Simple Tips to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

- Turn off the lights when natural light is sufficient and when you leave the room. It's that simple!
- Keep your temperature system on a moderate setting while you're home and set it a few degrees higher in the summer (or lower in the winter) when you leave.
- Use your windows wisely! If your climate control system is on, shut them...if you need a little fresh air, turn off the heat or AC. Open curtains and blinds during the day to help heat the house in the winter and close them in the summer to help keep the house cool
- Cut down the number of appliances you are running and save big on energy.
- Did you know that many electronics continue using energy even when powered down? This is true of any charger, television, printer, etc. Use a power strip to easily unplug these electronics when not in use.
- Power your computer down when you're away. A computer turned off uses at least 65% less energy than a computer left on or idle on a screen saver.
- Use the stairs as often as possible. Elevators consume electricity.
- Only do full loads of laundry and using the cold water setting whenever possible.
- Try to take shorter showers. The less hot water you use, the less energy is needed to heat the water.
- Switch to LED – Bulb (Projected) Comparison – An incandescent Bulb is projected to last for 1,200 hours. A CFL Bulb is projected to last for 10,000 hours. An LED Bulb is projected to last for 25,000 hours!
- Conserve Paper – Print and copy on two sides and print only what you need.
- Recycle – Most of us have curbside single stream recycling that will take aluminum & tin cans, plastics, glass, office paper, newspaper, cardboard. There are various facilities for recycling electronics, bulk metal and furniture.
- Promote Reuse by donating used cell phones and chargers, furniture clothing and cleaning and school supplies.
- Consider walking or riding a bike if the distance is reasonable. Walk from you bus or subway stop to your office or lab.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving
- Buy Locally Grown Food and Locally Produced Meats – By shopping locally, you are purchasing goods produced in your local community, reducing transportation, while giving you healthier food.
- Eat Less Industrially Produced Meats – It contributes to land and water degradation, biodiversity loss, acid rain, coral reef degeneration and deforestation. Giving up meat just one day a week means decreasing your meat consumption by nearly 15 percent, effectively decreasing the problems associated with meat production by the same amount.
- Use Less Plastic – From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening the survival of our planet.
- Plant a Tree, a Shrub, a Garden – Plants add oxygen and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and have a positive effect on lowering energy consumption and lowering costs
- Incorporate Native Plants in Your Garden – Native plants use less water, attract wildlife and are relatively easy to grow. Do Not Plant Nonnative, Invasive Plants – Nonnative invasive plants choke out native plants that are good for the local environment.

- Don't Bag Grass - Yard waste accounts for approximately 20 percent of all waste materials.
- Compost (If you can) – It saves water by helping the soil hold moisture and reduce water runoff. It benefits the environment by recycling organic resources while conserving landfill space. It reduces the need for commercial soil conditioners and fertilizers.

The Environmental Benefits of Buying Locally Grown & Produced Food

Reduce Your Food Miles

One of the most important ways buying locally helps the environment is by reducing your food miles. By shopping locally, you are purchasing goods produced in your local community. Conversely, when you shop at the grocery store, many of the food items you buy travel over 1500 miles to reach your plate. By cutting down on these miles, you are reducing the environmental impact of your food. Local food doesn't create large carbon footprints through overseas plane travel or long truck trips. This cuts down on fuel consumption and air pollution. There isn't a need for shipping facilities, packing facilities or refrigeration.

More Accessible

Local businesses are able to operate in their local communities. It's easy for them to bring their products to their consumers because their consumers are nearby. Take a farmer's market for example - consumers are able to easily access lots of local homegrown produce without leaving their own community. Shoppers are able to easily walk or bike to their local market to shop the stalls. On the other hand, with larger grocery and department stores, they usually aren't able to be located so centrally. Because these larger retailers require more space, they often have to move out of town. That means consumers are forced to drive to these stores, which increases their fuel consumption and carbon footprint.

Fresher Produce

By buying and eating local, consumers are able to enjoy produce that is fresh and nutritious. Many local producers pride themselves on keeping their product organic, hormone free and pesticide free. Not only is this beneficial to the consumer, it's also beneficial to the environment. Keeping harmful toxins, like pesticides, out of the air helps to improve crops and air quality. In addition, because the produce is fresh and brought directly from farm to table, there is less waste. Many large retailers have significant food waste due to items going bad before they are bought. On a smaller scale with a more direct farm to table approach, this food waste is cut down.

Protects Local Land & Wildlife

Buying local also helps to protect local lands and wildlife. By buying local, you are supporting local farmers and producers. With your support, these farms are able to stay in operation. Because the farms are owned and operated by local farmers and producers, they aren't being sold to local developers. Local developers could completely transform the land, devastating the wildlife that calls it home. Or, big business producers could buy out the farm and incorporate inhumane and non-eco-friendly farming practices.

Local Workforce

Lastly, an added environmental benefit of buying locally is supporting the local workforce. For example, if you buy your groceries at the local farmers market, you're helping to keep local growers, creators and farmers in their jobs. You're also creating an opportunity for other local jobs such as the team who organizes the farmers market, the team that sets up the stalls, the team that cleans up at the end of the day, etc. All of these local businesses with local workers are in place because consumers are demanding local goods. Without that consumer demand, these local businesses may not exist. Many of the employees would have to seek work elsewhere, outside of the community. This would add to highway congestion and fuel consumption, enlarging the overall carbon footprint.

http://www.gogreen.org/blog/the-environmental-benefits-of-buying-locally

Impact of Industrial Livestock on the Planet

The environmental impact is huge
Livestock farming has a vast environmental footprint. It contributes to land and water degradation, biodiversity loss, acid rain, coral reef degeneration and deforestation.

Nowhere is this impact more apparent than climate change – livestock farming contributes 18% of human produced greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. This is more than all emissions from ships, planes, trucks, cars and all other transport put together.

Climate change alone poses multiple risks to health and well-being through increased risk of extreme weather events – such as floods, droughts and heatwaves – and has been described as the greatest threat to human health in the 21st century.

Reducing consumption of animal products is essential if we are to meet global greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets – which are necessary to mitigate the worst effects of climate change.

It requires masses of grain, water and land
Meat production is highly inefficient – this is particularly true when it comes to red meat. To produce one kilogram of beef requires 25 kilograms of grain – to feed the animal – and roughly 15,000 litres of water. Pork is a little less intensive and chicken less still.

The scale of the problem can also be seen in land use: around 30% of the earth's land surface is currently used for livestock farming. Since food, water and land are scarce in many parts of the world, this represents an inefficient use of resources.

It hurts the global poor
Feeding grain to livestock increases global demand and drives up grain prices, making it harder for the world's poor to feed themselves. Grain could instead be used to feed people, and water used to irrigate crops.

If all grain were fed to humans instead of animals, we could feed an extra 3.5 billion people. In short, industrial livestock farming is not only inefficient but also not equitable.

It causes unnecessary animal suffering

[Industrial livestock farming falls well short](#) of this minimal standard. Most meat, dairy and eggs are produced in ways that largely or [completely ignore animal welfare](#) – failing to provide sufficient space to move around, contact with other animals, and access to the outdoors.

It is making us ill

At the production level, industrial livestock farming relies heavily on antibiotic use to accelerate weight gain and control infection – in the US, [80% of all antibiotics are consumed by the livestock industry](#).

This contributes to the growing public health problem of [antibiotic resistance](#). Already, more than 23,000 people are [estimated to die every year in the US alone](#) from resistant bacteria. As this figure continues to rise, it becomes hard to overstate the threat of this emerging crisis.

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[https://theconversation.com/five-ways-the-meat-on-your-plate-is-killing-the-planet-76128#targetText=Livestock%20farming%20has%20a%20vast,produced%20greenhouse%20gas%20emissions%20worldwide.](https://theconversation.com/five-ways-the-meat-on-your-plate-is-killing-the-planet-76128)

Tips for Using Less Plastic

According to an Article by the BBC:

- 3 billion metric tons (9.1 billion US tons) of virgin (non-recycled) plastic has been produced to date.
- Generating 6.3 billion metric tons (6.9 billion US tons) of plastic waste.
- 9% of that waste has been recycled.
- 12% has been incinerated.
- The remaining 79% (5.5 billion US tons) of plastic waste has accumulated in landfills and the natural environment.
- 12 billion metric tons (13.2 billion US tons) will enter landfills or the environment by 2050 if current production and waste management trends continue.

Tips for reducing plastic waste:

1. Stop using plastic straws, even in restaurants. If a straw is a must, purchase a reusable stainless steel or glass straw.
2. Use a reusable produce bag. A single plastic bag can take 1,000 years to degrade. Purchase or make your own reusable produce bag and be sure to wash them often!
3. Give up gum. Gum is made of a synthetic rubber, aka plastic.
4. Buy boxes instead of bottles. Often, products like laundry detergent come in cardboard which is more easily recycled than plastic.
5. Purchase food, like cereal, pasta, and rice from bulk bins and fill a reusable bag or container. You save money and unnecessary packaging.

6. Reuse containers for storing leftovers or shopping in bulk.
7. Use a reusable bottle or mug for your beverages, even when ordering from a to-go shop
8. Bring your own container for take-out or your restaurant doggy-bag since many restaurants use Styrofoam.
9. Use matches instead of disposable plastic lighters or invest in a refillable metal lighter.
10. Avoid buying frozen foods because their packaging is mostly plastic. Even those that appear to be cardboard are coated in a thin layer of plastic. Plus, you'll be eating fewer processed foods!
11. Don't use plasticware at home and be sure to request restaurants do not pack them in your take-out box.
12. Ask your local grocer to take your plastic containers (for berries, tomatoes, etc.) back. If you shop at a farmer's market, they can refill it for you.
13. The EPA estimates that 7.6 billion pounds of disposable diapers are discarded in the US each year. Use cloth diapers to reduce your baby's carbon footprint and save money.
14. Make fresh squeezed juice or eat fruit instead of buying juice in plastic bottles. It's healthier and better for the environment.
15. Make your own cleaning products that will be less toxic and eliminate the need for multiple plastic bottles of cleaner.
16. Pack your lunch in reusable containers and bags. Also, opt for fresh fruits and veggies and bulk items instead of products that come in single serving cups.
17. Use a razor with replaceable blades instead of a disposable razor