



Vegan Diet

Veganism is a plant-based diet that does not use animal products.

Environmental

- If every person in the United States gave up meat and dairy products on one or more days of the week, ideally all days of the week, we would save the environment from thousands of tons of carbon emissions (Hunnes, 2020).
- Since animal products are responsible for most of the GHG emissions generated by food related practices (72-78% of all agricultural emissions), cutting animal products from our diets can greatly contribute to emissions reduction (Springmann et al., 2018, p. 520).
- Additionally, eliminating meat and animal products from our diets would reduce our water consumption by at least 50% (Hunnes, 2020), while simultaneously freeing up wild land lost to agriculture, one of the primary causes for mass wildlife extinction (Petter, 2020).

Global

- There are economic benefits from a vegan diet as well as the other sectors.
- An important fact to note is that “the additional food that would be produced as a result of a shift to a vegan diet in the US alone could feed 350 million additional people” (World Economic Forum).
- This would be a large gain in the economic sector, as well as the social and political sector.
- There is also evidence that switching to a vegan diet in the US would save between \$197 billion and \$298 billion per year (World Economic Forum).

Local

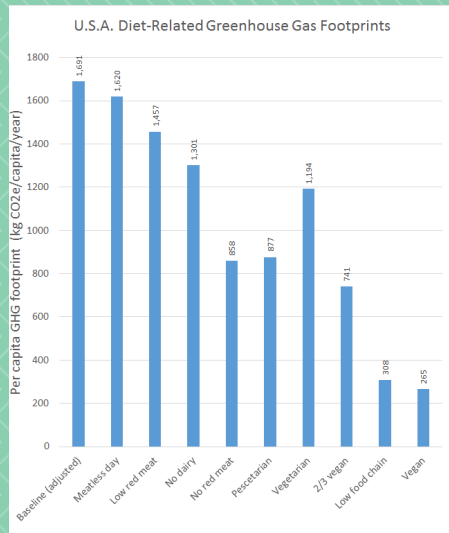
- The economic gain from an increase in the amount of individuals consuming a vegan diet is evident.
- Veganism is sustainable when the food one consumes is locally sourced, since otherwise food is being produced and shipped from great distances, and the travel impact of transporting food largely increases gas emissions (Lawler, 2020).

Possible Limitations

- To truly be sustainable, veganism needs to be conscious of food production methods, since this diet is still a part of the greater system of unsustainable and unethical practices that exist within the food industry’s colonial framework (Keselj, 2020).
- The vegan diet is not very sustainable when comparing plant-based meat emissions to meat emissions.
- Chicken and factory produced plant-based meat products produce the same amount of emissions as one another, but cell-based meat alternatives produce five times the amount of emissions than chicken does (Lawler, 2020).
- Also to be noted, in all facets of the agricultural industry exists exploitation of workers (Keselj, 2020).
- The vegan diet is also unsustainable when farming practices and the reliance upon artificial fertilizers account for at least 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions (Gray, 2020).
- Furthermore, mass tilling of lands not only releases carbon emissions into the atmosphere, but also contributes to erosion (Gray, 2020).

Social & Political

- Adding to the benefits of the vegan diet for the environment are the health-related reasons that draw some individuals into veganism.
- A benefit of the diet is that “vegans tend to have lower blood sugar levels, higher insulin sensitivity, and up to a 50-78% lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes” (Healthline, 2016). Healthline also observes that avoiding certain animal products can help reduce the risks of some types of cancers.
- A possible concern of veganism is the lack of nutrition, however, soy milk has about the same amount of protein as dairy milk (BBC, 2020), demonstrating a vegan diet can have equal amounts of nutrition as a non-vegan diet if done well.



Conclusion

The vegan diet is a sustainable diet, and each pillar of sustainability benefits from this diet.

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