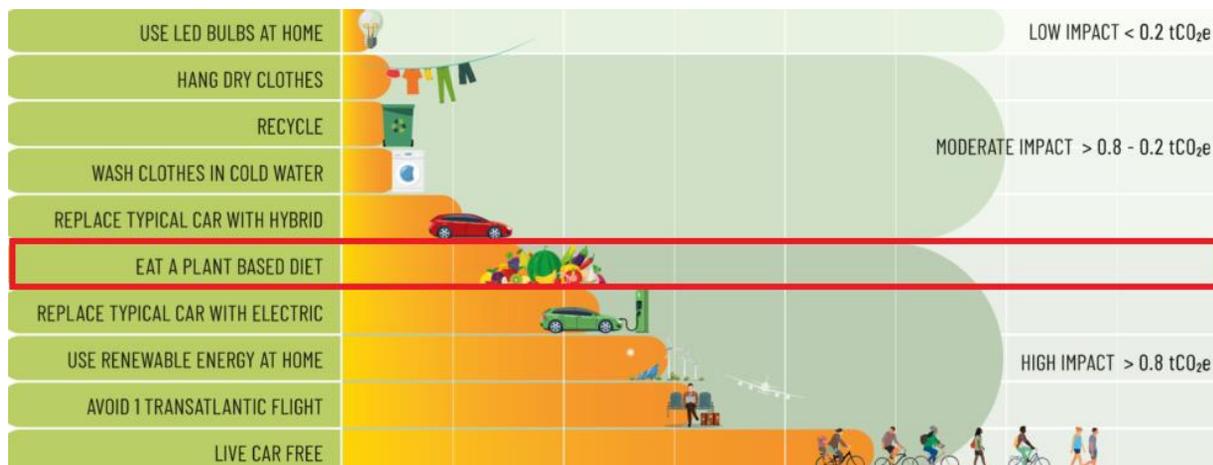


Healthy, Sustainable Food Choices

An extensive study by [The Lancet](#) published in 2019 documented the impact of food systems on environmental degradation and recommended a plant-based diet. An article published in [Science](#) found that impacts of the lowest-impact animal products typically exceed those of vegetable substitutes.

A study published in [2017 Environmental Research Letters](#) by Wynes and Nicholas found that eating a plant-based diet is among the top high-impact personal choices people in developed countries can make to help reduce global warming:



This graphic was developed by GreenFaith based on the 2017 Wynes and Nicholas paper.

Environmental Impacts of Meat & Dairy

- About 18% of greenhouse gas (GHG) comes from the livestock sector, including feed production and transport;
- Livestock herds often cause land degradation and water shortages;
- 1/3 of arable land use goes toward production of livestock;
- 70% of crops are fed to livestock, including corn, requiring antibiotics to aid digestion;
- Animal waste from large factory farms is both an environmental and health crisis, polluting water supplies and streams, as documented by [Food and Water Watch](#);
- Loss of forests and wild areas to agriculture contributes to loss of biodiversity and the [extinction of wildlife](#).

Confined Feeding Operations and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations often dispose of waste in “manure lagoons” that release nitrate into the local ground water.



Health Impacts of Meat & Dairy

- A long-term study by researchers at the [Harvard School of Public Health](#) published in 2012 found that eating red meat on a regular basis may shorten one’s lifespan.
- [The Lancet](#) 2019 study found a lower risk of major chronic disease and overall wellbeing from diets that receive protein from plants and fish, fat from unsaturated plant sources, carbohydrates primarily from whole grains, and include at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Giving antibiotics to livestock contributes to the rise of [antibiotic-resistant bacteria](#), which cause over 20,000 deaths each year in the United States.

Tips for Eating a Healthy, Plant-Based Diet

Balancing proteins

[The EAT-Lancet](#) Commission “reference diet” recommends the reduction or elimination of red meat and a corresponding increase in the consumption of whole grains, legumes and nuts. A plant-based diet balances protein by combining complementary, incomplete sources of protein from grains and legumes, plus nuts or seeds, which also provide needed fiber, minerals and vitamins. Many traditional cuisines balance 20 to 30% legumes with 70 to 80% grains. The [relative protein](#) from each grain, legume and nut is listed in descending order within each category:



Whole grains: oats, quinoa, whole wheat, barley, cornmeal, brown rice, white rice.

Legumes: soy beans,* lentils, peanuts, pinto beans, black Beans, navy beans, chickpeas.
*Soy is a complete protein, so it is good to include one serving a day (e.g. soy milk or tofu).

Nuts & Seeds: hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, almonds, pistachios, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, sesame seeds, chia seeds, cashews, walnuts and pecans.

Other sources of good nutrition Eat four to five servings of a wide variety of seasonal, and, when available, [local](#)** fruits and vegetables, for additional vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

Supplements Vitamin B12 supplements are recommended for those following a vegan diet. Soy milk often adds vitamins B12, D2 and calcium; check the label.

**Choose local food for fresher and better tasting products, to avoid long-distance transportation, and for the opportunity to get to know the growers and farmers.