

Huge reduction in meat-eating 'essential' to avoid climate breakdown

Level 1 • Pre-intermediate / Intermediate

1 Warmer

Answer the questions.

- Which country produces the most CO₂ (carbon dioxide)?
a. China b. the USA c. India
- Which country has done most to protect the climate?
a. the UK b. Germany c. Sweden
- Which country produces the most renewable energy?
a. China b. Canada c. the USA
- Which country has the most cattle?
a. the USA b. Brazil c. India



2 Key words

Complete the sentences using these key words from the text. The paragraph numbers will help you.

flood

pulses

drought

deforestation

consumption

- _____ is the use of something such as fuel or energy and the amount that people use. (para 1)
- _____ are seeds that you can cook and eat such as beans, lentils and peas. (para 1)
- _____ is the process of removing the trees from an area of land. (para 2)
- A _____ is a long period of time when there is little or no rain and crops die. (para 3)
- A _____ is a large amount of water that covers an area that was dry before. (para 3)

flexitarian

yield

fertilizer

undernourished

dairy

- _____ refers to products made from milk. (para 3)
- A _____ is someone who has a mainly vegetarian diet but sometimes eats meat or fish. (para 5)
- An _____ person is not healthy because they do not get enough food. (para 6)
- A _____ is a natural or chemical substance added to soil to help plants grow. (para 7)
- A _____ is an amount of something that is produced. (para 7)

3 Find the information

Find the following information in the text as quickly as possible.

- By what percentage should people in western countries reduce their consumption of beef?
- How many more people will there be in the world by 2050?
- According to the UN report, how many years does the world have to keep global warming under 1.5C?
- What proportion of food produced today is wasted?
- How much less pork should the average citizen eat?
- By what percentage should people in the UK and US reduce their consumption of milk?

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Damian Carrington
10 October, 2018

- 1 If we want to avoid dangerous climate change, we have to reduce the amount of meat we eat. This is according to the biggest ever analysis of the food system's effect on the environment. In western countries, beef consumption needs to reduce by 90% and be replaced by five times more beans and pulses. The research also finds that enormous changes to farming are needed if we want to feed ten billion people (the expected world population in a few decades).
- 2 Food production already causes a large amount of damage to the environment, via greenhouse gases from farm animals, deforestation and water shortages from farming. But without action, its effect will get far worse as the world population rises by 2.3 billion people by 2050. "It is quite shocking," said Marco Springmann at the University of Oxford, who led the research team.
- 3 The new study follows the publication of a UN report. In that report, the world's leading scientists warned there are just 12 years in which to keep global warming under 1.5C. Even half a degree above that will significantly increase the risks of drought, floods and extreme heat. The report said eating less meat and dairy was important.
- 4 The new research combined data from every country to study the effect of food production on the global environment. It then looked at what we can do to stop a food crisis. "There is no easy solution," said Springmann. "But changes to people's diets and technological change on farms are the two essential things. Hopefully there will also be a reduction in food loss and waste." About a third of food produced today is wasted.
- 5 The researchers said a global shift to a "flexitarian" diet was needed to keep climate change under 2°C. This flexitarian diet means people need to eat

shift= movement

2°C 2 degrees (Centigrade)

75% less beef, 90% less pork and half the number of eggs. They must also triple consumption of beans and pulses and quadruple consumption of nuts and seeds. This would reduce emissions from farm animals by 50%.

x3
x4

- 6 In rich nations, the dietary changes needed are greater. People in the UK and US need to eat 90% less beef and drink 60% less milk. They also need to eat four to six times more beans and pulses. However, the millions of people in poor nations who are undernourished need to eat a little more meat and dairy. milk products

manzo

(but)

- 7 To stop deforestation, water shortages and pollution from overuse of fertilizer, we need enormous changes in farming methods. These include increasing crop yields in poorer nations, more universal water storage and far more careful use of fertilizers. In some countries, fertilizers and water are already being better used, and big cuts in meat consumption are being seen among young people in some cities.

to store

- 8 But we need a global change, Springmann said: "I think we can do it, but we really need governments to do more. People can make a personal difference by changing their diet but also by asking their politicians for better environmental regulations. That is also very important."

rules

- 9 Professor Peter Smith at the University of Aberdeen, who was not part of the research team, said: "We know food choices are very personal and that behaviour change can be difficult to encourage, but the evidence is now very clear – we need to change our diets. It will also make us healthier so there's no reason not to make the change."

comportamento

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cattle in a field



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4 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings to make statements about the text.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. If we want to stop climate change, ... | a. ... occasionally eats meat and fish. |
| 2. An increase in global warming of 2C will ... | b. ... have already reduced the amount of meat they eat. |
| 3. A flexitarian is someone who is mainly a vegetarian but ... | c. ... we have to eat much less meat. |
| 4. The report says that we need both changes in diet ... | d. ... we will also become healthier. |
| 5. Young people in some cities ... | e. ... and technological changes on farms. |
| 6. If we change our diets in the way the report recommends, ... | f. ... increase the risk of drought, floods and extreme heat. |

5 Chunks

Rearrange the words to make phrases from the text.

- times beans more and pulses five
- damage a environment large to the of amount
- no solution there easy is
- waste in loss reduction a food and
- farming enormous in methods changes
- effect the production environment food on the of

6 Two-word phrases

Match the words in the left-hand column with the words in the right-hand column to make expressions from the text.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. food | a. change |
| 2. climate | b. gases |
| 3. greenhouse | c. diet |
| 4. global | d. yields |
| 5. flexitarian | e. production |
| 6. crop | f. warming |

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7 Word-building

Complete the table using words from the text.

	noun	adjective
1.	technology	
2.	globe	
3.	diet	
4.	environment	
5.	essence	
6.	person	

8 Discussion

- Should we all become vegetarian? Why? Why not?