

DID YOU KNOW?

The single most effective action each of us can take to protect the planet and our health is simply to choose foods free from animal products.

It's true! Read on to learn more about how adopting a plant-based (vegan) diet is the best choice for environmental sustainability, better human health, and kindness to animals.

SUSTAINABILITY

A diet heavy in animal products is simply not sustainable. It takes far more land, water, and energy to produce meat, dairy products, and eggs than it does to produce an equal amount of nutrition from healthy plant-based foods. Animal agriculture also causes extreme environmental damage.

Animal agriculture is responsible for 15% to 25% of greenhouse gas emissions. Cattle ranches and feed production account for over 70% of deforestation in the Amazon. Raising farmed animals and growing their feed uses more freshwater than anything else we do, and the livestock sector is the largest source of water pollution worldwide. A single dairy cow produces approximately 120 pounds of manure per day. On average, 990 litres of water are required to produce one litre of milk.

Animal agriculture is incredibly inefficient. 95% of the plant protein we feed to cows is lost when we eat beef. On average, 6kg of plant protein is required to produce 1kg of animal protein. Producing animal protein takes about 100 times more water than plant protein.

Farmed animals eat 80% of the world's soybean crop and over 50% of the world's corn crop. Over 3 billion people on the planet are malnourished, but there is more than enough for all to be fed if we grow vegetables, fruits, grains, legumes, etc., for humans to eat directly.



COMPASSION FOR ALL

Like us, animals are living, breathing and feeling beings. We all share a love of life and the desire to avoid pain. Many of us live with cats and dogs as family members. Some of us describe ourselves as "animal lovers".

Yet, we treat farmed animals as if they were mere objects or machines that exist for our own use. We bring them into the world only to be brutally killed at a small fraction of their natural lifespans, so that humans can eat their flesh and reproductive products.

The way that farmed animals are treated would be considered torture if it were done to humans. The idea that animals can be farmed for food "humanely" is just a myth designed to make us feel better. Nothing humane happens in a slaughterhouse.

Even animals who are not raised for meat suffer greatly. Dairy cows are kept almost constantly pregnant. Mother and calf are cruelly separated soon after birth; even the mother is slaughtered when her milk production slows. Male calves are killed for veal; female calves mostly suffer the same fate as their mothers. The egg industry is similarly cruel, treating hens as egg machines and killing millions of male chicks each year, as roosters are not profitable.

All of this is totally unnecessary, as we can live happy and healthy lives on a plant-based diet.

BETTER HEALTH

The World Health Organization and Food and Agriculture Organization have found that a diet low in meat, eggs and dairy, while also higher in fruit and vegetables, is associated with a lower risk of heart disease, osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes, stroke and various types of cancer. A plant-based diet rich in fibre, folic acid and antioxidants is also associated with lower cholesterol, blood pressure and body fat.

The U.S. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Dietitians of Canada agree that appropriately planned plant-based diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate, aid in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases, and are appropriate for all stages of life.

The Canadian Cancer Society recommends increasing our intake of high fibre foods such as whole grains and legumes. Health Canada recommends including plenty of vegetables and fruits in our diet; when you eat, half of your plate should be vegetables and fruits.

Research also suggests that a plant-based diet may reduce the number of medications patients need to take to treat a variety of chronic conditions.



WHY GO PLANT BASED

1

Animal agriculture is responsible, worldwide, for 15% to 25% of greenhouse gas emissions. That is more than all of the cars, planes, trains and ships in the world, combined.

2

Clearing forests for feed and pasture for animal agriculture is the leading cause of tropical rainforest destruction and is a prime cause of deforestation elsewhere.

3

People who don't eat meat are less likely to die of heart disease, have lower cholesterol levels, and are less likely to get high blood pressure, prostate cancer, colon cancer, and Type 2 diabetes.

4

A plant-based diet can provide all the nutrients you need, as long as you supplement vitamin B12.

5

Worldwide, over 70 billion farmed animals are raised and killed every year, including over 665 million in Canada.

6

Adopting a plant-based diet could help to fight global hunger. By 2050, it is estimated that the world's human population will be near 10 billion. If we don't change how we eat, we'll need to farm 70% more land than we're farming now. If the world were to adopt a plant-based diet, we could feed 4 billion more people using the same cropland that we use now.



Earthsave Canada

A registered charity since 1992, our mission is to change the world by promoting the widespread adoption of plant-based diets. We use evidence-based education to increase awareness of the ways in which choosing a plant-based diet will lead to a healthier, kinder, and more sustainable world.

For references and additional information visit
earthsave.ca

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THE POWER OF A PLANT BASED DIET

Sustainable. Healthy. Kind.

