

350

Food & Climate How Hot is Your Meal?

It is estimated that **1/3 of greenhouse gases are from our agriculture system. They are being emitted in every step of food production from seed to plate.**

Conventional agriculture is fossil fuel intensive and depends on a variety of chemical inputs, machinery, and fossil fuels. It is estimated that the production of food accounts for the large majority of agriculture emissions—more than 80% by recent estimates. Most of these—about 40%—come from the chemical fertilizers and pesticides used in conventional agriculture, which are very energy intensive to create. All told, the production of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides contributes more than one trillion pounds of GHG emissions to the atmosphere globally each year. **That's the same amount of emissions that are generated by 88 million passenger cars each year,** more than the total number of cars in India, China, Australia, Canada, and Mexico. As a result, soil management, including synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, accounts for about 2/3 of all domestic nitrous oxide emissions.

And it's not only crop production that's producing greenhouse gas emissions. The meat that we eat is the largest food contributor to climate change! In the U.S., livestock accounts for 1/3 of methane emissions—more than any other sector. Globally, the United Nations has estimated that **the multiple inputs of animal production results in nearly 1/5 of all greenhouse gases worldwide**—more than the entire transportation sector.



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Packaging

Most of us eat packaged foods daily. The food processing and packaging sector is one of the top 5 users of energy in the U.S., using almost **14 billion gallons of gasoline** every year.

Conserving containers or reducing consumption of highly processed food will cut down on these emissions.

Agriculture

Agriculture is the number one source of nitrous oxide and methane emissions—310 and 23 times as potent as CO₂, respectively—both in the U.S. and globally.





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Take Action!

Join 350's International Day of Action:

Host an event and take a stand against global climate change. Have a harvest festival or plant a garden and take a picture with 350 represented. Go to 350.org for more information.

Go organic: If everyone converted 10% of their diet to organic, we could capture an additional 6.5 billion pounds of carbon in soil—the equivalent of taking 2 million cars off the road each year!

Eat local: Reducing your food miles can help combat climate change. More than one-fifth of all transportation emissions in the U.S. come from agriculture and food products.

Get active: Sign onto the Cool Foods Campaign and make a commitment to "cooler" eating at coolfoodscampaign.org. Are you a student? Join the Real Food Challenge (realfoodchallenge.org) to combat climate change through food choices at your school or check out Slow Food USA to find out how to start a campus chapter and work to make good, clean and fair food available to everyone. Learn more at slowfoodusa.org

Transportation

The average conventional food product travels about **1,500 miles** to get to your grocery store. Between 2002 and 2008 the number of farmers markets in the U.S. increased by nearly 50%, providing significantly more options to find locally grown food.



It takes 7-10 times more energy to produce your food than is contained in the food itself.

Partner Organizations:



**FOOD
DEMOCRACY
NOW!**



**REAL FOOD
CHALLENGE**

**COOL
FOODS
CAMPAIGN**



350.org is an international climate change campaign calling for a fair Copenhagen climate treaty that meets the latest science. 350ppm represents the safe upper limit of CO₂ in our atmosphere. Take part in your community on 24 October, 2009: An International Day of Climate Action. Visit www.350.org or contact organizers@350.org to get involved.

