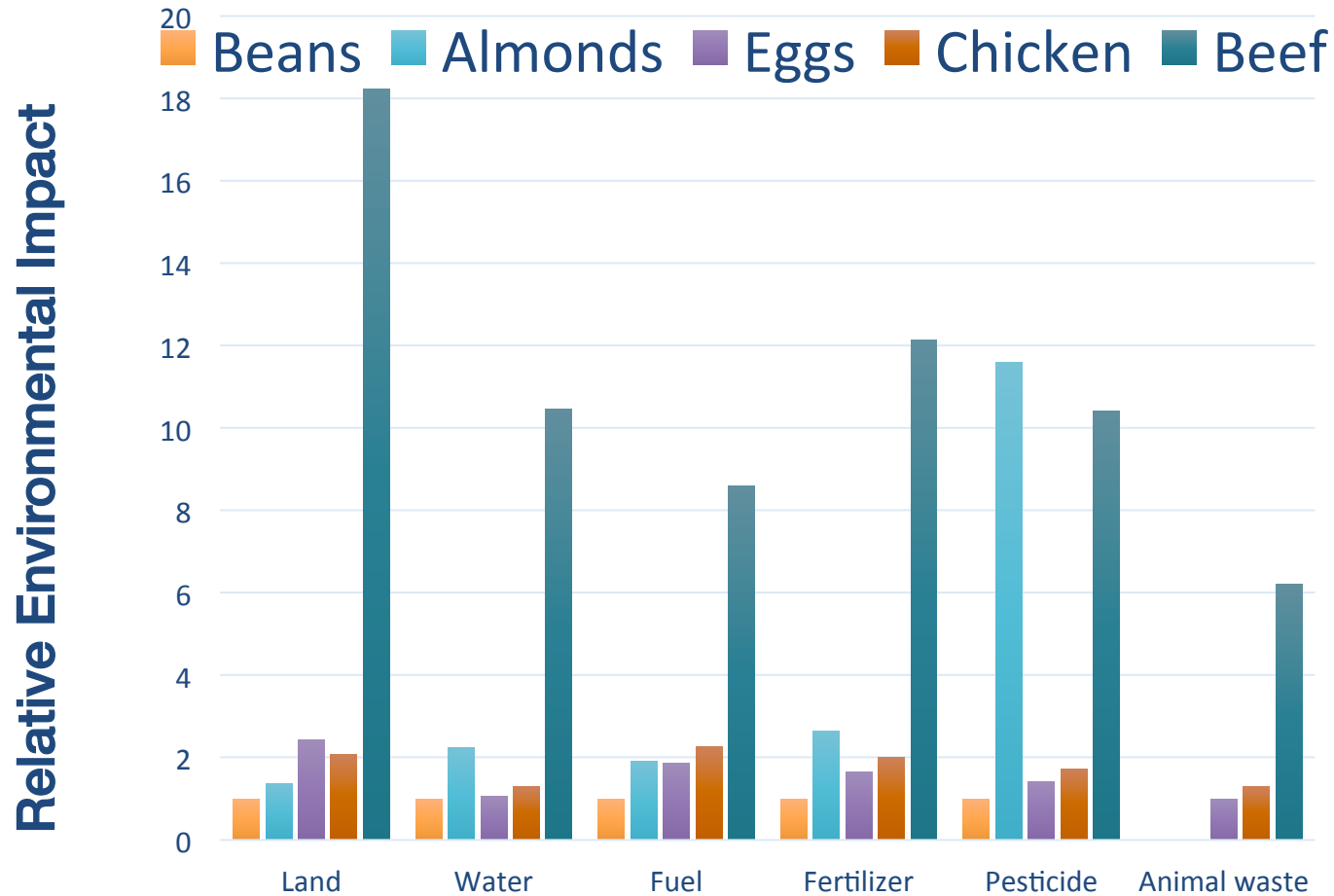
they require fewer natural resources

are less taxing on the environment  
compared to production of animal foods.

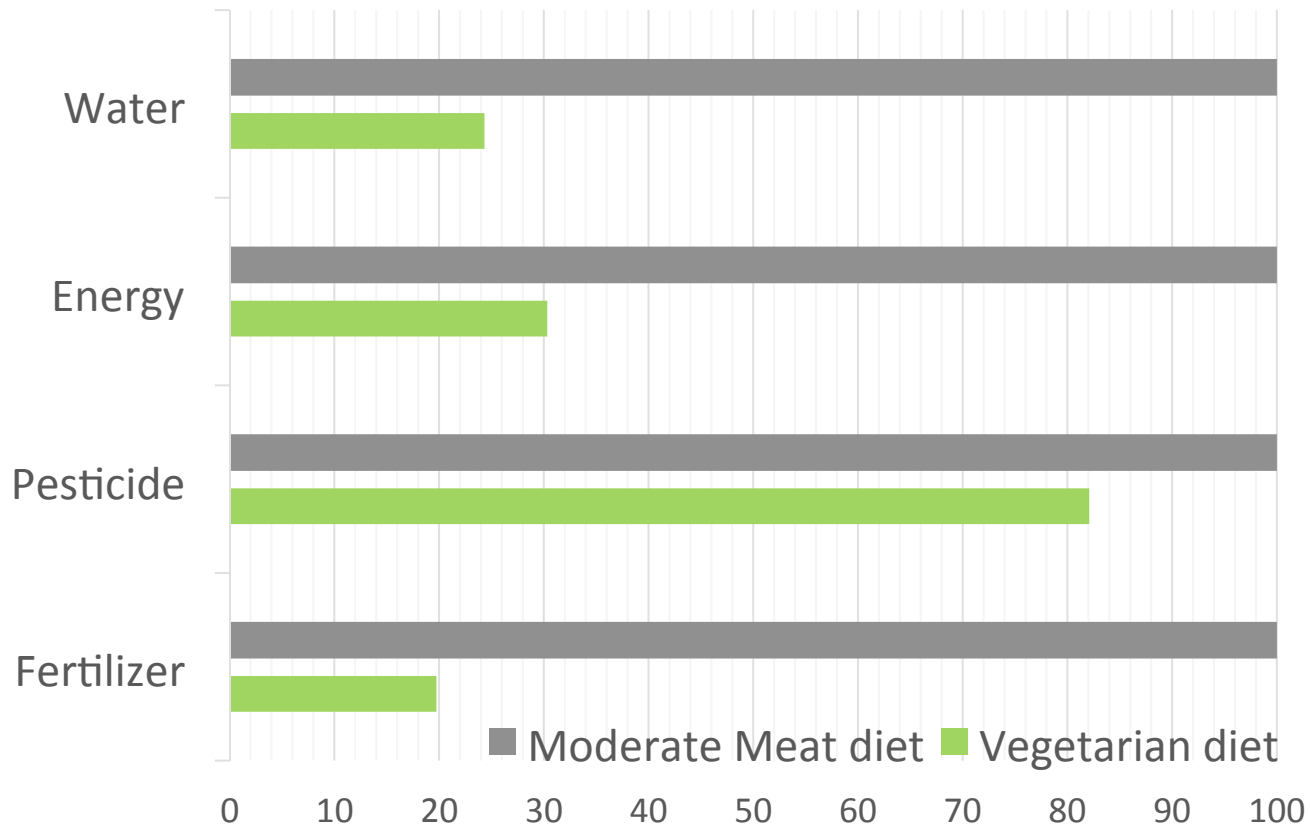
# Green house Gas emissions in the production of different foods



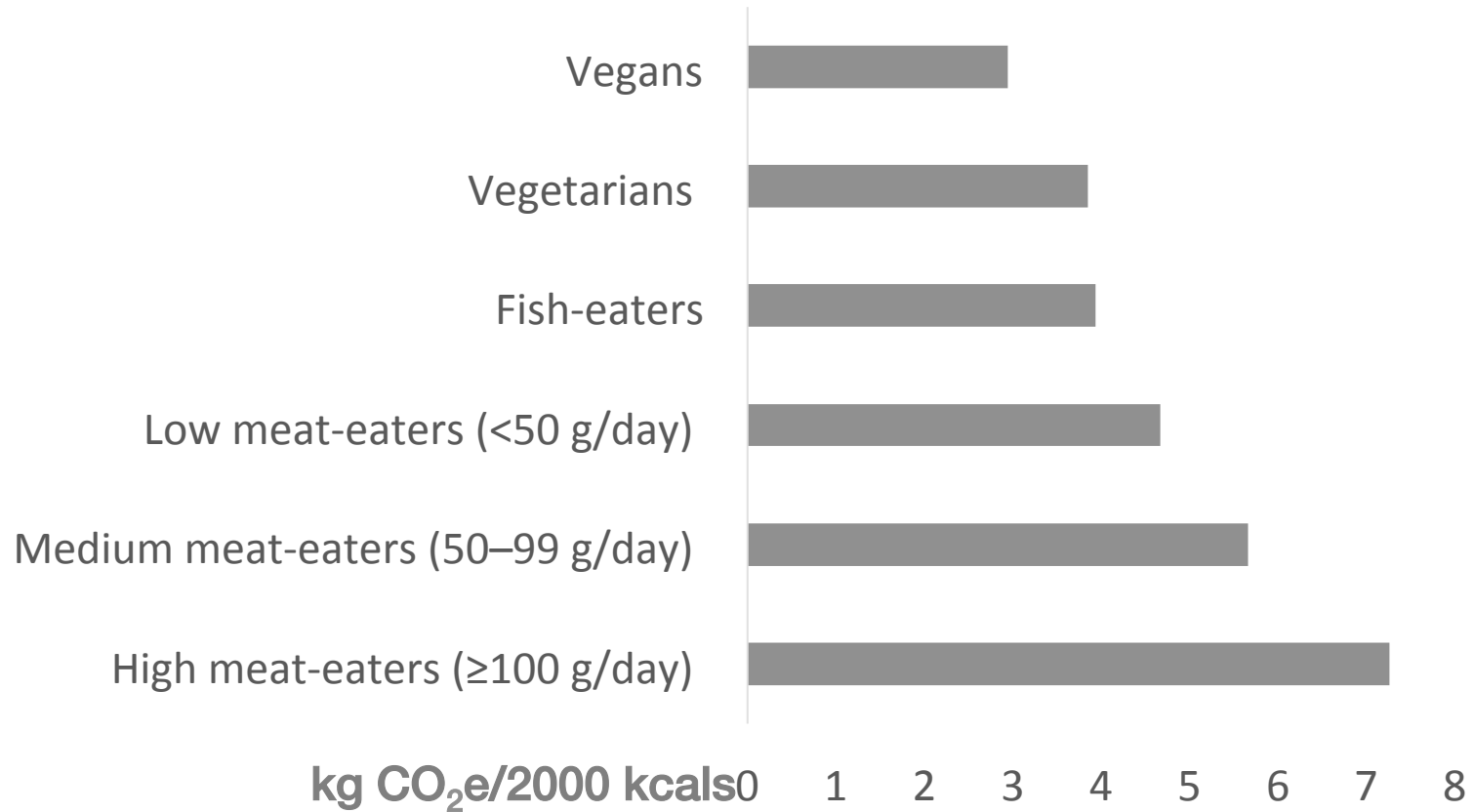
# Relative environmental impacts of protein production from plants vs. animal sources



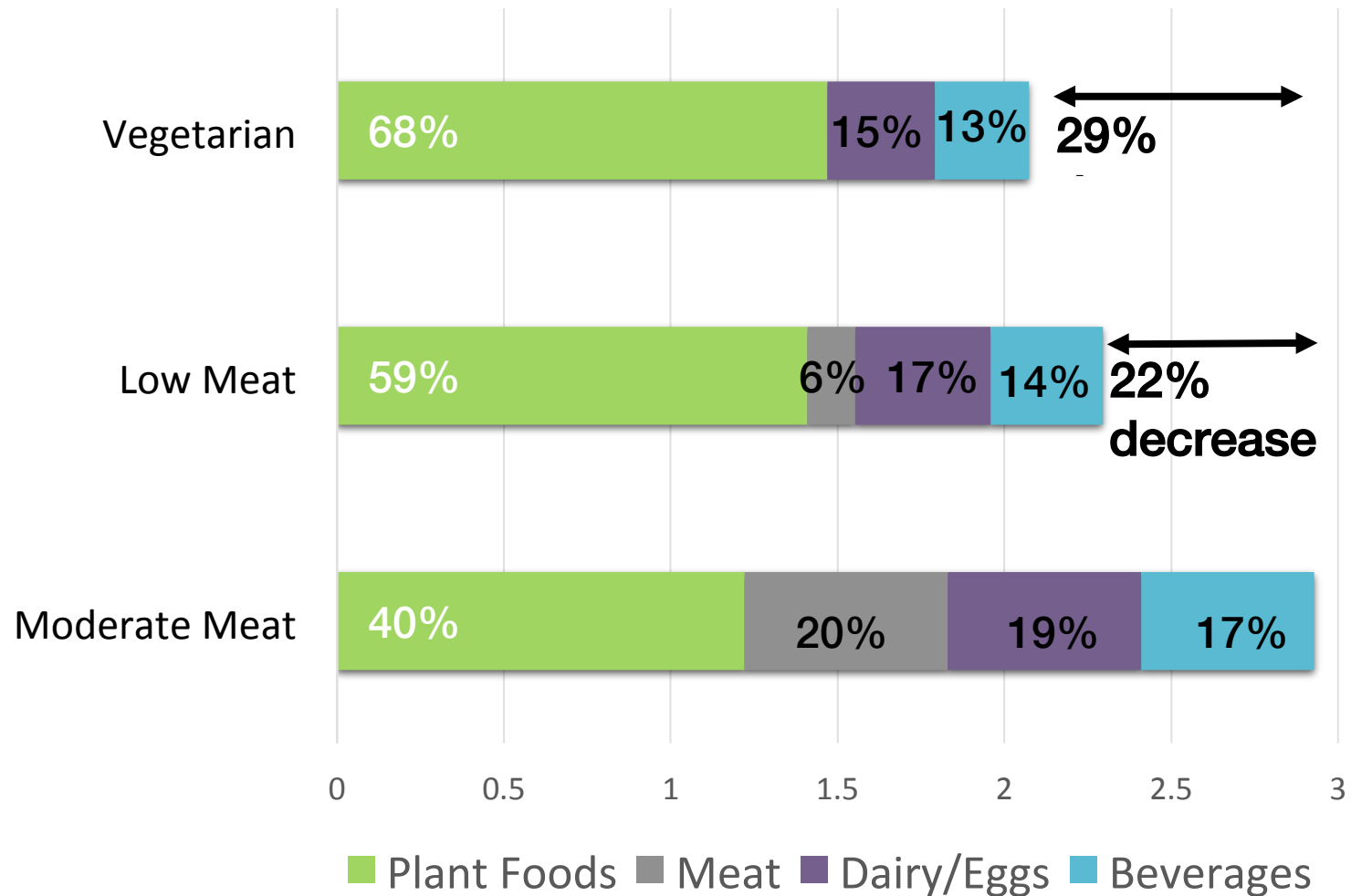
# The production of foods within a vegetarian diet requires less resources



# The production of all foods within vegetarian diets emits less GHGe



# The production of foods within a vegetarian diet emits less GHGe



**“The adoption of vegetarian diets at the global level has the potential to, all at once, optimize the food supply, improve human health, increase environmental sustainability, and advance social justice outcomes.”**

# Making the case for vegetarian diets

**Simple** – easy to understand and practice.

**Adaptable** – many cultures and cuisines.

**Healthy** - lower risk for chronic disease.

**Sustainable** – requires less natural resources.

**It is not “all or nothing”**