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WHEN we hear about global warming, melting ice caps and climate change, we often think that these are problems for scientists and politicians to solve. This is far from the truth. We're very much needed to find solutions for environmental degradation and destruction.

The most practical action we can take is to make our diet healthier and more environment-friendly: Move toward a meatless diet.

Meatless meals lessen greenhouse-gas emissions and reduce risks to diseases like hypertension, diabetes, cancer and obesity. Currently, 45 percent of the planet's land area has been deforested and cleared for livestock production and animal feed production. This contributes to at least 50 percent of human-caused greenhouse-gas emissions.

Oct. 1 has been designated as World Meatless Lunch, whose theme is "Fight climate change, one plate at a time." Check out the Meatless Lunch page on Facebook, or visit www.worldmeatlesslunch.org.

Invite friends, co-workers and relatives to join this important event. Some practical suggestions:

Ask your favorite carinderia or school cafeteria to serve meatless meals on Oct. 1 and, hopefully, every Monday thereafter.

Mothers can create special, meatless dishes, like pancit bihon, spaghetti or tofu-garnished pinakbet.

Prepare a healthy sandwich filled with grilled eggplant, tomatoes, lettuce, cucumber, pickle relish, avocado and cheese, and fruits such as bananas and rambutan for dessert. Then, enjoy a glass of refreshing buko juice!

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