

Young Tzu Chi Members in Malaysia Launch Vegetarian Movement

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On December 25 and 26, the Tzu Chi Foundation held its annual [Tzu Chi Collegiate Association](#) (Tzu Ching) conference. The highlight was the movement launched by Tzu Chings in Malaysia to promote vegetarianism.

For two days, 848 members of the association from 11 countries met in the Jing Si Hall in Hualien. They shared their experiences in promoting charity, vegetarianism and environmental protection. The quickest way to reduce the carbon footprint and save the earth is to become vegetarian. In July this year, Tzu Chings in Malaysia launched a campaign entitled 'vegetarian generation', with a target of one million CO₂-reducing meals – that is 10,000 young adults each eating 100 meatless meals. They started the campaign at 28 colleges in Kuala Lumpur; members in each school developed a strategy to promote vegetarianism among fellow students – some proposed one meatless day a week, some set up an educational booth and others used media like Facebook, where they explained that being vegetarian was the best way to save the planet, or helped their classmates buy a meatless lunch box. In front of the Tzu Ching house in Kuala Lumpur, the members grow vegetables. They save the kitchen waste and turn it into compost, to be used as natural fertilizer; everyone enjoys the natural, delicious and inexpensive food.



So far, the movement has attracted 3,206 participants; they have consumed over 20,000 vegetarian meals and eliminated 15,600 kilograms of CO₂. The target is 10,000 people each eating 100 meatless meals. One Tzu Ching explained that many of his fellow students did not know that being a vegetarian could save the earth. He said that, by cultivating his own vegetables, a person could save 10 Malaysian ringgits (US\$3) during one week – the cost of eating out twice: this is a good way to save money and Mother Earth at the same time, he said.



Each year Tzu Ching members come to Hualien to celebrate the Annual Global Tzu Ching Day. The association has 6,564 members in 17 countries. This year members came from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Japan, Australia, South Africa, Canada, United States, New Zealand and Taiwan. They chose not to wear fashionable clothes and accessories but simple light blue shirts and white trousers; each young face shone with faith and conviction. They chose to spend their holiday time together, to share their achievements and their hopes and learn from each other -- how to use their talents to help the earth.