

Unsustainability of meat overconsumption



Social

- 20% higher risk of bowel cancer for consumers eating highest amount of processed meat compared with lowest.
- 34,000 cancer deaths/year due to high processed meat consumption; 50,000/yr due to high red meat consumption.
- If animal feed (and other non-food) crop production was directed at human consumption, 70% more calories would become available to feed up to 4 billion more people.
- Controlling use of antibiotics in animal agriculture reduces antibiotic resistance prevalence in humans by 24%.



Environmental



- Conversion of habitat for livestock production is the major cause of deforestation and biodiversity loss.
- Animal agriculture is responsible for a third of phosphorous and nitrogen loading into freshwater, 55% of erosion and sediment, half of antibiotic use, and 37% of pesticide use.
- Animal products create 56% GHG emissions from As.the food sector.



Economic

- By 2020, overconsumption of red and processed meat could cost the global economy £219 billion in health-related costs, equivalent to 0.3% of the global GDP.
- If diets followed recommended dietary guidelines, we would produce US \$234 billion/year in environmental benefits and save US \$735 billion/year in reduced health-related costs; these values increase the more plants and less meat people eat.

How to reduce overconsumption of meat

Eliminate choice

No-meat days in canteens

Vegetarian days in Finnish schools resulted in 18% less food consumed from the canteen but no difference in food choice or food waste compared with controls.

Restrict choice

Substitution

Replacing beef with beans in the US could free up 42% of US cropland and reduce GHG emissions by 334 mmt, accomplishing 75% of the 2020 reduction target.

Fiscal

(dis)incentives
Tax and Price Change

A Danish saturated fat tax reduced consumption of high-fat beef by 9% (but an increase in low-fat beef by 8%).& negative effect on the economy.

Change defaults

Menu Placement & Visibility

Due to changes in vegetarian meal placement, vegetarian meal purchases increased by 6%, which reduced carbon emissions by 5%.

Provide services

Cookery classes

A 6-week cooking program in the US resulted in increased consumption of fruit and vegetables, and reduced spending on meat and unhealthy snacks.

Provide information

Healthy-eating counselling

A systematic review of interventions to reduce meat consumption found healthy lifestyle counselling were associated with reduced meat consumption.

