

## **Eating as an Act of Love**

### **Part 2: Changing our diet**

Most of us try to eat healthy foods—not too many sweets or highly processed foods, and plenty of fruits and vegetables—but few of us think of eating as a spiritual practice.

Poor agricultural and grazing methods have contributed to habitat loss and species extinction, and negatively impacted water resources. Currently, agriculture is causing about a quarter of our greenhouse gas emissions, and increased global temperatures are already causing food insecurity around the world. The good news is that improved technologies and modern farming and grazing strategies not only reduce agriculture's environmental damage and mitigate climate change, but also help regenerate degraded land. Is there anything we as individuals can do to help in this effort? Yes, there is!

Individuals and families can make a difference in efforts to decrease food shortages, reduce environmental damage, and lessen global warming, simply by changing what we eat. Changing our diets can improve our environment and lessen global warming. Climate and environmental scientist Jonathan Foley list some ways that eating differently can reduce our carbon footprints.<sup>1</sup>

### **Changing our Diets**

- **Make vegetables a bigger part of your diet.** (Eating less meat and dairy can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. About 75% of farmland worldwide goes to raising livestock and the crops that feed livestock. Raising cattle accounts for about 10% of global carbon emissions).
- **Replace red meat with white meat** (the carbon footprint for beef is five times higher than for chicken).
- **Consider buying grass-fed beef.** (Grass-fed beef is most often raised on arid lands that are not suitable for growing other foods. Raising grass-fed beef is generally better for wildlife and watersheds).
- **Support Sustainable Farms.** (More and more farms are seeking Food Alliance Certification. The Food Alliance label on food indicates environmentally sustainable farming practices).
- **Choose fish wisely.** (Over 70% of global fisheries are overfished and no longer sustainable. The Monterey Aquarium Seafood Watch Check ([www.seafoodwatch.org](http://www.seafoodwatch.org)) discusses what are the most sustainable fish on the markets).

---

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Foley. Apr 21, 2020. "Your Personal Action Guide for the Environment" (<https://globalecoguy.org/a-personal-action-guide-for-the-environment-20d70fcdd840>; accessed September 14, 2022)