

## How to Care for Creation, Plus Your Health and Budget

What if I told you that there is a way that you can save money, eat healthier, AND help the planet? You can accomplish all three goals if you give up red meat one day per week. I eat and enjoy steaks, burgers, and prime rib roasts; I'd have a hard time giving them up. My grandfather was a butcher. But I don't eat red meat every day, or even every week, for health and budget reasons. And recently I learned that raising cattle and sheep is a huge drain on land and water resources, and it adds greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

According to a 2014 study by Gidon Eshel, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, raising cattle in the US uses 28 times as much land, and 11 times as much irrigation water, plus pumps at least five times as much planet-warming gases into Earth's atmosphere, than producing the equivalent calories of dairy products, poultry, pork, or eggs. According to a University of California study, beef takes over 6 times the amount of carbon emissions to produce than chicken:

Beef:	330 grams
Chicken:	52 grams
Fish:	40 grams
Vegetables:	14 gram

Cattle and sheep produce methane gas as part of their digestive process. Methane gas (CH<sub>4</sub>) is a greenhouse gas like carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), and according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, it is more than 20 times as effective as carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere.

Here's where you can make an impact: One day a week, replace red meat with chicken, fish, or vegetables, and you will help reduce carbon emissions. There are many delicious recipes that don't include red meat, and are healthier for you, your wallet, and the planet. Researchers have found that the Mediterranean diet has only a slightly higher environmental impact than vegan or vegetarian diets. The Mediterranean diet consists of fish and poultry at least twice a week, red meat a few times a month, and eating primarily plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, and nuts.

Not ready to give up red meat completely? Then reduce your portion size to the recommended 4 ounces, roughly the size of a deck of cards.

To help you get started, Caring for Creation team members have collected a few of our favorite meatless recipes and posted them on the Caring for Creation web site <http://uccdg-caring-for-creation.weebly.com/>. You'll find recipes for black bean burritos, split pea soup, black bean soup, chickpea veggie burgers, black bean lentil tacos, ground turkey meatloaf, and ground turkey sloppy joes.

Here are a few links to learn more about why and how to replace red meat in your diet.

<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/climate-lab>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/mediterranean-diet/art-20047801>

<http://www.meatlessmonday.com/favorite-recipes/>

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