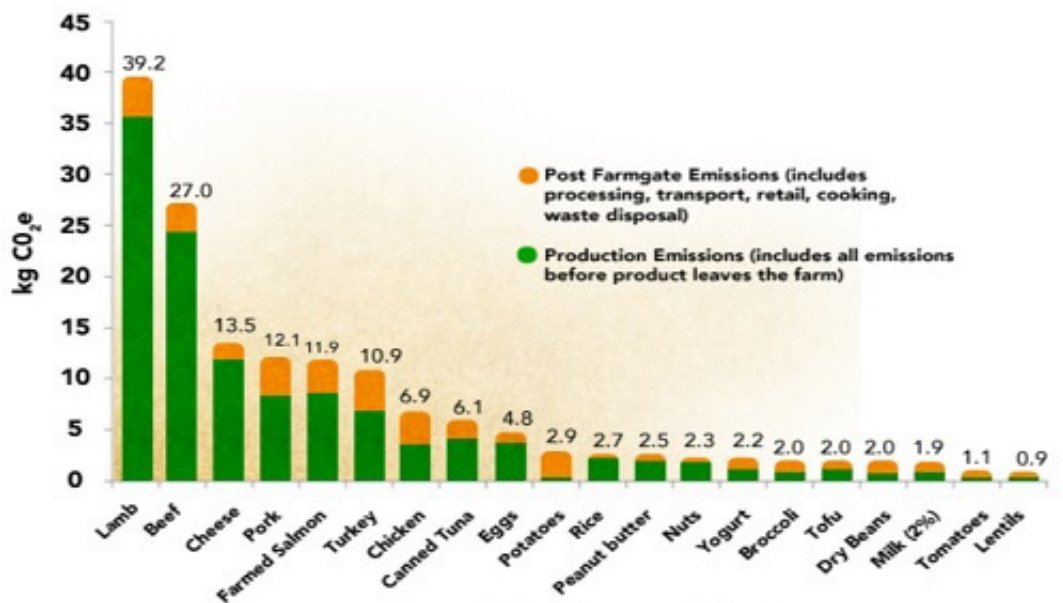


Carbon Action Project – Week 3

Energy Smart Actions: Food

Over the last 200 years, Australia has lost 75% of its rainforests and nearly 50% of all forests due to land clearing, much of it for animal agriculture. Currently, Australians consume on average 92kg of meat per person per year, three times the recommended dietary amount. Reducing the amount of meat we eat and replacing it with healthy plant-based alternatives can have health benefits for many people and will promote a healthy climate through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. It's a win-win!

Figure 1. Full Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Common Proteins and Vegetables



The following check-list includes tips not just for reducing meat in the diet, but also food shopping in general, food waste, and how to get a “climate conscious” coffee. It will be useful in our discussions this week and for you into the future. Put a check (✓) in the box if you are already doing the action; put a * in the box for the actions you intend to start doing. There are blanks at the end for you to add your own ideas or actions.

Tips for eating less (especially red) meat

- Replace red meat with salmon (great with pasta! says Shirley), eggs or chicken
- Replace meat with healthy plant-based alternatives such as nuts, seeds, whole grains, beans and legumes.
- Have smaller portions of meat or go vegetarian for a certain number of meals per week

Tips for food shopping

- Shop with local producers; in supermarkets check the labels for “Product of xxxx”
- Support local family farms and buy fruits and vegetables in season
- Avoid purchasing factory farmed animal produce
- Buy foods that are justly produced eg Fair Trade products or slavery-free chocolate and seafood. <https://beslaveryfree.com/>
- Purchase more raw ingredients and less highly processed foods
- Purchase less pre-packaged food (A 1-litre plastic (PET) bottle has an embodied energy of roughly 5.4 MJ. This is the same as leaving a 15 W lightbulb on for 100 hours)

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Tips for reducing food waste (Refuse – Reduce – Reuse – Rot)

- Support local farmers, rather than supermarkets, who are more likely to offer ‘imperfect’ produce
- Refuse to buy into marketing tactics, such as 2 for 1, if you are not sure you’ll use the quantity of product
- Use menu planning to buy only what you need
- If certain foodstuffs often go off or out of date before they can be used, buy smaller quantities
- Use reusables such as ‘unpaper’ kitchen towel
- Use leftovers for another meal
- Use scraps to make stock
- Use a compost bin, worm farm or Bokashi system

Tips for growing your own food

- Grow herbs in pots near the kitchen
- Start with easy plants (strawberries and tomatoes grow well in pots)
- Plant a fruit tree

Tips for a climate-friendly cup of coffee

- At home use plunger or similar brewing methods rather than the espresso machine (<https://perfectdailygrind.com/2019/05/how-to-reduce-the-environmental-impact-of-your-coffee-habit/>)
- Give up single-serve capsules or switch to a more sustainable version (e.g. <https://www.ecocaffe.com.au/so-green-we-could-plant-it/>)
- Use instant coffee (<https://theconversation.com/sorry-baristas-instant-coffee-has-the-smallest-carbon-footprint-but-dont-overfill-the-kettle-98754>)
- Use grounds as fertilizer, in compost or worm farm, or grow mushrooms
- Coffee tastes best in ceramic or glass cups – or at least NOT a disposable one
- Choose durable reusable cups so number of uses offsets environmental cost of production
- Choose low fat milk or non-dairy alternatives.

Your own Tips

- _____
- _____

Other resources:

<https://australian.museum/learn/science/biodiversity/whats-happening-toaustralias-biodiversity/>
<https://data.oecd.org/agroutput/meat-consumption.htm>
<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/>
<https://www.localharvest.org.au/learn/grow-your-own-food/>