

# Vegetarian Diet

By choosing a vegetarian diet, you can become healthier, happier, and Earth-friendly individual! Vegetarian diets are found to be more sustainable for our environment.



## What is Sustainability?

Protecting the natural environment, human and ecological health, while allowing innovation and production. Sustainability involves maintaining an ecological balance involving three main pillars: economic, social and environmental.

## Health Benefits

- Obesity and risk factors for cancer are caused by unhealthy diets such as those composed of too much red or processed meats and not enough whole grains, fiber, and vegetables
- Vegetarian diets can lower BMI and blood pressure

## What is the Vegetarian Diet?

A diet based on the consumption of plant products for nutrients. Refraining from animal meat but may include animal by products.

## How does sustainability relate to vegetarian diet?

- Agriculture activities are greatly affecting our environment, activities such as crop cultivation, manufacturing processes, packaging, refrigeration, transport, cooking, and waste management. Meat eaters emit 3.3 tons more CO<sub>2</sub> than vegetarians each year. Raising animals for food generates more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks in the world combined. The table to the right compares different diets and their greenhouse gas emission. As seen, the vegetarian diet has the lowest emission
- Dietary choices rich in vegetables (e.g. vegan, vegetarian...) are more environmentally sustainable than those that include meat. Switching from meat to alternative foods such as animal proteins and plant/vegetable oils, leads to a healthier and more environmentally friendly diet
- However, the elimination of all animal byproducts (ie. vegan diet) is not suggested due to their supply of micronutrients such as calcium and vitamin D
- Normalizing environmental sustainability through a person's diet, can extend to other aspects in their life, (ie. recycling, composting, fuel efficient cars, public transportation use, etc.)

S. González-García et al. / Science of the Total Environment 644 (2018) 77–94

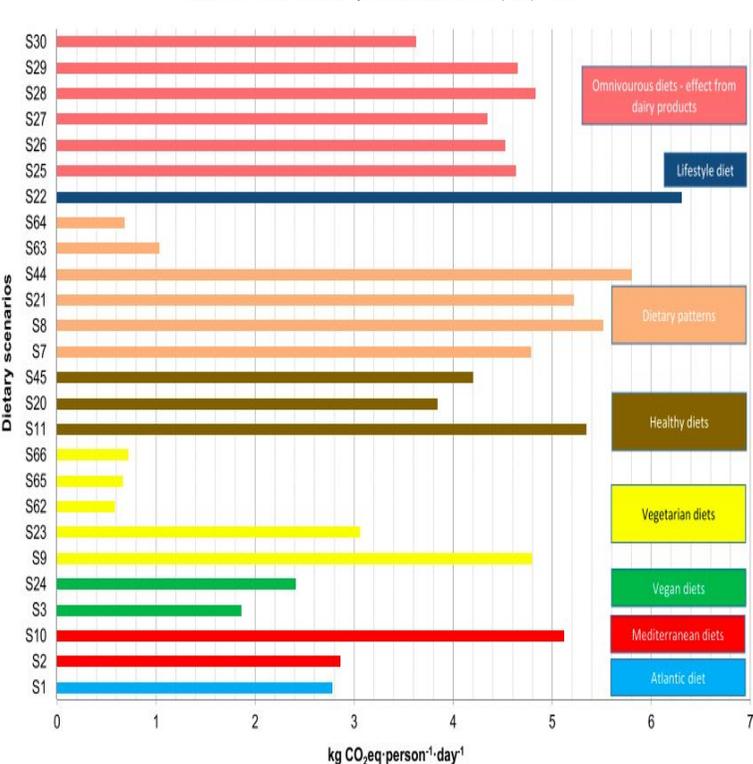


Fig. 1. Comparative profile in terms of GHGs emission of reviewed scenarios based on a cultivation-to-consumer approach. For references and detailed information about each scenario see González-García S, Esteve-Llorens X, Moreira MT, Feijoo G. Carbon footprint and nutritional quality of different human dietary choices. 2018;644:77–94. <http://proxy.geneseo.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eih&AN=131773850&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

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