

Eating Right



Which diets are most healthy and environmentally sustainable? Producing the foods we eat has massive environmental impacts: it requires vast tracts of land and huge quantities of water. In addition to using land and water, food production results in greenhouse gas emissions – from the fossil fuels burned to run tractors and harvesters, for example, and from the gases released when cow manure decomposes and from when cows burp and fart.

These emissions add up: scientists estimate that food production around the world causes up to 30% of all the greenhouse gases people release to the atmosphere each year. Raising cows and sheep for meat has an especially large environmental footprint with regards to land use, water use, and greenhouse gas emissions. What changes can you make to lower that impact?

Watch “Climate Lab: The Diet” video and ask the following questions:

1. What kind of food produces the most greenhouse gases?
2. What food produces the least?
3. Why? Where do all those greenhouse gases come from?
4. The total amount of carbon dioxide produced by livestock is the same as what other human source?
5. Which food choices do you think would require the most water?
6. What can we do with our food choices to reduce our greenhouse gases?
7. Do we have to go vegan or vegetarian?

Keep a food journal.

- Ask your family to help plan meals for the week to help reduce your carbon footprint. Bonus! Create a card for your whole family to use.



FOOD JOURNAL

| | BREAKFAST | LUNCH | DINNER |
|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| monday | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| tuesday | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| wednesday | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| thursday | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| friday | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| saturday | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| sunday | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

ANSWERS TO VIDEO QUESTIONS

1. What kind of food produces the most greenhouse gases? **beef**
2. What food produces the least? **vegetables**
3. Why? Where do all those greenhouse gases come from? **fertilizers, tractors, animal feces, etc.**
4. The total amount of carbon dioxide produced by livestock is the same as what other human source? **transportation**
5. Which food choices do you think would require the most water? Why? **animal products**
6. What can we do with our food choices to reduce our greenhouse gases? **eat less meat and cheese**
7. Do we have to go vegan or vegetarian? **no, but we can reduce how much meat we eat**



REMOTE HIKE AND LEARN ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT YOU ARE SAVING.
PARK YOURSELF ON YOUR COUCH!



Tennessee - North Carolina Border

PARK YOURSELF AT

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

The Great Smoky Mountains are a mountain range rising along the Tennessee – North Carolina border in the southeastern United States. They are a range of the Appalachian Mountains and form part of the Blue Ridge Province.

Natural foods that have been processed less are the best for a healthy lifestyle. Examples include fresh fruits, vegetables, beans, and grains like rice.

Historically, people used to eat a lot of foraged foods— which are foods gathered directly from nature. During the 19th century, parents and children would head into the mountains toward summer's end to harvest nature's bounty of berries. Ever watchful for bears, families would fill bucket after bucket with fresh, natural foods to help them survive the winter ahead.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park is home to 8 common berries. Unlike hundreds of years ago, there are now billions of people on the planet. For this reason, we no longer eat berries found in the forest so that animals can eat, too. However, we can still make good food choices that keep both us and the planet strong and healthy as we hike the rolling hills of the Smoky Mountains.

How eating right positively impacts the Great Smoky Mountains.

- Leaving behind any berries you find in the park helps animals living in the park survive.
- Choosing less meat and cheese for your meals keeps the environment healthy.
- Bringing natural snacks on a hike helps you stay strong and gives you the energy needed to traverse the 850 miles of trails in the park.