

SUSTAINABILITY

→ a great amount of resources is needed to raise animals for those who eat meat. If more people went vegan, the food used for animals could go to feed the hungry

→ the burning of fossil fuels for farm machinery is a great contributor to global warming
→ deforestation due to expansion of pasture land. 80% of land cut down in the Amazon is used for cattle pastures

→ cattle produce methane, a greenhouse gas, which is 20 times more potent than CO₂

→ there is a lot of deforestation, overfishing, and pollution that are caused by the meat and fish industries

→ planting more plants and crops leads to a richer soil

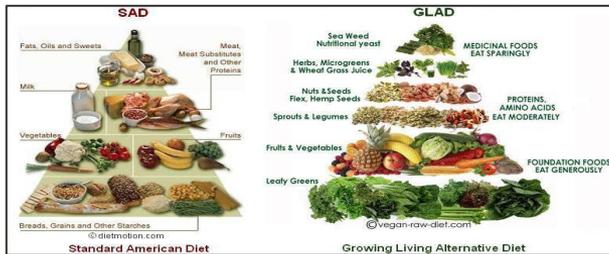
(Scarborough, 2011)

Websites

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WHY GO VEGAN?

Emily Dulieu, Kennedy Gardner, Beyza Gedemenli, & Niko Sidou



The diagram above shows two food pyramids comparing the Standard American Diet and the Growing Living Alternative Diet

WHY BE SAD WHEN YOU CAN BE GLAD

→ the Standard American Diet (SAD) consists of consumption of high meat and animal products with processed food and low fruits and vegetables

→ the Vegan/Growing Living Alternative Diet (GLAD) consists of consumption of high vegetables and fruits with no meat or animal products.

(Nordqvist, 2011)

IS IT A MIS-STEAK?

Is veganism always the way to go?

→ may result in malnutrition as the vegan diet doesn't always provide adequate amounts of nutrients-may need to supplement with vitamins

→ vegan diets rely heavily on soy which has a high phytoestrogen content which causes hormone imbalances in the body

(Geersten, 2011)

TROPHIC ADVANTAGE

→ vegans receive the highest amount of energy from their food

→ as one moves higher up the food chain, the more energy is lost as heat

→ vegans are second in the food chain above primary producers (Smith & Smith, 2001)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, due to many resources being involved in raising farm animals, livestock contributing to high methane levels and overall high emissions of CO₂e, the Standard American Diet is less sustainable than the vegan diet. Additionally those who are vegan have greater efficiency in obtaining energy from their food because less energy will be lost through the transfer of trophic levels.

QUICK STATS

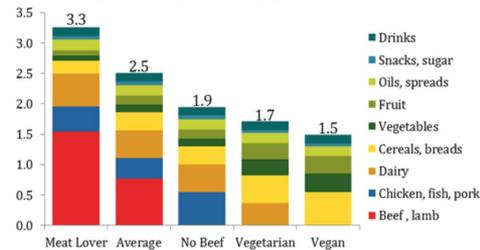
→ 70% of the crops grown go to feeding livestock

→ 7 football fields of land are bulldozed every minute to create more room for farmed animals

→ it takes 100 to 200 times more water to raise a pound of beef than it does to raise a pound of plant food.

→ by switching to a vegan diet you can essentially cut your carbon footprint in half (McCarthy, 2010)

Foodprints by Diet Type: t CO₂e/person



The figure above shows that diets high in meat consumption have the highest carbon footprint (3.3 tons of CO₂ equivalent) while a vegan diet has the lowest carbon footprint (1.5 tons of CO₂ equivalent).

Primary Sources

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Smith TM, Smith RL. *Elements of Ecology* 4th ed. Boston: Pearson Education; 2005.

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