

# Lowering your climate **FOODPRINT**

## **Eat less meat and dairy**

Animals raised for meat consumption and dairy create about 1/5 of manmade greenhouse gas, even more than all transportation combined. That's because 10 billion animals a year means a lot of manure and droppings — around 5 tons of waste for every man, woman and child. That adds up to a lot of methane and nitrous oxide gases, two very potent greenhouse gases. Factory-farmed animals also eat high concentrations of carbon-intensive grains, such as corn, instead of grass. Eat less meat and dairy, and when you do, look for grass-fed organic. Chicken and fish have a much lower foodprint.



*Cool Link* Calculate your meal's "foodprint" with the Bon Appétit calculator. [www.eatlowcarbon.org](http://www.eatlowcarbon.org)

## **Choose fish wisely**

Fish is a great substitute for meat, but only if from sustainably sourced seafood. Many fish populations are stressed from overfishing and destructive fishing practices. Oceans that are in balance are vital to controlling global warming according to researchers at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Healthy ocean ecosystems absorb a tremendous amount of greenhouse gas. Look for sustainably sourced seafood.

*Cool Link* Identify sustainably sourced seafood. [www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/seafoodwatch.aspx](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/seafoodwatch.aspx)

## **Buy local, organic produce in season**

Long-running studies show that organic farming is far more effective at removing greenhouse pollution from the atmosphere and fixing it as beneficial organic matter in the soil than current industrial farming practices. Eating organic local produce in season also reduces the number of "food miles" necessary to get food onto the table. Fewer miles means less greenhouse pollution. Consuming a 30-mile salad has a much lower carbon foodprint than a 3,000 mile salad.

*Cool Link* Use the Eat Well Guide to find local, organic, sustainably produced food. [www.eatwellguide.org](http://www.eatwellguide.org)

## **Reduce packaging**

Overly processed and packaged foods take a lot of energy to produce. Choose foods with eco-friendly packaging. Get in the habit of bringing your own reusable produce and shopping bags to the store. When done eating and cooking, recycle packaging as best you can.

*Cool Link* 15 ways to reduce packaging. [www.lifewithnature.com/greenliving/reducing-food-packaging](http://www.lifewithnature.com/greenliving/reducing-food-packaging)

## **Reduce waste**

Nearly half of all food in the United States is thrown away before it's consumed. Per capita food waste has progressively increased by about 50% since 1974. It's now estimated that 25% of all freshwater and 4% of all oil consumed in this country are used to produce food that is never eaten. Get in the habit of buying only what you plan to eat. Make room in the menu for "leftovers", and practice composting to turn inedible food into nutrient-rich dirt for the garden.

*Cool Link* Learn how to waste less food. [www.wastedfood.com](http://www.wastedfood.com)

# Cool Harvest

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