

Environmental Food Choices

Every bite counts: Eating animal products affects the planet

A clean planet with diverse life forms is necessary for human and non-human animals' survival on earth. Harming nature can cause or worsen disasters, such as flooding and soil erosion. This damage destroys the very diversity which all life, including humans, requires for survival. Using animals for food destroys ecosystems, pollutes the planet, and uses water and land at an alarming rate—all when a growing human population is putting even more pressure on the planet.

Water pollution

About 75% of all water-quality issues in the U.S. are caused by animal farming.

Water use

One pound of beef requires 1,799 gallons of water to produce; a pound of pork uses 576 gallons of water; a pound of chicken uses 468 gallons of water; and a gallon of milk requires 880 gallons of water. Compare that to a pound of soy beans at 216 gallons and a pound of potatoes at 119 gallons of water.

Global warming & water pollution

On most farms, animal manure and urine are stored in massive waste lagoons that often break, leak, or overflow. This sends dangerous germs, pollution, and drug-resistant bacteria into water supplies. These lagoons also emit toxic gases such as ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, and methane into the atmosphere. Farming animals for food is the leading cause of global warming.

Hunger

The bulk of corn and soy grown in the world feeds animals used for food, while 800 million people on the planet are hungry or malnourished. If humans consumed all crops directly instead of feeding them to animals that they eat, the world supply would be enriched by approximately 70% more food, which would adequately feed another four billion people. Talk about inefficient.

Land

Pastures used for animal agriculture use over 30% of the Earth's entire land surface. Growing feed for animals uses one-third of all farm land. This land could otherwise be available for plant growth to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, to provide habitat for wildlife, or even to grow crops for humans to eat.

Habitat

Both "sustainable" and factory farms destroy woodlands and other natural habitats. Wild animals cannot survive if their habitats are destroyed faster than they can adapt.

Extinction

Globally, animals used for food outnumber humans. Animals used for food push countless species of wild animals and plants to extinction due to their excessive land and water use and the pollution they cause.

Oceans

Human consumption of fish is destroying marine life. Common fishing methods such as trawling, long-line fishing, and fish farms destroy endangered species as well as the fish they are intended to catch. While only under 1% of the plastic in the ocean comes from plastic straws, more than 45% comes from fishing nets.

Energy

It requires two to ten times more energy to produce animal products than it does to produce the same number of calories from plant foods. By eating plant foods directly rather than eating animals that have eaten plant foods, you are eating lower on the food energy chain and conserving resources.

Waste of the West

In Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, grazing of cows and domestic sheep has destroyed native grasses. This causes soil erosion and lowers stream beds. The wildlife that once flourished there has been decimated.

How can you make a difference?

Go vegan

Veganism is on the rise for its environmental and health benefits. And, it's easier than you think! Replace animal products with plant products and reap the benefits: plant-based foods cause less pollution and use fewer resources than animal products—less land, water, and energy. A vegan lifestyle also means that you will not be exploiting animals. Don't know where to start? Let us help! #GoVeganWithUs at PeaceAdvocacyNetwork.org for free recipes, coupons, tips, lectures, panels, and more!

What's your carbon footprint?

An all-local diet that includes meat, milk, and eggs only reduces your carbon footprint by the equivalent of 1,000 miles driven in a car per year. Going vegan reduces your carbon footprint by eight times as much.

Healthy

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics states that well-planned vegan diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the life-cycle including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood and adolescence, and for athletes. Vegans have shown lower rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, and obesity.



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