

# Every Meal Is a Choice

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## *Eat Fewer Animal Products to Preserve Our Environment*

One of the easiest ways to dramatically reduce your impact on the environment is the food choices you make everyday. This change requires no special technology or equipment, and you can start immediately the next time you eat!

### **Livestock are a major cause of climate change**

Studies published by the United Nations (UN) and World Bank environmental experts agree: domestic food animals are a main cause of climate change. A UN report estimates that raising animals for meat is the cause of 18% of global greenhouse gas emissions, more than all forms of transport put together (13%). According to a World Bank expert report, livestock are responsible for 51% of greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Vegetarian eating cuts greenhouse gases**

You can reduce your carbon footprint by simply eating differently. Here are approximate carbon dioxide reductions per year when compared to the average American diet:

Vegan: 2 tons

Vegetarian: 1 ton

Weekday Vegan: 1.4 tons

Weekday Vegetarian: 0.7 tons

Switch 1 meal/day to animal-free: 0.67 tons

Switch 1 meal/day to vegetarian: 0.33 tons

### **Livestock release potent greenhouse gases**

Methane and nitrous oxide, with 23 and 296 times more warming power than carbon dioxide, come primarily from livestock digestive processes. Animal agriculture emits 37% of our methane and 65% of our nitrous oxide.

### **Plant foods reduce water use and pollution**

Meat requires much more land and water to feed people than does plant food. Compared to soy, meat production takes

- 6 to 17 times more land
- 4.4 to 26 times more water
- 6 to 20 times more fossil fuels
- 6 times more biocides (pesticides and chemicals used for processing)

Compared to producing pasta, red meat requires 20 times the land, and generates 3 times the greenhouse-gas emissions, 17 times the water pollution caused by soil and biological matter, and 5 times the toxic water pollution. These figures are based on a Union for Concerned Scientists study.

### **Diet is more significant than driving a Prius**

According to the University of Chicago, when you add up the costs of raising animals for meat, dairy, and egg production, the average American reduces climate change more by eating plant foods than by driving a Prius. A calorie of meat

protein requires 10 times more fossil fuels than a calorie of plant protein.

### **Animal agriculture causes deforestation**

Forests absorb carbon dioxide from the air. Animal agriculture consumes 70% of agricultural land and 30% of the land surface of the planet, which instead could be forested land. 70% of the former Amazon rainforest is now pastureland.

### **Smart food choices preserve our earth**

Other ways to preserve the environment with your food choices include:

*Buy organically grown food.* Conventional nitrogen fertilizers add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere while organic agriculture actually removes it.

*Grow your own organic food.* Using the biointensive method saves water, reduces erosion, and requires no fossil fuels for transport and cultivation. Growing heirloom fruits and vegetables preserves biodiversity.

*Use the food you buy.* The University of Arizona in Tucson estimated that the US wastes as much as *half* of its food supply.

**Links to sources of this information are on the back of this flyer. For more information, see <http://meetup.com/scvegetarians> or <http://meetup.com/scvegans>**

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## United Nations Report: Livestock's Long Shadow

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=20772&Cr=global&Cr1=environment#.UJ7T\\_4WCWEQ](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=20772&Cr=global&Cr1=environment#.UJ7T_4WCWEQ)

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/a0701e/a0701e00.HTM>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/jun/02/un-report-meat-free-diet>

<http://www.worldwatch.org/node/6297>

## World Bank Environmental Expert Report

<http://www.worldwatch.org/files/pdf/Livestock%20and%20Climate%20Change.pdf>

<http://www.euractiv.com/cap/livestock-overlooked-climate-tal-news-222916>

## Carbon Dioxide and Diet

Al Gore: "It's absolutely correct that the growing meat intensity of diets around the world is one of the issues connected to this global crisis - not only because of the CO<sub>2</sub> involved, but also because of the water consumed in the process."

<http://news.theage.com.au/breaking-news-national/turn-vego-to-save-planet-gore-20091104-hysi.html>

<http://planetgreen.discovery.com/food-health/vegetarian-diet-carbon-footprint.html>

[http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/09/less\\_meat\\_1\\_ess.php](http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/09/less_meat_1_ess.php)

<http://planetgreen.discovery.com/games-quizzes/green-partner-debate-quiz/index.html>

[http://blogs.edf.org/climate4u/2008/05/05/low\\_carbon\\_diet\\_calculator/](http://blogs.edf.org/climate4u/2008/05/05/low_carbon_diet_calculator/)

## Comparison of Resources Required to Produce Plant Foods Vs. Meat

<http://www.grist.org/article/meatz/>

[http://esa21.kennesaw.edu/activities/foodcalories/food\\_calories.pdf](http://esa21.kennesaw.edu/activities/foodcalories/food_calories.pdf)

[http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-30610-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-30610-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

[http://www.ciwf.org.uk/news/factory\\_farming/lecture\\_calls\\_for\\_dietary\\_change.aspx](http://www.ciwf.org.uk/news/factory_farming/lecture_calls_for_dietary_change.aspx)

## Comparison of Diet and Prius; Methane and Nitrous Oxide Outputs; Forests Converted to Pasture

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kathy-freston/vegetarian-is-the-new-prius\\_b\\_39014.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kathy-freston/vegetarian-is-the-new-prius_b_39014.html)

## Forests and Climate Change

<http://www.treehugger.com/green-food/vegetarian-diet-could-cut-climate-change-mitigation-costs-by-70.html>

## Carbon Dioxide Comparison of Organic Vs. Conventional Food

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/wendy-gordon/orange-is-greener-when-it\\_b\\_163650.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/wendy-gordon/orange-is-greener-when-it_b_163650.html)

[http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_245\\_30.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_245_30.cfm)

## Biointensive Organic Gardening

[http://growbiointensive.org/grow\\_main.html](http://growbiointensive.org/grow_main.html)

[http://www.johnjeavons.info/worldofhope\\_Home.html](http://www.johnjeavons.info/worldofhope_Home.html)

## Wasting Food

<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Financial-Industry/US-wastes-half-its-food>

<http://www.treehugger.com/files/2009/10/food-portion-sizes.php>

<http://www.soundvision.com/Info/poor/statistics.asp>

<http://dsc.discovery.com/news/briefs/20041122/foodwaste.html>

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/FoodReview/Jan1997/jan97a.pdf>

## Threats to Oceans

### Drop in the Ocean

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vdo-YUFZd6c>

A short and beautifully filmed documentary by Greenpeace that examines the threat of overfishing, trawling, pollution, fish farming, and climate change.

More about climate change and how to stop it:

<http://worldpreservationfoundation.org>