

Date:

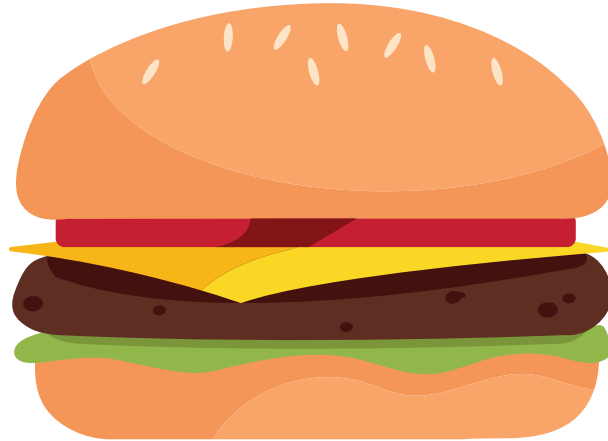
Learning objective:

Name:

To explain the impact of food choices on the environment.

Food and the environment

Highlight or underline any key bits of information about how this food impacts the environment.

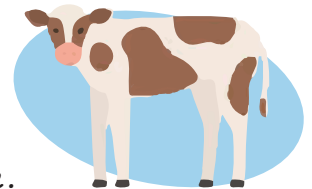


Meat

Beef, the meat most commonly used to make burgers, comes from cows. Many people want to eat beef, so there is a high demand for it. However, it has more of a negative impact on the environment than most other foods.

Studies show that raising animals for meat contributes around 14.5% of greenhouse gas emissions - the same amount as all transportation in the world. A large amount of this comes from the waste that livestock produces, particularly the gas methane. Methane heats the planet 80 times more than carbon dioxide.

Animals need water, food and warmth to grow and stay healthy. This uses vast amounts of energy and resources, which means more fossil fuels are burnt, and therefore, more harmful greenhouse gases are released into the atmosphere.



In addition, all animals need land to live on. Currently, around 26% of land not covered in ice is used for livestock. That's over a quarter of the Earth's land. This means trees are removed for animals to graze, and therefore less harmful greenhouse gases are absorbed. Instead, they stay in the atmosphere and contribute to global warming.

As well as taking lots of energy to produce, meat does not provide as much energy or nutrients as fruit and vegetables.

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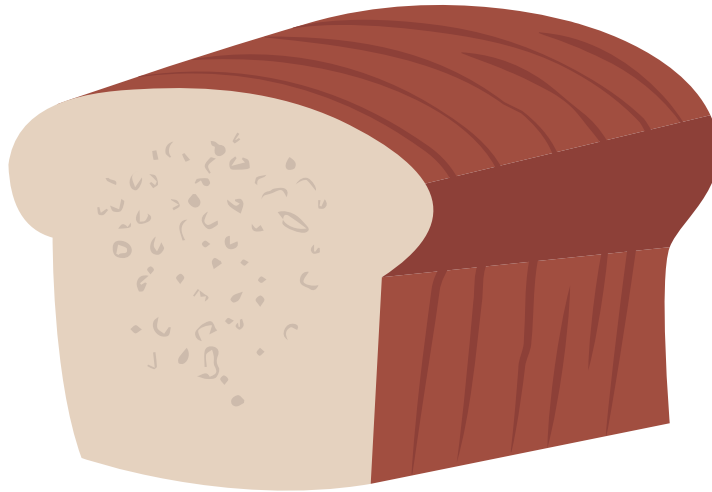
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Bread

Bread is generally better for the environment than meat or rice, which both need a lot of water. However, a lot of energy is used to make bread when wheat is ground up, and later when the bread is baked. This energy is produced by burning fossil fuels which give off greenhouse gases and therefore contribute to global warming.

In addition, wheat is given fertiliser to help it to grow. Yet the chemicals used in fertiliser can harm wildlife and release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Lastly, many people waste bread; almost a quarter of all people throw away a loaf before they get to the end.

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Dairy

Dairy products, such as butter, cheese, ice cream and yoghurt, are made with milk. This milk usually comes from cows and therefore has a similar impact on the environment to the production of beef - a negative one.

There are around 270 million cows worldwide used to produce milk. All of these cows need vast amounts of energy to eat, drink and stay warm, which means burning fossil fuels. Additionally, cows give off methane gas when they go to the toilet, which contributes to global warming. What's more, land needs to be cleared of trees so that cows can graze - fewer trees means less harmful carbon dioxide is absorbed.

Although milk is a vital source of calcium, drinking one glass of milk every day for a year produces the same amount of greenhouse gases as driving a car for 950 kilometres. This is further than driving from the bottom of England to the top.