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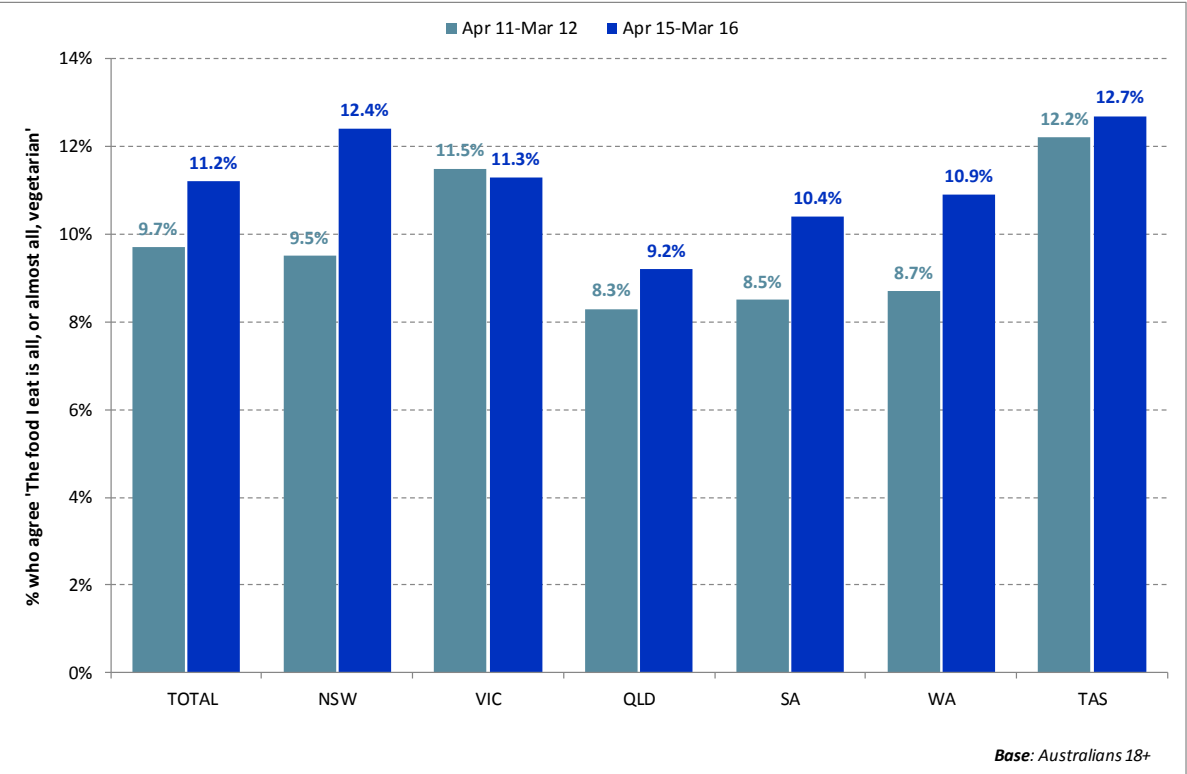
# The slow but steady rise of vegetarianism in Australia

Between 2012 and 2016, the number of Australian adults whose diet is all or almost all vegetarian has risen from 1.7 million people (or 9.7% of the population) to almost 2.1 million (11.2%), the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research reveal. While it is a nationwide trend, the shift towards vegetarianism has been most striking in New South Wales, where there has been a 30% growth in this kind of diet.

As of March 2016, 12.4% of people living in NSW agreed that 'The food I eat is all, or almost all, vegetarian', up from 9.5% back in 2012. There was also a solid increase in Western Australia, with 10.9% of adult Sandgropers adopting a meat-free (or meat-minimal) diet (up from 8.7% in 2012), and in South Australia (10.4%, up from 8.5%).

As it did in 2012, Tasmania leads the nation with the highest proportion of residents who eat little or no meat (12.7%, up from 12.2%), while Queensland (9.2%, up from 8.3%) retains the distinction of being the state least inclined towards vegetarianism.

## Where Australia's vegetarians live: 2012 vs 2016



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), April 2011-March 2012 (n=19,167) and April 2015-March 2016, (n=14,380)

Australia's vegetarians (and those who eat an almost vegetarian diet) are more likely to live in capital cities than in regional or rural areas. Given NSW's vege-friendly status, it's hardly

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surprising that Sydney is the capital with the greatest proportion of residents who eat little or no meat (14.4%); ahead of Hobart (13.3%) and Melbourne (12.7%).

### *Veges: good for the waistline?*

As Roy Morgan Research has explored in the past, many Australians adopt a vegetarian diet for health and/or weight-loss reasons – and this hasn't changed. Nearly half (48.7%) of Aussies 18+ who eat little or no meat agree that 'A low-fat diet is a way of life for me' (well above the population average of 31.9%) and 36.7% agree that 'I always think of the number of calories in the food I'm eating' (compared with the 25.2% national average).

And it seems they're onto something: while 60.7% of Australian adults have a Body Mass Index that qualifies as overweight or obese, this figure drops to 45.4% of those whose diet is mostly or totally vegetarian.

**Norman Morris, Industry Communications Director, Roy Morgan Research, says:**

*"Whether people are embracing a less meat-heavy diet for health, environmental or animal-welfare reasons, the fact remains that this trend looks set to continue. Not only has there been an increase in near or total vegetarianism across Australia, but almost 9.9 million Aussie adults (53.4%) agree that they're 'eating less red meat these days'.*

*"If they have not already, supermarkets and eateries would be wise to revisit their vegetarian-friendly options to ensure they are catering adequately for this growing – and potentially lucrative -- consumer segment.*

*"Of course, to do this successfully, an in-depth understanding of the segment is crucial: which is where the power of Roy Morgan Single Source data comes in. For example, Australians whose diet is largely or completely vegetarian are 20% more likely than average to spend more than \$40 per week on fruit and vegetables, 93% more likely to buy organic food whenever they can, and 14% more likely to try new types of food.*

*"Roy Morgan's ground-breaking consumer profiling tool Helix Personas allows businesses in the food industry to identify the country's vegetarians with unprecedented accuracy, enabling them to create marketing campaigns and branding that are relevant and appealing to their target audience.*

*"For example, nearly 30% of people who fall within the Fit & Fab persona eat little or no meat. Based primarily in inner-city neighbourhoods, Fit & Fab tend to be young, sociable, sporty and always on the go. While they're not averse to some serious partying, they are also careful to balance their action-packed lifestyle with a healthy diet – which is where vegetarian food would come in.*

*"In contrast, vegetarianism is frequently a cultural choice for the segment known as New Australians, nearly one third of whom follow a diet free of or low in meat. Comprised largely of Indian, Chinese and other Asian immigrants living in outer suburban areas, New Australians are well educated, socially connected and in the early*

*stages of their careers. They enjoy domestic life – even grocery shopping, where they would certainly take an interest in vegetarian products on offer.”*

**For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s consumer products data, please contact:**

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### **Related research findings**

[Learn more about Australians who agree that ‘The food I eat is all, or almost all, vegetarian,’ as well as a wide range of other food attitudes, including ‘I’m eating less red meat these days’.](#)

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan’s Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

### **About Roy Morgan Research**

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

### **Margin of Error**

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2

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