



# ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS

FOR VEGETARIANISM

**YOUR DIET CAN MAKE A  
BIG DIFFERENCE TO YOUR  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

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**Global warming, deforestation, land degradation, pollution, loss of biodiversity, water shortage, over-fishing ... meat production is killing the Earth!**

#### **DID YOU KNOW ...**

Animal farming is one of the most significant contributors to the serious environmental problems facing our planet.

#### **REDUCE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT**

Switching to a vegetarian or vegan diet is the single most efficient act you can take to reduce your environmental footprint on the planet<sup>9</sup>.

#### **GLOBAL WARMING**

- Cows are the biggest producers of nitrous oxide and methane<sup>1</sup>.
- The agriculture sector is the biggest producer (47%) of New Zealand's greenhouse emissions<sup>2</sup>.
- Dairy farming is increasing our emissions annually<sup>3</sup>.
- Farmed animals contribute more to greenhouse warming (14.5% of global, human-induced greenhouse gas emissions is due to animal agriculture) than all forms of transport combined<sup>4</sup>.

#### **DEFORESTATION, LAND DEGRADATION, POLLUTION, LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY**

- A third of our planet's landmass is now taken up with animal farming<sup>1</sup>.
- Globally animal farming is the main cause of deforestation and a major contributor to land degradation<sup>1</sup>.
- In 2004, pastoral land use (sheep, beef, and dairy farming) was New Zealand's largest human land use at just over 37% of New Zealand's total land area.
- Pastoral animal farming impacts include erosion and sedimentation of streams and rivers<sup>5</sup>.
- Intensive animal farming contaminates soil, groundwater and streams and increases the risk of soil compaction<sup>5</sup>.
- Farming is responsible for the modifying of New Zealand lakes, rivers and streams by dams, drainage and irrigation schemes<sup>6</sup>.

- Water quality in New Zealand rivers and lakes has declined in regions dominated by pastoral animal farming<sup>7</sup>.
- As ecosystems are changed into farmland only tiny pockets of our once vast flourishing ecosystem are left<sup>6</sup>.

### **WATER SHORTAGE**

- Meat is a water waster. It takes far less water to produce plant foods than meat.
- Up to on average 15,000 litres of water can be needed to produce just 1 kilo of beef, while 1,000 calories of food in the form of cereals takes about half a cubic metre of water<sup>9</sup>.

### **OVER-FISHING**

- According to the United Nations, many of the world's major fisheries are over-fished or on the edge of collapse<sup>8</sup>.
- Modern fishing practices cause massive damage to both wildlife and the sea itself<sup>8</sup>.
- Moving to fish farming is not the solution as, just as for other intensive animal farming, it pollutes the environment and destroys wildlife<sup>10</sup>.

### **HOW CAN I HELP THE PLANET?**

**Go vegetarian:** the only genuine way to cut down on the massive impact meat eating diet is having on our planet.

- Research states that beef is the worst foodstuff in terms of environmental impact<sup>8</sup>.
- A plant-based diet requires 10-20 times less land than a meat-based diet.
- The least environmental impact is caused by eating a vegan diet high in organic produce<sup>9</sup>.

### **HELP! BE PART OF SAYING 'NO' REDUCE • PROTECT • REDUCE • LIMIT**

You don't need to wait for the government or industry to act on climate change. YOU can do something, and you can do it NOW!

### **GO VEGETARIAN, FOR OUR PLANET'S SAKE.**

**“You can make a bigger contribution to cutting greenhouse gases by becoming vegan than by buying an eco-friendly car.”**

*- Jonathon Porritt, Chair of the UK Sustainable Development Commission*

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**“It is impossible to feed future generations a typical western diet without destroying the environment.”**

*International Water Management Institute*



### **New Zealand Vegetarian Society**

(09) 523-4686

[info@vegetarian.org.nz](mailto:info@vegetarian.org.nz)

[www.vegetarian.org.nz](http://www.vegetarian.org.nz)

PO Box 26664, Epsom, Auckland 1344

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